



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ATHLETICS  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, MEETING

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

**Division I Only.**

- **Legislation – NCAA Division I Bylaw 15.5.3.1.2 – Equivalency Sports – Maximum Equivalency Limits – Women's Sports – Stunt.**
  - (1) Recommendation. Introduce and adopt legislation into the January 2024 council-governance legislative cycle, in stunt, to increase the maximum equivalency limit from nine to 14.
  - (2) Effective date. Immediate.
  - (3) Rationale. The Committee on Women's Athletics reviewed a request from the women's stunt coaches association to increase the maximum equivalency limit in Division I from nine to 14. Division I adopted legislation during the 2022-23 academic year to add stunt as an emerging sport for women with an equivalency limit of nine. The women's stunt coaches association thought the limit was intended to be 14 and asked CWA to recommend an increase. After review, the CWA agreed with the recommendation. Women's stunt has large rosters with an average of 26 – 50 student-athletes. Like other sports with large rosters and higher equivalencies, women's stunt could benefit from a higher equivalency to help grow the sport and support student-athlete participation opportunities, particularly in the early stages of its emerging status. Increasing the maximum to 14 is permissive and allows institutions the opportunity to support additional equivalencies for female athletes.
  - (4) Estimated budget impact. Dependent on institutional decision-making.
  - (5) Student-athlete impact. Will vary depending on institutional decision-making.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- **None.**

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Welcome and announcements.** Committee on Women's Athletics Chair, Ragean Hill, welcomed committee members and previewed key agenda items.

2. **Approval of previous reports.** The committee approved the report from its May 12 videoconference, as presented.
3. **2024 NCAA Convention Division II Proposal No. 2024-1.** The Division II Presidents Council and Management Council referred 2024 NCAA Convention Division II Proposal No. 2024-1 (Playing and Practice Seasons – Football – Preseason Practice and First Contest – First Permissible Contest) to the committee for a position and to discuss whether it would have a gender equity impact.

The proposal specifies that, in football, a member institution shall not participate in its first contest with outside competition in the championship segment before one week prior to the Thursday preceding September 6. Sponsors note that this change would permit institutions to schedule and play the maximum allowable 11 football contests over a 12-week period.

The committee agreed to oppose the proposal noting that it would treat football differently from other fall sports, including women's sports, and could create inequities in resource allocation and acclimatization. The committee also noted that while permissive in nature, the proposal would likely result in institutions bringing their football student-athletes to campus a week earlier than under the current playing and practice seasons model and other fall sport programs, including women's sports, would not have the same opportunities.

4. **NCAA Policy on Campus Sexual Violence.** NCAA staff provided an overview of the NCAA Board of Governors Policy on Campus Sexual Violence, its six components and the deadline for schools to attest for the 2022-23 academic year. The committee discussed the policy's implementation on campus and noted the impact on institutional staffs to obtain accurate information and complete the attestation by the stated deadline, as well as complications that may arise in cases when a student-athlete transfers.
5. **Selection of the 2023 NCAA Woman of the Year.** The committee received an overview of the 2023 NCAA Woman of the Year award, which honors graduating female student-athletes who have distinguished themselves throughout their collegiate careers in the areas of academic achievement, athletics excellence, service, and leadership.

A record 619 nominations were submitted for the 2023 award. The Woman of the Year Selection Committee worked diligently to choose the Top 30 nominees (10 from each division) and then select the Top 9 nominees (three from each division) to position the committee to select the overall winner.

The committee reviewed the nominations of the nine finalists and narrowed its selection to the top three nominees before ultimately agreeing on the winner, which will be announced at the award ceremony held January 11, 2024, during the 2024 NCAA

Convention. An announcement sharing information about the Top 30 and Top 9 honorees will be released later this fall.

6. **Emerging sports updates.** The committee received updates on the progress of the six emerging sports currently in the program, including: acrobatics & tumbling; equestrian; rugby; stunt; triathlon; and women's wrestling. The committee discussed each sport and raised any relevant questions or concerns regarding their progress. The committee also addressed topics in the following sports:
  - a. **Stunt – Request to increase the Division I maximum equivalency limit.** The committee approved a request from the women's stunt coaches association to introduce and adopt into the January 2024 Division I council-governance legislative cycle, in stunt, to increase the maximum equivalency limit from nine to 14. (See Legislative Action Item.)
  - b. **Women's wrestling – potential transition to national collegiate championship sport status.** The committee noted that women's wrestling has reached the threshold of 40 sponsoring institutions to be considered for national collegiate championship sport status. As such, the committee began discussing the possible establishment of a National Collegiate Championship for women's wrestling. Committee members noted that several steps must be accomplished to make the transition, including socializing the concept among the three divisions and formalizing the budget necessary to support the championship.

