



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2020, MEETING**

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

• **Noncontroversial Legislation – NCAA Bylaw 21.9.6.2 and Figure 21.1 – Committee Membership.**

- a. Recommendation. Adopt noncontroversial legislation to amend Figure 21.1 as incorporated by Bylaw 21.9.6.2 as illustrated below to increase the composition of the NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Tennis Committees from four to eight members to coincide with the new regional alignment recommended in Action Item 2-b.

Committee	Number of Members (current)	Number of Members (proposed)
Tennis, Men's	4, including one member from each region.	8, including one member from each region.
Tennis, Women's	4, including one member from each region.	8, including one member from each region.

- b. Effective date. September 1, 2021.
- c. Rationale. The recommendation coincides with expanding the number of regions in men's and women's tennis from four to eight per the regional realignment project recently approved. Accordingly, expanding the committee from four to eight members means that the national committee should be composed so that each region has its own representative.
- d. Estimated budget impact. Budget allocations resulting from the regional realignment project were previously approved by the Division III Management and Presidents Councils.
- e. Student-athlete impact. None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

**a. Minimum contest requirements for winter sport championship selection.**

National Collegiate Athletic Association

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

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

- (1) Recommendation. Reduce minimum contest requirements for championship selection to 50 percent in all winter sports for the 2020-21 academic year.
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. As it did this summer when planning for fall sports, the Championships Committee discussed potential blanket relief in the area of minimum contest requirements for championship selection purposes, this time for winter sports. Given that many institutions and conferences have already declared they will not initiate winter sports until mid- to late January – and given the likelihood that the playing and practice seasons for winter sports will not be significantly expanded – the committee believes it is appropriate to afford maximum flexibility for institutions to manage the scheduling challenges they are likely to face and still be eligible for championship selection. (As an example, reducing the minimum contest requirements accommodates most conferences that have announced they will play a conference-only schedule.)

The reduced minimum contest requirements are:

- Basketball: 9
- Ice hockey: 9
- Swimming and diving: 4
- Indoor track and field: 2
- Wrestling: 3

For the individual sports – indoor track and field, swimming and diving, and wrestling – the minimum contests must be achieved for a school to register a team score at the championships; individual student-athletes can qualify based on a single performance.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Reducing minimum contest requirements for championship selections helps preserve championship opportunities for student-athletes.

**b. Regional alignment in men's and women's tennis.**

- (1) Recommendation. Expand the number of regions as they apply to the team portion of the men's and women's tennis championships from four to eight.
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2021.

- (3) Rationale. The Division III Men's and Women's Tennis Committees recently finalized their recommendations to accommodate the regional realignment initiative undertaken by the Division III Commissioners Association. The recommendation follows the principles the commissioners emphasized in their proposal and expanding from four to eight regions more appropriately aligns regional sponsorship numbers in tennis with most other team sports that have made adjustments along the way. This recommendation applies only to the team portion of the tennis championships, since due to the unique nature of how individuals are selected by region for the singles and doubles portion of the championships, the tennis committees believe it is best at this time to leave the regions unchanged for the purposes of ranking and selecting individuals.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

- 1. Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** Division III Championships Committee Chair Kiki Jacobs welcomed committee members and reviewed the meeting schedule and key discussion items.
- 2. Recent committee reports.** The committee reviewed and approved its September 8 videoconference report as presented.
- 3. Championships Equity Action Team update.** Staff noted initiatives from the newly formed Championships Equity Action Team created to emphasize the value of the student-athlete voice at all NCAA championship sites and raise awareness for social justice, racial equity and inclusion.
- 4. Recap of meeting with sport committee chairs.** Committee members discussed key takeaways from the meeting with sport committee chairs conducted earlier in the day.
- 5. Championship budget discussions.** The committee discussed at length the need to mitigate expenses this year considering the projected budget shortfall. Committee members revisited cost-savings options they considered previously, such as reducing per diem, reducing travel parties and eliminating host honorariums, among others, but it quickly became clear that more drastic measures would be necessary to balance the budget. Accordingly, the committee reviewed several bracket- and field-reduction scenarios and settled on capping brackets (field sizes for individual-team sports) at 75 percent and accommodate all automatic qualifiers based on the following:

