



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2022, MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **Convention Proposal --NCAA Bylaw 20.11.3.8 – Minimum Contests and Participants Requirements for Sports Sponsorship – Tennis.**
 - a. Recommendation. That Bylaw 20.11.3.8 be amended to change the minimum number of participants required in tennis from six to four.
 - b. Effective date. 1, 2024.
 - c. Rationale. A tennis match can be won with only four participants competing (two doubles teams who also compete as four singles players). During COVID the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) put in place a temporary minimum requirement that adjusted the required number of players down to only four to accommodate teams that were short on players due to circumstances outside of their control. In August 2022 the ITA officially adopted the minimum of four as a permanent change to its playing rules. Tennis is one of the NCAA championships that operates under the national governing body’s playing rules as opposed to an NCAA rules book. The tennis committees belief that aligning the legislation with the playing rules would be advantageous and reduce confusion.
 - d. Estimated budget impact. None.
 - e. Student-athlete impact. Amending the legislation to match the playing rules would positively impact the student-athletes as it would allow a team to still compete even if it has only four available student-athletes for any number of reasons (e.g., class schedule, sickness, injury).
- **Administrative Regulation -- NCAA Bylaw 31.3.4.2.1 – Primary Criteria – Ranking and Selection (All Contests Leading up to NCAA Championships).**
 - a. Recommendation. That Bylaw 31.3.4.2.1 be amended for rowing only to no longer include winning percentage but instead focus solely on head-to-head results and results versus common opponents.
 - b. Effective date. August 1,2023.
 - c. Rationale. Rowing is unique in how it selects teams to the championship and winning percentage can be misleading and provide an inaccurate view of a team’s success which can potentially impact the selection process in a way that is not intended. Accordingly, focusing solely on head-to-head results and results versus common

National Collegiate Athletic Association

Supporting student-athlete success on the field, in the classroom and for life

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

opponents provides a more reliable evaluation metric for selection purposes. The negative impact of considering winning percentage came to light as rowing has transitioned to using the online score reporting system to review results. Previously, the rowing committee had to rely on a separate system to analyze results. Through this change it became aware that winning percentage is not an accurate representation of each boat's performance.

- d. Estimated budget impact. None.
- e. Student-athlete impact. This change in selection criteria would allow for student-athletes to be considered for championship selection based on a more accurate depiction of their achievements during the season.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** Division III Championships Committee Chair Chuck Mitrano welcomed the group, previewed key agenda items and noted the schedule for presenters during the meeting.
2. **Recent Championships Committee reports.** The committee approved the report from its August 16 videoconference as presented.
3. **Review of meeting with sport committee chairs.** The committee reviewed results from the discussions with sport committee chairs held prior to the Championships Committee's meeting. The committee noted the benefits from the round-table discussions that centered on: 1) championship experience and minimum hosting expectations, 2) selection criteria, and 3) regional rankings. Feedback from those interactions will help inform several topics slated for the committee to discuss later in their agenda.
4. **Playing rules and officiating update.** The committee reviewed reports from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel.
5. **Championships topics.**
 - a. **Bench size, travel party and squad size increase guidelines.** The committee reviewed the current numbers by sport in all three of these categories and noted the collaboration with sport committees over the past several months to establish bench limits that best accommodate each sport. The committee also discussed potential guidelines that can be used when sport committees request an increase to bench size, squad size or travel party to determine if an increase in any of these areas is merited. The committee ultimately determined that the bench size, squad size and travel party numbers are currently sufficient, with the exception of the pending request for men's basketball, and will commit to reviewing

the numbers and considering increases with every other budget cycle. The next review will occur in FY27.

The committee did act on the tabled request from the Division III Men's Basketball Committee to increase its bench size from 18 to 20. The committee approved the request and applied the same increase to the women's basketball bench size. The squad size and travel party size are not impacted.

