

**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 15, 2024, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** Division III Championships Committee Chair Karen Tessmer welcomed the group and previewed the agenda.
2. **Recent Championships Committee reports.** The committee approved the report from its September 9-10 meeting as presented.
3. **Division III Nominating Committee report.**
 - a. **Committee member eligibility recommendation.** The Championships Committee approved the Division III Nominating Committee's recommendation to allow **Bethany Dannelly**, who recently was hired as commissioner of the Ohio Athletic Conference, to continue her term on the Division III Women's Basketball Committee despite her new job moving her into a different region. The Championships Committee agreed with the Nominating Committee's reasoning that (1) Ms. Dannelly has extensive experience in Region VI to serve the region capably, regardless of her new location; (2) the implementation in 2024-25 of the NCAA Power Index and new bracketing principles requires significant knowledge and consistency that only current members of the Division III Women's Basketball Committee would have; and (3) the Division III Women's Basketball Committee asked for the exception, as this is Ms. Dannelly's final year of service and her second year as the chair.
 - b. **Sport committee appointments.** The Championships Committee also approved the following sport committee appointments, effective as indicated:
 - (1) **NCAA Division III Baseball Committee** – Region IV (immediate vacancy): **Jake Ayers**, assistant commissioner, United East Conference; and Region VI (immediate vacancy): **James Peeples**, director of athletics, Piedmont University, Collegiate Conference of the South.
 - (2) **NCAA Division III Men's Lacrosse Committee** – Region V (immediate vacancy): **Justin Newell**, associate director of athletics, Kenyon College, North Coast Athletic Conference.

(3) **NCAA Division III Women's Soccer Committee** – Region VI (immediate vacancy): **Tiffany Pins**, head women's soccer coach/associate professor, Washington and Lee University, Old Dominion Athletic Conference.

(4) **NCAA Division III Wrestling Committee** – Region V (immediate vacancy): **Josh Hardman**, head wrestling coach, Manchester University, Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference.

4. **2025 wrestling regional sites.** The committee approved the Division III Wrestling Committee's recommendation that Wabash College host the Region 5 regional and Augsburg University host the Region 7 regional.

5. **Championships updates.**

a. **Streaming analytics.** The committee received a summary of live streaming analytics for the 2024 winter and spring championships.

b. **Football championship broadcast.** Staff updated the committee on the new broadcast window for the 2024 NCAA Division III Football Championship game, which now will be aired on ESPN on Sunday, January 5, 2025, due to the expanded bracket approved for this year that required the tournament to be extended. The championship game had previously been conducted on a Saturday. Staff noted that in the case that a participating(s) institutions have a policy precluding play on Sunday, the championship game could be played either on Saturday, January 4, or Monday, January 6.

c. **Live streaming requirements.** Staff updated the committee on live streaming for the fall championships, noting in particular that ESPN will broadcast all preliminary-round games of the 2024 Division III Football Championship on ESPN+, which is a change from previous years in which the live streams for the preliminary rounds were available on the host's website. Staff also noted the negotiations with ESPN regarding the number of cameras required for streaming those games this year and in subsequent years. ESPN ultimately wants each host to provide four cameras but is willing to take a stairstep approach for campuses to be able to meet that minimum (i.e., retain the current one-camera requirement for this year and gradually increase in future years). The Division III Football Committee will collaborate with and survey the football sponsoring membership to develop a camera minimum and host stipend recommendation for the 2025-26 season. The Championships Committee will act on the recommendation during its February 2025 meeting.

Staff also updated the committee on streaming for the 2024 Division III Women's Volleyball Championship. The semifinal and final matches were already slated to be aired on ESPN+, but since the quarterfinals are being held at the same site, ESPN also may air those matches on ESPN+. Additionally, staff is working internally to distribute an RFI to create an NCAA streaming platform.

