



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2020, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

**a. Bracket/field sizes for winter and spring sport championships.**

- (1) Recommendation. That brackets and field sizes for all 2021 winter and spring sport championships be maximized at 75 percent, understanding that downward adjustments may be necessary later based on the number of eligible institutions as the championship approaches.
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. The Championships Committee reaffirmed its previous recommendation that bracket/field sizes for winter and spring sport championships not exceed 75 percent of the original (or the maximum automatic-qualification allocations in a given sport). That recommendation was based in part on the fact that the 75-percent threshold helps contain costs and also maintains access for all automatic-qualifying conferences in team sports. After gathering feedback from sport committees about whether to maintain an AQ-only field or to fill out the remaining spots, the Championships Committee agreed that philosophically, the intent should be to maximize the brackets to mitigate the impact of reduction as much as possible. The committee believes making this statement is the first step before finalizing how the remaining spots would be filled. While sport committees have begun discussions in this regard, the Championships Committee acknowledges that determining how to fill the brackets may change depending upon membership participation decisions in the coming weeks and months. Accordingly, the committee believes it is prudent to continue collaborating with sport committees on those discussions but hold final decisions until later.

As for the individual/team sports, the committee acknowledges that the 75-percent threshold does not always produce a conveniently manageable field size. Particularly in wrestling, the 75-percent threshold results in a field size of 135, which is awkwardly between 13 and 14 wrestlers per the 10 weight classes. The Championships Committee believes for the sake of consistency it is neither prudent

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to exceed the 75-percent threshold (increase to 140 per the wrestling committee's request) nor reduce the field even further (i.e., to 130 wrestlers) to ease management of the bracket. Rather, the committee believes that, while challenging, it is better for the wrestling committee to manage how the five spots would be allocated among the 10 weight classes.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None beyond the impact from establishing the 75-percent threshold.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Maximizing the 75-percent threshold fulfills as many championship opportunities as possible within the known financial constraints and does not compromise the automatic-qualification privileges conferences have earned.

**b. Selection dates for winter sport championships.**

- (1) Recommendation. That selections for the 2021 winter sport championships be conducted on the following dates:

Men's Basketball – Sunday, March 7 (AQ deadline: March 6)  
Women's Basketball – Sunday, March 7 (AQ deadline: March 6)  
Men's Ice Hockey – Sunday, March 14 (AQ deadline: March 14)  
Women's Ice Hockey – Sunday, March 14 (AQ deadline: March 14)  
Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving – Wednesday, March 10  
Men's and Women's Indoor Track and Field – Sunday, March 7  
Wrestling – Tuesday, March 2

- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. The recommendation to reduce bracket/field sizes for winter sport championships means that in some cases the championship will require fewer weeks to conduct. Sport committees were asked whether the selection dates could be delayed in order to provide institutions and conferences an additional week to compete during what already figures to be a compressed regular season in order to meet the recently reduced minimum contest requirements. The four team sports (men's and women's basketball and men's and women's ice hockey) were able to move their selections back up to one week, while swimming and diving moved its date back two weeks. Indoor track and field and wrestling opted to retain their original selection dates.

In-person diving regionals will be replaced with a video submission selection process to alleviate the challenge of preparing regional sites, give institutions some budget relief, as they otherwise pick up the costs for participating in the diving

regionals, and allow for the change to the selections date. While in-person regionals are the preferred method by which to determine advancement to the championship meet, video review was used for several years prior to the establishment of regionals and is considered an adequate selection method.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Moving selections back in some sports provides more regular-season opportunities for student-athletes and allows teams more time to meet minimum contest requirements for championship selection purposes.

### **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 reports from its September 14-15 quarterly meeting and the September 14 session with sport committee chairs as presented.
- 3. Championship budget discussions.** During its quarterly meeting in September, the Championships Committee recommended that the bracket/field size for winter and spring sport championships in 2020-21 not exceed 75 percent of the original (or the maximum automatic-qualification allocations in a given sport) and asked sport committees for feedback on how best to manage brackets in which an AQ-only field results in a bracket that is below the 75-percent threshold in order to submit final recommendations to the Division III Management Council in October. The Championships Committee also asked 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.
  - a. Bracket/field size.** The committee reaffirmed its recommendation to reduce bracket/field size to 75 percent and agreed that philosophically, the intent should be to maximize the brackets/field sizes to the 75-percent capacity (see Action Item 2-a). The committee will continue working with sport committees to determine the best way of filling spots not already filled by automatic-qualifying conferences.
  - b. Selection dates.** The committee also reviewed sport committee feedback on selection dates and proposed the schedule in Action Item 2-b to give institutions more time to meet the recently reduced contest minimums for championships selection purposes.

- c. **Championship formats.** The committee began discussing winter sports championship format adjustments to accommodate the need for predetermined sites and to protect participant health and safety but did not reach a conclusion on all sports at this time.
  - d. **Spring sports.** The committee spent this meeting almost entirely on winter sports but did reaffirm that its 75-percent bracket/field size threshold recommendation applies to spring sports as well.
4. **Other business.** The committee provided feedback on the recently released resocialization guidelines for basketball in order to help staff develop an FAQ resource for membership usage.
5. **Future videoconference/meetings dates.**
- a. October 6, 2020 (videoconference to review site selections for 2022-2026).
  - b. October 13, 2020 (videoconference).
  - c. November 17, 2020 (videoconference).
  - d. December 15, 2020 (videoconference).
  - e. February 2-3, 2021 (quarterly meeting; via videoconference).
  - f. June 21-22, 2021 (quarterly meeting; via videoconference).

*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 29, 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>
Julie Sargent, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Liz Turner Suscha, Championships and Alliances.
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
Greg Johnson, Louise McCleary and Demetria Woodard.