- b. Regional rankings.** The committee continued discussing issues related to how regional advisory committees conduct their regional rankings, noting concerns from some sport committees. The concern relates to the high with the large number of teams ranked this past year with the new 10-region model and how it negatively impacted championship selection criteria. Sport committees currently rank 20 percent of teams in each region. However, the larger pool of ranked teams can dilute the value of being ranked and can compromise sport committees' ability to consider the real value of the "results versus ranked teams" selection criterion. This topic was discussed at length during the session with sport committee chairs as well, which helped inform the Championships Committee's decision to establish a maximum of seven teams ranked in any region; if a region is currently ranking fewer than seven it will continue with its current practice.
- c. Championship mileage radius.** Last year, the committee increased the 500-mile radius for flights to 600 miles to mitigate the pandemic's impact on the airline industry (e.g., limited flights and increased cancellations). It discussed if the current 600-mile radius for flights should be retained for the 2022-23 championships but agreed to revert back to the 500-mile radius.
- d. Replacement policies.** The committee revisited the topic of its policies for replacing teams and individuals that are unable to participate in the championship after selections announcement. The committee reviewed its policies that had been in place during the pandemic and believe that these policies, which were developed to address situations over the past two years due to COVID-19 are applicable to other circumstances as well and are consistent across all sports. Accordingly, the Division III Championships Committee agreed to adopt the policies as noted in the Attachment. These policies essentially mimic what was implemented for COVID reasons but would cover other potential scenarios in which a team or individual cannot compete.
- e. Championships bracket/field size decrease.** The committee discussed potential instances in which a drop in a given sport's sponsorship numbers could cause the field size to decrease based on the access ratio. Committee members agreed to manage these situations, should they arise, by establishing a two-year grace period (similar to what conferences are afforded with automatic qualification) to give sport sponsorship time to recover before taking any action to reduce championship opportunities.
- f. Selection criteria.** The committee discussed whether the current criteria should be modified based on the discussions with sport committee chairs. The committee noted that because selection criteria are legislated and are a significant issue for the membership that any

modifications should go through the governance process and be voted on by the membership, which would mean that the earliest that changes could be proposed would be for the 2024 Convention, as the legislative window for the 2023 Convention has closed. The committee also noted that it is waiting to see initial data on the PairWise pilot to be able to have a more full conversation on selection criteria. The committee did note that its earlier recommendation to the selection criteria is consistent with this position since rowing is unique in its selection process and playing format.

6. Championships experience.

- a. Hosting expectations.** The committee revisited discussions regarding the consistency in the experience at preliminary-round sites, noting that the membership is increasingly concerned that all student-athletes are afforded the same positive and memorable championship experience in all rounds of their participation. Staff noted that this issue has become a point of emphasis in light of the gender equity review, as well as because of issues that arose during the pandemic. The staff noted that an internal group has been formed to help ensure consistency in expectations from hosts across sports and methods by which to hold hosts accountable for meeting those expectations. Staff will update the committee on the results of this review at a future meeting.
- b. Congratulatory card at preliminary-round sites.** Among recommendations resulting from the initial work to address the student-athlete experience at preliminary-round sites is to provide a printed card congratulating each student-athlete on their advancement to the championship. This was implemented and well-received at the 2022 Division I Women's Basketball Championship and is being considered for all sports going forward. The Championships Committee supported the cards being provided at all Division III championships.

7. 2023 Convention proposals. Per a request from the Division III Management Council, the Championships Committee considered the following membership-sponsored proposals for the 2023 NCAA Convention that are relevant to the committee and provided the following:

a. Playing and Practice Seasons – General Playing Season – Defining Playing and Practice Season Non-Consecutive Days.

The committee raised several potential areas for concern with the proposal including the potential negative impact facilities and staff to support the model; however, it also understands that resources are unique to each institution across the membership and would need to be scaled accordingly. The committee also had concerns about the potential for teams to operate on a year-round basis and the added stress it could cause student-athletes.

Conversely, the committee also realizes that additional touch-points with student-athletes could be an added benefit for their overall experience, adjustment to campus life and retention. Ultimately, the committee felt that the proposal provided flexibility to allow each institution and conference to establish guidelines addressing any specific concerns it might

have with this playing and practice season model and that it could be implemented uniquely to fit individual institutional needs.

b. Playing and Practice Seasons – Fall Preseason Practice Formula – Sports Other Than Football – Preseason Acclimatization for Fall Sports.

The committee noted that this is permissive and not required; however, institutions may feel pressure to adjust what it is doing based on how other institutions choose to operate. It also noted that each sport has its own unique challenges and demands and that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be the best. The committee believes that a sport-by-sport approach to preseason acclimatization that would allow for each sport to account for its unique nuances is more appropriate.

8. Sport committee reports.

a. Baseball.

- **Automatic qualification.** The Championships Committee approved the following 41 conferences to receive automatic qualification into the 2023 NCAA Division III Baseball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Atlantic East Conference; Centennial Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Midwest Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Collegiate Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; United East; USA South Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

- b. Men's golf.** The committee received the report from the Men's Golf Committee's June 13-14 annual meeting as information only.

c. Women's golf.