- **Fiscal responsibility.** While a recommendation to reduce brackets is difficult under any circumstances, the committee believes the 75-percent threshold is fiscally sound while still affording a meaningful championship experience for as many student-athletes as possible.
- **Protecting access.** Knowing that reduced brackets would alter the current balance among Pools A, B and C, the committee identified protecting access for the automatic-qualifying conferences as its top priority, as automatic qualification is an earned right the Division III membership covets. The following charts demonstrate how the 75-percent threshold accommodates the maximum number of automatic qualifiers in almost every team sport.

WINTER SPORTS				
Sport	2019-20 Sponsorship	Bracket size	Bracket size @ 75 %	AQs
Men's Basketball	416	64	48	44
Women's Basketball	430	64	48	44
Men's Ice Hockey	84	12	9	8
Women's Ice Hockey	67	10	8	7

SPRING SPORTS				
Sport	2019-20 Sponsorship	Bracket size	Bracket size @ 75 %	AQs
Baseball	383	60	44	40
Men's Golf	309	43	32	31
Women's Golf	218	29	22	22
Men's Lacrosse	244	36	28	27
Women's Lacrosse	298	44	34	34
Women's Rowing	44	8	6	4
Softball	408	62	47	42
Men's swimming and diving	238	260	195	--
Women's swimming and diving	265	319	239	--
Men's Tennis	328	44	34	34
Women's Tennis	365	49	37	39
Men's Indoor Track and Field	291	396 max	297 max	--
Women's Indoor Track and Field	297	396 max	297 max	--
Men's Outdoor Track and Field	322	508 max	381 max	--
Women's Outdoor Track and Field	332	546 max	400 max	--

Men's Volleyball	107	16	12	10
Wrestling	109	180	135	--

Women's tennis is the only sport in which the AQs exceed the 75-percent threshold. However, it is by only two, which is why the committee felt comfortable structuring the recommendation to include the maximum automatic-qualification allocations in a given sport.

Protecting AQ access is further validated in that it aligns with the conference-centric scheduling the committee identified previously as a priority when discussing playing and practice seasons and minimum contest requirements this year, and because it aligns with the Division III philosophy that emphasizes conference and regional competition as a core tenet.

- **Sport committee input.** Regarding the sports for which an AQ-only field results in a bracket that is below the 75-percent threshold, the Championships Committee is asking those sport committees to recommend how best to manage such instances (i.e., whether to keep the bracket at the AQ-only level or recommend ways to fill the remaining spots). The Championships Committee is also asking sport committees to determine whether the bracket reductions can accommodate moving selections a week later, since the championship would potentially take fewer weeks to conduct.

The Championships Committee will deliberate these issues during its September 29 videoconference and submit final recommendations to the Division III Management Council by the Council's October meeting.

6. **Winter sport championship updates.** The committee reviewed results from a survey the Division III Commissioners Association conducted to obtain membership feedback regarding the timing for winter sport championships. While the results were informative, the committee acknowledged that the delays in the playing and practice seasons many in the membership desire are not logistically or financially feasible under the extreme circumstances.
7. **Minimum contest requirements for championship eligibility.** Given the recent recommendation from the Division III Membership Committee to approve a one-year waiver to eliminate the minimum number of contests and participants required for sports sponsorship for fall and winter championship sports, the Championships Committee also considered reductions in contest minimums for championship selection purposes in winter sports to provide institutions as much scheduling flexibility as possible (see Action Item 2-a).
8. **Sport committee reports.**
  - a. **Men's golf.**

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 31 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Men's Golf Championships: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest 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; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; North Eastern 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; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; and USA South Athletic Conference.
- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Jim Ott, head men's golf coach at Illinois Wesleyan University, serve as chair of the Division III Men's Golf Committee.