- d. **Men's and women's golf regionals.** The committee noted that the men's and women's golf committees are continuing to discuss a proposal for regional play in Division III golf. The committees have settled on the number of participants, the format and the date formula for the proposal in preparation for a second survey to be sent to the membership after discussion during the golf coaches association convention. Because of the potential budget implications, the first opportunity for a regional model to be implemented, if approved, would be for the 2027 championships (in line with the next budget cycle).
- e. **Women's golf field size.** The committee noted that the Division III Women's Golf Committee is moving forward with a previously approved field size increase for the 2025 NCAA Division III Women's Golf Championships. The continued increase in Division III women's golf sponsorship has warranted an increase in the championship field size. The women's golf committee reviewed sponsorship for the last two years and reaffirmed that the championship field should increase to 34 teams and six individuals as was previously approved by the Division III Championships Committee (along with approved funding to secure the two courses necessary to accommodate a field larger than 29 teams). The increase will begin with the 2025 championship pending the identified host's ability to secure the two courses necessary to accommodate the expanded field size.

[Note: The previously approved site for 2025 will no longer be able to serve as the championship site. Harris County-Houston Sports Authority and the University of Mary-Hardin Baylor will submit recommended alternatives to the women's golf committee by October 18. It is hoped that the new site (whether still in the Houston area or elsewhere) will be able to offer the two courses necessary to accommodate the expanded field size; if not, the current field size of 29 teams would be retained.]

- 6. **Division III Interpretations and Legislation Committee (ILC) update.** Staff updated the committee on its referral to the ILC regarding the proposal from the Division III Men's Golf Committee to increase the mileage restriction and provide more flexibility for teams to practice at different courses and in different areas of the region. The Championships Committee had asked the ILC to review both the merits of the proposal as well as whether it should be processed through the governance structure as Convention legislation or as a membership-sponsored proposal. Further, while the recommendation came from the men's golf committee, the Championships Committee asked the ILC to consider whether the recommendation should apply to all sports.

While the ILC has not completed its review of the issue, it preliminarily agreed that if there is a change it should apply to all sports, and that institutions should have the discretion to determine the range depending on their location within a region, and that students should not miss class time for a practice. The ILC is working to submit some discussion points for the Division III Management Council for possible consideration in the legislative cycle for the 2026 NCAA Convention.

7. **Committee chair.** The committee elected Leonard Trevino as chair beginning at the conclusion of the 2025 NCAA Convention. Mr. Trevino will replace current chair Karen Tessmer, whose term on the committee expires at that time.

8. **Other business.**

- **NPI discussion.** The committee discussed and ultimately supported a request from the Division III Commissioners Association to release the final NPI ranking in all team sports before the selection show but only after all contests have been completed, per the AQ deadline for each sport. Additionally, the committee agreed that the NPI data be released daily the week before selections. The committee charged staff with working internally to establish the logistics of this approach to ensure the releases are accurate and timely.

9. **Future meeting schedule.**

- November 19, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (videoconference).
- December 17, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (videoconference).
- February 3-4, 2025 (meeting via videoconference).

Committee Chair: Karen Tessmer, Worcester State University.
Staff Liaisons: Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances
Jeff Myers, Academic and Membership Affairs
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Championships Committee October 15, 2024, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Renee Bostic, State University of New York at New Paltz.	
Tim Demant, Whitworth University.	
Maureen Harty, College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin.	
Shannon Howley, Montclair State University	
Duey Naatz, University of Wisconsin-Stout.	
Sara Shoffner, Huntington College.	
Karen Tessmer, Worcester State University.	
Leonard Trevino, Chatham University.	
Jason Verdugo, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire.	
Absentees:	
Jason Doviak, Alfred State College.	
Chad Eisle, Hampden-Sydney College.	
Adaobi Nebuwa, Colby College.	
Guests in Attendance:	

None.
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:
Jeff Myers, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Elise Boulton, Margaret Gaines-Hornberger, Louise McCleary, Bill Regan and Demetria Young.