



Championships 101:

Snapshot of NCAA and Conference Championships

Brad Bankston, Commissioner
Old Dominion Athletic Conference

1




2



My Background

- Commissioner of the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) for 22 years. Sports Sponsorship of 24 (11 men, 13 women).
- Hosted over 75 NCAA Division III championships since 1993
 - Partner to the City of Salem – Municipality that has supported DIII and DII championships for 25+ years.
 - This past year we supported women's basketball and swimming and diving.
- Member of various committees in the NCAA Division III Structure Including:
 - Championships (*current*).
 - Management Council (*current*).
 - Convention Planning.
 - Budget.
 - Sport Committees.
 - Men's Golf and Football.



3

Outline

- Championships –Role in Our World.
- Access Factors – NCAA Opportunities and Rules.
 - Significant Investment by Association.
- Structure of Division III Championships.
- Administration of NCAA Championships.
- Hosting, On the Road, Getting Paid \$\$.
- Conference Championship Involvement.
- Wisdom from Veterans.





4

Importance of Championships

- It really is what we all play for!
 - Success is based on a number of factors and winning championships is one of them.
 - Thus, championships (Conf. and NCAA) play a vital part in the administration of your departments, conferences and the NCAA.
 - Ask my coaches in the league and you would think the NCAA championship bid is the secret to all success.
- Anxieties
 - Quality student-athlete experience.
 - Costs – Non-Budgeted.
 - Location/Travel/Accessibility.
 - Wins and Losses.
 - External Pressures.





5

NCAA Investment in Championships

- New NCAA Contract \$10 Billion over 14 Years (2.5% increase)
 - Division III receives 3.18% of the Association's annual revenue.
 - Begins 2024-25 Academic Year.



- Division III Budget of \$32.2 million in 2018-19
 - 75% Championships (approx. \$23.9 million).
 - 25% Non-Championship Initiatives (approx. \$8.2 million).
 - That's a lot of money --- but they do a lot with it!



6

NCAA Division III Championships

- NCAA sponsors championships in 28 sports for Division III.
 - 14 men and 14 women (men's volleyball most recent).
 - Members also have the ability to compete in nine association wide championships.
- Conferences qualify for automatic qualification into the NCAA Tournament.
- Specs for Automatic Qualification for DIII Conferences.
 - Seven sponsoring teams or more in conference.
 - Multi-sport or single-sport conferences are eligible.
 - Can have associate members help meet the minimum.



7

How Many? How Do You Qualify?

- This information is located in NCAA Bylaw 31 – Championships Regulations.
- Ratios are used to determine field sizes.
 - Team sports – 6.5:1.
 - Tennis and Golf – 7.0:1 and 7.5:1.
 - Individual Sports – 1:16 to 1:24.
 - The field sizes are based on the previous year's sponsorship numbers.
 - Division continues to explore sports that need attention related to sponsorship changes. This is an on-going project.



8

Field Composition

- Field Sizes are determined by the ratios on last slide
- Sports vary in size for various reasons
- Brackets are made up of three set of qualifiers
 - Pool A – Conferences with automatic bids
 - Pool B – Independents in the sport and conferences members that do not have an AQ (*there is guaranteed access here*)
 - Pool C – Non conference champions, independents and remaining teams from non-AQ leagues.



**** Important to note – As conference numbers grow, the number of Pool C bids will diminish unless the field is expanded. There is a guarantee for a minimum of Pool C bids in a tournament field. Access to Pool B is guaranteed but has very few members that are true independents at this time.**



9

Administration of NCAA Championships

- Conference Commissioners – Handle Automatic Qualification Forms.
- NCAA Sport-by-Sport Regional Advisory Committees.
 - AQ conferences have a rep in their regions (coaches and admin.).
- Divisional Regional Alignment is currently being discussed at the national level.
- NCAA Sport-by-Sport National Committee (coaches and admin.- 50/50).
- NCAA Championships Committee (9-member committee).
 - Bill Stiles– Current Chair, AD at Alvernia College.
 - Liz Suscha – NCAA staff liaison with D3 Championships Committee.
- NCAA Management Committee (*three members on the committee*).
- DIII Management Councils and Presidents Councils.



10

Hosting

- Bid Process – Predetermined vs. Selection.
 - Deadlines and other events on campus.
- Prepare – Follow the NCAA Manual for Hosting.
- **Hosting a championship takes a Village!**
 - Arrange a host committee to cover all aspects of the event. This is an essential piece to the puzzle.
- **REMEMBER – IT’S NOT YOUR EVENT.**
- Emphasize Communication, Communication, Communication.
 - Conference call with participants.
 - Confirm travel plans with opponent – early.
 - Secure local and campus police well in advance.