**b. Women's golf.**

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 21 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 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; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

*[Note: The recommendation from the Women's Golf Committee did not include the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, whose request for an AQ waiver was pending at the time the committee met. The Championships Committee subsequently approved the SLIAC's request (see Informational Item 11-b).]*

- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Mary Giorgi, head women's golf coach at St. Catherine University, serve as chair of the Division III Women's Golf Committee.

**c. Men's and women's golf.**

- **Allowable format for tournament pairings.** The committee approved allowing student-athletes from the same institution to be paired as a fivesome during countable competition throughout regular-season play for 2020-21, at the discretion of tournament hosts, in order to reduce the number of potential touchpoints and contacts among participating institutions and mitigate concerns related to COVID-19.

*(Note: The committee approved this recommendation for 2020-21 only, noting that the golf committees will review whether the format should be available in subsequent years.)*

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

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following eight conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship: Commonwealth Coast Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Hockey Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; Northern Collegiate Hockey Association; State University of New York Athletic Conference; and United Collegiate Hockey Conference.
- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Craig Russell, head men's ice hockey coach at Plymouth State University, serve as chair of the Division III Men's Ice Hockey Committee.

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

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee tabled the Women's Ice Hockey Committee's recommendation to approve conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Women's Ice Hockey Championship until one of the conferences being recommended completes the waiver process for its members transitioning from a single-sport conference to a multi-sport conference.
- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Jackie MacMillan, head women's ice hockey coach at The College of St. Scholastica, serve as chair of the Division III Women's Ice Hockey Committee.

**f. Men's and women's ice hockey.**

- (1) **Pilot program with PairWise.** The committee agreed to allow the Division III Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Committees to extend the initial two-year pilot to use the

PairWise selection system to rank and select teams for an additional two years in part because of positive feedback from the first year of the pilot and also because the second year of the pilot was affected by the cancellation of the championships due to COVID-19.

- (2) **Adjusted RPI calculation for overtime games.** The committee approved adjusting the RPI weighting within the PairWise formula to 67% for a win and 33% for a loss in games decided in overtime to accommodate a playing rules change for overtime formats.

**g. Men's lacrosse.**

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 27 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Men's Lacrosse Championship: Atlantic East Conference; Capital Athletic Conference; Centennial Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic 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; and USA South Athletic Conference.
- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Gene Peluso, head men's lacrosse coach at Stevens Institute of Technology, serve as chair of the Division III Men's Lacrosse Committee.

**h. Softball.**

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 42 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Softball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Capital 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; 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; North Eastern Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; USA South Athletic Conference; and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Renee Hellert, associate director of athletics and senior woman administrator at Moravian College, serve as chair of the NCAA Division III Softball Committee.

**i. Men's and women's tennis.**

- (1) **Realignment.** The committee approved expanding the number of regions in tennis from four to eight (see Action Items 1 and 2-b).

- (2) **Automatic qualification for men's tennis.** The committee approved the following 35 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Men's Tennis Championships: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Capital Athletic 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 Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic 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 Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Conference; University Athletic Association; and USA South Athletic Conference.

- (3) **Automatic qualification for women's tennis.** The committee approved the following 39 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Women's

Tennis Championships: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Southwest Conference; American Rivers Conference; Capital Athletic Conference; Centennial Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Great South 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 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; State University of New York Athletic Conference; The Commonwealth Coast Conference; University Athletic Association; Upper Midwest Conference; USA South Athletic Conference; and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

**j. Men's and women's track and field and cross country.**

- **Regional realignment and selection process modification in cross country.** The committee reviewed several recommendations from the Division III Men's and Women's Track and Field and Cross Country Committee that are a result of a new regional realignment model that would increase the number of regions in cross country from eight to 10. The recommendations include the need to expand the sport committee from eight to 10 members, realign the cross country regions to more evenly distribute the membership across the regions, and modify the championship selection process to equitably represent the 10 regions (which would also increase the field size by 14 individuals per gender). The Championships Committee supported the sport committee's recommendations but because of the budget ramifications was reluctant to forward them for approval at a time during which the Division III championships budget is facing more immediate challenges. Accordingly, the Championships Committee agreed to table these recommendations for the remainder of the 2020-21 academic year.