- 1) **Automatic qualification.** The Championships Committee approved the following 24 conferences to receive automatic qualification into the 2023 NCAA Division III Women's Golf Championships: American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Centennial Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Heartland

Collegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northeast Women's Golf Conference, Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; USA South Athletic Conference and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

- 2) **Regular-season competition format.** The Championships Committee approved the sport committee's request to consider the six-count-five and six-count-four formats as allowable options for purposes of rankings and selections. The Championships Committee noted that the two formats are currently allowed in all three divisions of men's golf and that the Divisions I and II Women's Golf Committees are advocating the use of both formats as well.

d. **Men's ice hockey.**

- **Bracket expansion request.** The Championships Committee did not support, at this time, the sport committee's request to expand the bracket from 12 teams to 13, effective for the 2023 championship. The sport committee acknowledged that the request falls outside of the current budget cycle and that the increase in sport sponsorship to qualify for expansion is not anticipated until this coming year. Accordingly, the Championships Committee agreed that the request would be better considered as part of the next budget cycle (the committee will consider budget requests from sport committees initially during its February 2023 meeting).

e. **Women's ice hockey.**

- **Elimination of the third-place game.** The Championships Committee approved the sport committee's request to eliminate the third-place game at the finals site, effective immediately. The committee agreed with the sport committee's recommendation to reallocate the costs associated with conducting the third-place game to support other championship enhancements.

f. **Men's lacrosse.**

- 1) **Automatic qualification.** The Championships Committee approved the following 28 conferences to receive automatic qualification into the 2023 NCAA Division III Men's Lacrosse Championship: Atlantic East Conference; Centennial Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Men's Lacrosse Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Midwest Lacrosse Conference;

New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; State University of New York Athletic Conference; United East Conference; and USA South Athletic Conference.

- 2) Regional realignment.** The Championships Committee approved the sport committee's request to move the following conferences to a different region for the 2023-24 season: North Atlantic Conference from Region I to Region II; Heartland Collegiate Men's Lacrosse Conference and North Coast Athletic Conference from Region IV to Region V; and Southern Athletic Association from Region V to Region IV. The adjustment evens out the number of teams in each region (current regions have 37 to 58 teams, and the adjustment would make the range 47 to 55 teams).

g. Women's lacrosse.

- 1) Automatic qualification.** The Championships Committee approved the following 32 conferences to receive automatic qualification into the 2023 NCAA Division III Women's Lacrosse Championship: Atlantic East Conference; Centennial Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Women's Lacrosse Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Midwest Women's Lacrosse Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; United East Conference; and USA South Athletic Conference.
- 2) 2025 and 2026 joint championships update.** The committee received an update on the joint championship with Divisions I and II in 2025 and 2026. The joint championship opportunity continues to be discussed among the sport committees and staff and the committee will receive updates throughout the planning process.

h. Softball.

- **Automatic qualification.** The Championships Committee approved the following 43 conferences for automatic qualification into the 2023 NCAA Division III Softball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference, American Rivers Conference, American Southwest Conference, Atlantic East Conference, Centennial Conference, City University of New York Athletic Conference, Coast-Coast-Conference, College Conference

- of Illinois and Wisconsin, Colonial States Athletic Conference, Commonwealth Coast Conference, Empire 8, Great Northeast Athletic Conference, Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference, Landmark Conference, Liberty League, Little East Conference, Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Association, Middle Atlantic Conference – Commonwealth, Middle Atlantic Conference – Freedom, Midwest Conference, Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, New England Collegiate Conference, New England Small College Athletic Conference, New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference, New Jersey Athletic Conference, North Atlantic Conference, North Coast Athletic Conference, Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference, Northwest Conference, Ohio Athletic Conference, Old Dominion Athletic Conference, Presidents’ Athletic Conference, Skyline Conference, Southern Athletic Association, Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference, St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, State University of New York Athletic Conference, United East Conference, Upper Midwest Athletic Conference, USA South Athletic Conference, Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.
- i. Men’s and women’s swimming and diving.** The committee received the report from the Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving Committee’s June 7-8 annual meeting as information only, noting that the sport committee continues to evaluate expanding the men’s cap and is conducting a more comprehensive examination of the equity between the men and women. The sport committee took no action during its meeting but will continue considering a proposal for increasing the men’s cap this year in anticipation of implementing the increase in 2023-24.
- j. Men’s and women’s tennis.**
- 1) Automatic qualification (men).** The Championships Committee approved the following 35 conferences for automatic qualification into the 2023 Division III Men’s Tennis Championships: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Centennial Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin; The Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference, Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Midwest Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents’ Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Inter. Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; United East Conference; University Athletic Association; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; USA South Athletic Conference.
- 2) Automatic qualification (women).** The Championships Committee approved the following 39 conferences for automatic qualification into the 2023 Division III Women’s

Tennis Championships: Coast to Coast Athletic Conference; Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Southwest Conference; American Rivers Conference; Atlantic East Athletic Conference; Centennial Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Midwest Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletics Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Inter. Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; University Athletic Association; Upper Midwest Conference; USA South Athletic Conference; Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

3) Selection criteria. The Championships Committee considered but did not support the tennis committees' proposal to change the current criterion of "win-loss percentage vs. last 50% of the season" to "performance vs. last 50% of the season." Championships Committee members believe the concept of "performance" is too open to interpretation and not appropriate as a definitive selection criterion.