The committee directed staff to gather additional information for discussion at the committee's February 2024 meeting, where it would likely recommend that the three divisions introduce and adopt legislation to add women's wrestling as a national collegiate championship during the 2024-25 legislative cycle or at the 2025 NCAA Convention. The committee acknowledged that the earliest a national collegiate championship could be staged would be in winter 2026.

7. **Trends in women's sports and interest in the emerging sports for women program.** Staff updated the committee regarding the increased interest and investment in women's sports and the numerous inquiries the national office has received about prospective emerging sports. Staff also noted increased interest and engagement from the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) in this space and its commitment to growing sports in the Olympic pipeline. Additionally, the committee discussed that the new NCAA Operating Plan emphasizes the importance of women's sport growth. The committee received brief updates on flag football, open-water swimming, table tennis, squash, and pickleball.
8. **Emerging Sports for Women Process Guide and application edits.** The committee received an update from the subcommittee appointed to review the existing process guide and the suggested edits. Staff also solicited feedback from the leadership of the current

emerging sports regarding potential changes to the guide and program. The committee reviewed a revised document that incorporates many of the suggestions to date, and members also reviewed other ideas submitted for consideration. The committee offered feedback and asked staff to continue refining the draft and looking into program improvements with the subcommittee for review to finalize at the committee's next meeting.

**9. NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee updates.**

- a. Division I.** The Division I SAAC representative updated the committee on the SAAC's efforts to meet with all Division I conferences to emphasize the need for increased communication among SAACs at the campus and conference levels to heighten awareness of issues that the national SAAC can address. It was further noted that the Division I SAAC is working within the Division I governance structure to potentially shorten the notification-of-transfer windows to be less burdensome on student-athletes. Finally, the SAAC representative shared that the SAAC also is working to develop a feedback instrument to satisfy the recommendation from the Division I Transformation Committee that Division I student-athletes be surveyed annually regarding their experience.
- b. Division II.** The Division II SAAC representative updated the committee on SAAC's engagement efforts with congress, noting a letter sent in June to select U.S. senators and representatives stating that DII SAAC encourages the continued evolution of college athletics with an emphasis on the student-athlete voice being critical in identifying their ever-changing needs. It was also noted that the Division II SAAC refined its goals for the coming year to focus on "the three E's": (1) Empower student-athletes to make the college experience their own and prepare for success in life after sport; (2) Empathize with student-athletes to protect their mental wellness and their shared values regarding diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging; and (3) Enhance the connections among SAACs at the national, conference and campus levels to increase communication and strengthen the student-athlete voice in the Division II governance and decision-making process. Finally, the SAAC representative noted that the Division II SAAC also will conduct its sixth super region convention November 17-19 in Atlanta, Georgia, for the South Region.
- c. Division III.** The Division III SAAC representative was not present to provide an update.

**10. Future meetings.** The committee will meet jointly with the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee on Tuesday, September 19, from 8:30 a.m. to noon Eastern time. The committee will also convene in February and May 2024, on dates to be determined.

**11. Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m. Eastern time.

*Committee Chair:* Ragean Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.  
*Staff Liaisons:* Maison Hubbard, Academic and Membership Affairs.  
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.  
Ashlesha Lokhande, Office of Inclusion.  
Gretchen Miron, Office of Inclusion.

NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics September 18, 2023, Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Laura Amaya, Roberts Wesleyan University (via videoconference).	
Greg Bamberger, Fairmont State University.	
Elise Byun, University of California, Berkeley (via videoconference).	
Katherine Rowe Fell, University of Findlay.	
Sharief Hasim, Susquehanna University.	
Ragean Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.	
Marybeth Lamb, Bridgewater State University.	
Katherine Loh, Florida Southern College.	
LaWanda Miller, Fayetteville State University.	
Michael Perez, California State University, Fullerton.	
Quinton Ross, Alabama State University.	
Tracy Shoemake, Texas State University.	
Steve Stoute, Canisius University.	
Sean Sullivan, Salve Regina University.	
Marion Terenzio, State University of New York at Cobleskill.	
Dawn Turner, Lander University.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
Gabby Elliott, Denison University.	
Chuck Sack, Neumann University.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Renie Shields, Saint Joseph's University, Chair of the Woman of the Year Selection Committee (via videoconference).	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:</b>	
Maison Hubbard, Ashlesha Lokhande, and Gretchen Miron.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance for Portions of the Meeting:</b>	
Gail Dent, Rachel Denton, Jessi Faulk, Chelsea Hooks, Felicia Martin, Corbin McGuire, Jean Merrill, Greg Pottorff, Stacey Preston, Stephanie Quigg, Angela Red and Amy Wilson.	