*[Note: Part of why the committee tabled the realignment for cross country and not for tennis (see Action Items 1 and 2-b) is that expanding regions in cross country comes with a significant budget impact because each region conducts regional competition to determine championship participants. The committee's action to table is not meant to infer that one sport's recommendation is stronger than the others; rather, this is strictly a budgetary issue.]*

**9. Championships and Alliances update.** Senior Executive Vice President Joni Comstock updated the committee on several championship matters, including staffing and other logistics to factor into the process for finalizing winter sport championship dates.

**10. Playing Rules Oversight Panel.** The committee reviewed reports from recent PROP meetings, noting the adjustments this year to accommodate social justice messaging on uniforms.

**11. Academic and membership affairs updates.**

**a. CUNY waiver request.** The committee considered a request from the City of New York Athletic Conference to extend the AQ grace period through the 2021-22 academic year. Specifically, the CUNY stated that due to the reclassification of The College of Staten Island to Division, the sports of women's soccer, softball, and men's and women's tennis fell below the required seven sponsoring institutions. The CUNY stated as result of cancellation of 2020 sports seasons, and uncertainty moving forward, they are unable to secure another conference member. The committee considered all relevant mitigation, and while sympathetic to surrounding circumstances, were not compelled to approve an additional year of grace. Further, the committee stated the CUNY would have the opportunity to resubmit the request prior to the 2021-22 academic year, if additional mitigation exists.

**b. SLIAC women's golf appeal.** The committee supported a request from the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference to count the 2019-20 academic year as year-two of the waiting period required prior to receiving an AQ in women's golf. Specifically, prior to the SLIAC had the opportunity to meet sport sponsorship requirements during the 2019-20 academic year in the sport of women's golf. However, due to COVID-19, two core member institutions were deprived of the opportunity to satisfy sport sponsorship requirements during the 2020 spring semester due to cancellation of the season. The committee supported the request noting the conference was not given a fair opportunity to meet sport sponsorship requirements due to extraordinary circumstances (COVID-19) and believed approving the waiver was appropriate, in this case.

**12. Committee recusal policies.** The committee at its June meeting tabled a request to re-evaluate the policy for national committee member recusal when their team is under consideration for selection and during bracketing but was unable to address the matter at this meeting due to time constraints. The committee will revisit the issue at a subsequent meeting.

**13. Automatic qualifier deadlines.** Due to time constraints, the committee was unable to discuss whether the legislated deadline for conferences to submit their automatic qualifier in select sports should be altered. The committee will review the matter at a subsequent meeting.

**14. Future videoconference/meetings dates.**

**a.** September 29, 2020 (videoconference).

- b. October 6, 2020 (videoconference to review site selections for 2022-2026).
- c. October 13, 2020 (videoconference).
- d. November 17, 2020 (videoconference).
- e. December 15, 2020 (videoconference).
- f. February 2-3, 2021 (quarterly meeting; via videoconference).
- g. June 21-22, 2021 (quarterly meeting; tentatively in-person; Indianapolis).

*Committee Chair:* Kiki Jacobs, Roger Williams University  
*Staff Liaisons:* Liz Turner Suscha, Championships and Alliances  
 Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances  
 Julie Sargent, Academic and Membership Affairs

Division III Championships Committee September 14-15, 2020, Videoconference	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Robin Baker, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.	
Heather Benning, Midwest Conference.	
Jason Fein, Bates College.	
Kiki Jacobs, Roger Williams University.	
Brady Keller, Nebraska Wesleyan University.	
Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8.	
Michelle Morgan, John Carroll University.	
John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University.	
Penny Siqueiros, Wesleyan College (Georgia).	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.	
Julie Sargent, Academic and Membership Affairs.	
Liz Turner Suscha, Championships and Alliances.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Zach Christopher, Joni Comstock, Dan Dutcher, Jan Gentry, Greg Johnson, Micaela Liddane, Aaron King, Laura Klee, John Kuzio, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, Nancy O'Hara, Chris Termini and Demetria Woodard.	