



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
AUGUST 3, 2023, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **Neutrality in championships preliminary rounds for team sports.**
 - a. Recommendation. Approve a policy that permits preliminary round hosts in all team sports to run the same kind of pregame promotions and celebrations they conduct during the regular-season contests before resuming neutrality during the course of the contest. [Attachment].
 - b. Effective date. Immediate.
 - c. Rationale. The neutrality pilot was first approved in 2019 to permit preliminary-round hosts of the 2019-20 Division II Football Championship, Division II Men's and Women's Basketball Championships, and Division II Softball Championship to run the same kind of pregame promotions and celebrations they conduct during their regular-season contests before resuming neutrality at the start of the contest and through its conclusion. The cancellation of championships in 2020 and reduction of bracket sizes and restrictions on preliminary-round sites in 2021 compromised the policy's use and subsequent evaluation. At its June 2021 meeting, the Division II Championships Committee approved extending the pilot to allow it to be implemented as championships returned to their normal operations and thus produce more meaningful data. Then in June 2022 the Championships Committee agreed to extend the neutrality pilot for an additional year and expand the pilot to include all team sports. Feedback over time from sport committees and member institutions that have operated under the policy has been favorable enough for the Championships Committee to feel comfortable recommending that it be adopted as permanent policy for all team sports.
 - d. Estimated budget impact. None.
 - e. Student-athlete impact. The neutrality pilot has proven to have enhanced the competitive atmosphere and has garnered positive feedback from student-athletes (both home and away) who have experienced it.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Welcome and review of agenda.** Championships Committee Chair Reid Amos welcomed the group and previewed key agenda items.

2. **Review of previous reports.** The committee approved the report from its June 26-27, 2023, in-person meeting as presented.
3. **Triennial budget update.** The committee revisited all of the requests for the 2024-27 budget cycle in preparation to submit final recommendations coming out of the committee's September in-person meeting. The committee reviewed breakout group discussions conducted previously and focused its attention on requests that had either unanimous or majority support from those groups. The committee then discussed items that had received a mixed reaction previously to determine whether any change in support was warranted. Ultimately the committee reached a consensus on a number of items and agreed to discuss at least two others in more detail but noted that any outstanding item could be revisited in September if something would have changed between now and then to warrant such review. Once the committee finalizes its recommendations in September, the Division II Planning and Finance Committee will review the recommendations in the fall and the Division II Management Council and Presidents Council will formally consider them during their meetings in January.
4. **Neutrality pilot.** The committee reviewed the overwhelmingly positive feedback from sport committees that have been involved with the neutrality pilot and agreed to recommend that it become permanent policy beginning this coming year. (See Nonlegislative Action Item.)
5. **First ranking as under consideration.** The committee reviewed feedback from sport committees on publishing the first of their three rankings as an alphabetical list of teams under consideration rather than as an actual ranking. The option of posting rankings as "under consideration" lists was implemented during the pandemic to provide sport committees more flexibility to manage compromised playing schedules, but the Championships Committee subsequently heard interest from sport committees on being able to continue this practice. Given the positive feedback received, the Championships Committee agreed to retain the policy going forward, noting that it would be reviewed annually. (The committee emphasized the importance of continuing to conduct the first ranking as actual even though it is published alphabetically, as each ranking process builds preparation for the final selection. The second and third rankings would continue as they currently are to be published as actual ranking.)
6. **Recognition of outgoing committee members.** The committee formally thanked outgoing member Matt Kilcullen for his outstanding contributions during his term, including his service representing the committee on the Playing Rules Oversight Panel. The committee also once again acknowledged Reid Amos' contributions as chair since this is the final meeting he will oversee in that role (his term on the committee expires at the end of August). Nathan Gibson will assume the role of chair at the committee's next meeting in September.
7. **Future meetings and videoconferences.**
 - September 14-15, 2023 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).

Committee Chair: Reid Amos, Mountain East Conference

Staff Liaison(s): Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances

Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs

Division II Championships Committee August 3, 2023, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Reid Amos, Mountain East Conference.	
Kristy Bayer, Rockhurst University.	
Marcus Clarke, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.	
Chris Colvin, Conference Carolinas.	
Matt Kilcullen, Mercy College.	
Regan McAthie, Concordia University, St. Paul.	
Courtney Medwin, West Chester University of Pennsylvania.	
Nathan Gibson, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.	
Sandee Mott, Texas Woman's University.	
Gary Pine, Azusa Pacific University.	
Carol Rivera, California Collegiate Athletic Association.	
Cade Smith, University of Alabama in Huntsville.	
Jerry Wollmering, Truman State University (Management Council vice chair).	
Absentees:	
Carrie Michaels, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania (Management Council chair).	
Guests in Attendance:	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances.	
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.	
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Terri Gronau, Leslie Havens, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones, Julia Longo and Angela Red.	



**Division II Preliminary Round Neutrality
Policy
Do's and Don'ts Document**

At its August 2023 meeting, the NCAA Division II Championships Committee approved a policy to permit preliminary rounds of all Division II Championships to run the same kind of pregame promotions and celebrations they conduct during their regular-season contests before resuming neutrality at the start of the contest and through its conclusion.

Outlined below are the do's and don'ts of the policy as they pertain to pre-game promotions in preliminary rounds. (Note: Nothing regarding the in-game neutrality policy changes. Remember, once the contest starts, if you plan a promotion for one team, it must be done for both.)

PERMISSIBLE:

- Hosts are allowed to incorporate typical **pre-game** promotions before being neutral in-game.
 - Hype/intro video.
 - The only permissible video content outside of hype/intro videos is provided by the NCAA.
 - Running through tunnel.
 - Announcer/introduction/starting lineups.
 - The NCAA script provided for each site should be followed.
 - Pyro/smoke/fog/cannons during team introductions.
 - Crowd live shots.
 - Lights out with spotlights during player introductions.

IMPERMISSIBLE:

- No "toss" of t-shirts, premium items, etc.
- Hype for third-downs, sacks, turnovers, home runs, 3-pointers, strikeouts, etc. through video board or PA announcer.
- Nothing in-game related to video that's only geared towards the host team.
- Crowd teasers on videoboard that incite crowd involvement.
- Walk-up music for only the host team. Can be used only if provided for both teams.
- Promotions sponsored by corporate partners.
- Recognitions specific to the host institution or sponsors.
- Pyro/smoke/fog/cannons for only the host team after the start of the contest.

Final determination on any activations not listed above will be at the discretion of the NCAA championship manager and the site representative.