11

Hosting - Continued

- Lean on your NCAA Representative (*assigned to your site – may be member of RAC*).
 - Arrange a host committee to cover all aspects of the event.
- Go overboard to make your opponents feel at home. Nothing goes further than quality hospitality.
 - Remember – The best team will win.
 - No need to let competition affect a visiting team’s stay on your campus.
- Make friends on campus – security, dining services, B&G, Finance, etc. – you are going to need their help!
- Keep quality records for your financial reporting following the championship.

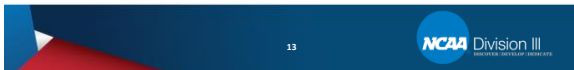




12

On the Road

- Plan ahead – Make sure you reach out to Shorts early and often if necessary.
- Bus Travel will be supplied through Go Ground – Official Ground Transportation supplier for the NCAA (*new rule for NCAA to cover on-site ground if you fly to the championship location*).
- Establish who will handle – logistics – Let the coaches coach!
- Gather hotel information as soon as you can.
- Quickly communicate information to parents on arrangements (travel and hotel).
- Track on expenses based on the NCAA per diem allocated.



13

On the Road

- Website – alumni and fans have access to hotel information on line.
- If long bus ride or cross country flight - ask for another day per diem (or half day).
- Secure finances – through school – How does the school handle cash advances?
- Academic notification – professors have little or no idea about postseason timing.
 - *Horror stories of teams on the road and the academic side holding to policy for missed classes.*
- Be well aware of the travel party and per diem for the championship
 - *Participants and Official Travel Party composition (see NCAA Champ. Handbook).*



14

Getting Paid

- Very important to be aware of deadline for financial reporting.
- Same whether you are hosting or on the road.
- NCAA is very helpful – recently streamlining forms to better assist with the end product.
- Receipt for all expenses – upload them into the budget reporting system.
 - Vital to have these organized.





15

Conference Championship Tips



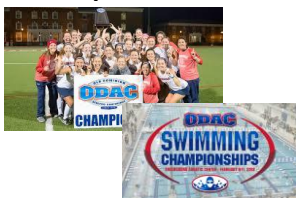
- A functioning championships and games committee in a conference is a vital part of the planning and execution of events. Everyone is on the same page.
- Checklists are big. We provide a checklist for all members spelling out their requirements when hosting a round of the conference championship.
- We require conference calls with the participating teams in formats where multiple teams advance to one location (final four teams, 8-team basketball tournament).



16

Conference Tips

- Require that hosts provide the visiting team with a championship hosting form spelling out travel arrangements (parking), ticket prices, locker room location, game manager contact, officials assignments and anything specific to your facility.
- We ask that hosts produce an equitable environment— providing a quality experience that recognizes the visiting and home team equally.
- Guidelines are vitally important for planning and changes to championship structure. Create a comprehensive guide for each sport so the pieces are there even if you are not. Create consistency from one championship to the next so conference members are working with the same guidelines and expectations regardless of the sport.
- Phone conferences help with this aspect of planning.



17

Veteran Advice

- I wish I had prepared myself more for the advance calls and planning when I bid on the national round of the Division III Championship. There were lots of items on the agenda and personnel was at a premium. Rally the troops and have too many not too few staffers in the loop. Better to plan immediately after the call.
- The budget planning process is intensive. You should make sure you have your line items covered. Don't be afraid to list things that can add to the atmosphere for the competitors. Schools can augment the experience with additional hospitality.
- Make sure you account for all possibilities when planning to host. Alternate locations for competition/practice, emergency plans and unforeseen travel problems that may arise.

18

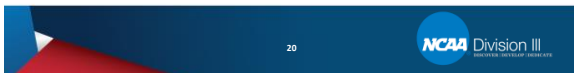
Veteran Advice

- I have found that Shorts Travel does the best they can to accommodate the travel party and making it comfortable to fly. Busing has become easier as Go Ground has improved its offerings. Flying commercial can be a challenge while *charters are fantastic!*
 - *Charters do carry a very hefty price tag.*
- Traveling in conference championships was bad enough with last minute notice but the turnaround with NCAA championship play in the early rounds is lightning fast. You have to be prepared for prep and planning to arrange travel. It is good to have an assistant/administrator work with you on planning and communication. Sometimes it is only a few days turnaround.



Veteran Advice

- Send an administrative representative with your teams for national competition. It is not required but definitely helps with planning and execution should something go wrong. We want our coaches coaching and not serving as travel agent, concierge and bus coordinator while on the road!
- Pay special attention to the timing of championships – spring events can run during exams and graduations which can be a complicating factor whether hosting or on the road!
- Make sure you remind the student-athletes, coaches and support staff to have fun. Sometimes it is a once in a lifetime experience that they will cherish forever.
 - Don't waste it on what ifs – regardless of the outcome.



Questions and Follow-Up