4) Day of rest implementation. The Championships Committee supported the tennis committees' request to implement the day of rest between the team quarterfinals and semifinals rather than between the semifinals and final. The tennis committees proposed this for the 2023 championship only because of the unique format associated with conducting a joint outdoor championship with Divisions I and II. The committee further noted that those two divisions are implementing their day of rest between the team quarterfinals and semifinals and the as well. This adjustment will provide relief in the schedule and eliminate several back-to-back days of eight or more matches and provide more flexibility should inclement weather be a factor. The committee further noted that is exception only applies to this unique situation and any further request may not be approved.

k. Men's and women's cross country and track and field. The Championships Committee received the report from the sport committee's June 14-16 annual meeting as information only, noting that the action item requesting to increase the field size for the men's outdoor track and field championships from 20 participants per event to 22 was previously approved by the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and the Division III Management Council.

l. Men's volleyball.

1) Automatic qualification. The Championships Committee approved the following 12 conferences for automatic qualification into the 2023 Division III Men's Volleyball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference, City University of New York Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Continental Volleyball Conference; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Middle Atlantic Conferences; Midwest Collegiate Volleyball League; New England Collegiate Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Skyline Conference; and United Volleyball Conference.

2) Regional realignment. The Championships Committee supported the sport committee's request to expand the regional composition for men's volleyball from three regions to four but amended the effective date to be implemented for the 2023-24 season. The Championships Committee was supported the merits of the proposal but was concerned with the timing, as it would disrupt scheduling already in place for the coming season.

m. Wrestling.

- **Regional sites.** The Championships Committee approved the sport committee's request to conduct the 2023 Upper Midwest Regional at Concordia University-Wisconsin at R. John Buck Fieldhouse.

9. Updated sport committee liaison chart. The committee reviewed sport committee liaison assignments for the coming year.

10. 2021-22 Division III streaming metrics. Staff provided the committee with a summary of metrics for the 2021-22 championships.

11. Future meeting/videoconference dates.

- October 25, 11 a.m.-noon (monthly videoconference).
- November 15, 11 a.m.-noon (monthly videoconference).
- December 13, 11 a.m.-noon (monthly videoconference).
- February 6-7, 2023 (in-person meeting, Indianapolis).
- June 12-13, 2023 (meeting via videoconference).
- September 11-12, 2023 (in-person meeting, Indianapolis).

12. Other business.

- **Men's and women's soccer championship format.** The Championships Committee approved a change to the Division III Men's and Women's Soccer Championships to permit the that championship be contested in a split schedule with one gender playing on Thursday and Saturday and the second gender playing on Friday and Sunday. In this new format the gender competing first (Thursday and Friday) will rotate annually. The committees would also be flexible and in an instance where an institution that does not compete on Sunday advances to the final site the impacted championship with automatically be slotted in the Thursday/Saturday option.

Committee Chair: Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8

Staff Liaisons: Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances

J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances

Julie Zike, Academic and Membership Affairs

| Division III Championships Committee September 12-13, 2022, Meeting | |
|---|--|
| Attendees: | |
| Robin Baker, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. | |
| Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8. | |
| Michelle Morgan, John Carroll University. | |
| John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University. | |
| KryJuan Roberson, Keystone College. | |
| Holly Sheilley, Transylvania University. | |
| Karen Tessmer, Worcester State University. | |
| Leonard Trevino, Chatham University. | |
| Jason Verdugo, Hamline University. | |
| Absentees: | |
| None. | |
| Guests in Attendance: | |
| None. | |
| NCAA Staff Support in Attendance: | |
| Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances. | |
| J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances. | |
| Julie Zike, Academic and Membership Affairs. | |
| Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance: | |
| Kevin Alcox, Ashley Caldwell, Lindsey Eldred, Nate Flannery, Will Hopkins, Aaron King, Caleb Kolby, Victoria Lipscomb, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, Nancy O'Hara, Rachel Seewald and Jonathan Youngblood. | |