



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 2, 2023, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Baseball squad size increase.

(1) Recommendation. Increase the squad size for teams participating in the Division II Baseball Championship by one student-athlete (from 25 to 26).

(2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.

(3) Rationale. In its review of budget requests from sport committees for the 2024-27 triennium, the Division II Championships Committee supported the request from the Division II Baseball Committee to increase the travel party size from 29 to 30 individuals but was not prompted to consider the baseball committee's accompanying request to increase the squad size. Accordingly, the Championships Committee revisited the request and agreed to support increasing the squad size by one student-athlete (from 25 to 26). The Championships Committee noted that historically, an increase in travel party coincides with a like increase in squad size. The committee considered the baseball committee's original request of increasing the squad size by as many as three student-athletes but ultimately determined that matching the travel party increase was more appropriate. The Championships Committee also felt that an increase of more than one student-athlete could place a financial burden on institutions because it would result in the four non-student-athletes allowed in the travel party exceeding the limit of 30 and not being reimbursed by the NCAA.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. The recommendation allows an additional student-athlete to participate in the championship.

b. Baseball visible pitch clock rule referral.

(1) Recommendation. Refer a review of the visible pitch clock rule in baseball to the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee as it pertains to Division II and consider making the rule permissive rather than mandatory. Further, as part of the review, request feedback from the NCAA Division II Baseball Committee.

(2) Effective date. Immediate.

(3) Rationale. In August 2022, the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel approved a requirement that the between-innings and action clocks in baseball be visible on the field by Jan. 1, 2024, for all Division I games and by Jan. 1, 2025, for all Divisions II and III games. After that decision, several Division II conference commissioners expressed concern regarding the ability to obtain and install the necessary equipment by Jan. 1, 2025, and suggested that the rule be delayed or at least made permissive. The Division II Conference Commissioners Association surveyed its membership regarding the matter and enough respondents expressed concern to warrant recommending that the rule be referred to the Baseball Rules Committee for further review. The Championships Committee supported this action and also supported the rule as permissive rather than mandatory in order to provide the most flexibility for the membership (i.e., allowing institutions with either logistical or financial challenges to opt out while ensuring institutions that have already purchased the clocks not having made the expenditure in vain).

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

c. Minimum contest requirements for sports sponsorship and championship selection purposes in men's and women's golf.

(1) Recommendation. Adjust the additional minimum contest requirements for at-large selections in men's and women's golf to the following:

- 50 Division II opponents, **or**
- 50% of the total opponents for the year must be Division II and at least 40 of those must be Division II in-region opponents.

(2) Effective date. 2023-24 season.

(3) Rationale. As part of the recent examination conducted by the Division II Championships Committee and the Division II Membership Committee to ensure consistency between minimum contest requirements for sports sponsorship and championship selection purposes across sports, the men's and women's golf committees requested adjusting the additional minimum contests for at-large selections as specified in the recommendation. The Championships Committee supports the request and believes the recommended adjustment will align the requirements in men's and women's golf and provide scheduling flexibility and fewer restrictions, especially given current budget restraints and tournament availability.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and review of agenda.** Championships Committee Chair Nathan Gibson welcomed the group and previewed the agenda. The committee also recognized Kristy Bayer for being selected as a member of the Division II Management Council effective at the conclusion of the 2024 NCAA Convention. Staff noted that the Division II Nominating Committee is soliciting nominees for her replacement on the Championships Committee and that a new member is expected to be in place by the committee's February 2024 meeting.
2. **Review of previous reports.** The committee approved the report from its October 5 videoconference as presented.
3. **Sport reports.**

- a. **Baseball.**

- (1) **Squad size request.** The committee reviewed the request from the Division II Baseball Committee to increase the squad size for teams participating in the Division II Baseball Championship by up to three student-athletes. After discussion, the Championships Committee agreed to recommend an increase of one student-athlete to coincide with the one-person increase already approved for the travel party effective with the 2025 championship. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-a.)

- (2) **Visible pitch clock.** The committee noted concerns from the Division II Conference Commissioners Association regarding the visible pitch clock rule set to become effective in Division II on Jan. 1, 2025, and agreed to support a recommendation to refer a review of the rule to the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee. The committee also agreed to seek input from the Division II Baseball Committee. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-b.)

- b. **Men's and women's basketball.** The Championships Committee received the report from the men's and women's basketball committees' October 4 joint videoconference as information, noting that the committees are supporting a legislative exception allowing Division II men's and women's basketball coaches to attend the NCAA College Basketball Academy. Currently, attendance is permitted via a blanket waiver issued by the Division II Presidents Council and Division II Committee for Legislative Relief. The Division II Legislation Committee will consider recommending a legislative exception at its November 2023 meeting.

The Championships Committee also noted the ongoing media rights negotiations that could impact the Division II men's and women's basketball championships. Staff provided an update regarding the status of those negotiations.

- c. **Men's and women's cross country.** The Championships Committee received the report from the men's and women's cross country committee's October 5 meeting as information,

noting that the committee has discussed a proposal from the coaches association to have only one regional site for the men's and women's championships. The sport committee does not support the proposal due to the cost impact on institutions but is willing to continue discussing other regional format options during its annual meeting at the championships and has invited representatives from the coaches association to join the conversation.

- d. **Men's and women's golf.** The committee supported a request from the men's and women's golf committees to adjust the minimum contest requirements for sports sponsorship and championship selection purposes as specified (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-c.)

The Championships Committee also noted that the NCAA has selected Clippd, a leader in the golf technology industry, to provide NCAA golf scoring and ranking services, taking over from Spikemark, which previously had been chosen for that service but subsequently encountered technological challenges outside of the company's control that impeded its ability to execute the agreement as specified. Clippd is a golf data platform that provides performance insights for more than 100 NCAA Division I, II and III college programs. The committee urged staff to ensure that the transition be fully communicated with the membership to help golf coaches understand how to navigate the new process.

- e. **Women's rowing.** The Championships Committee received the report from the women's rowing committee's September 29 meeting as information.

4. Review of 2024 NCAA Convention proposals.

- a. **Process to establish a divisional championship.** Given the Division II proposal at the 2024 Convention regarding requirements necessary to establish a championship, the committee reviewed a draft process should the proposal be adopted. The process resembles the one used to establish a National Collegiate Championship from emerging sport status, with the necessary Division II-specific steps. The proposed timeline assumes championship funding must come through the triennial budget cycle, which means a new championship could not be established before the 2027-28 academic year. However, the Division II Strategic Planning and Finance Committee also will review the proposed process and timeline during a future videoconference and discuss whether a championship could be added outside of the triennial budget cycle.
- b. **Review of 2024 Convention question and answer guide.** Staff walked the committee through the Q&A documents for the three proposals the committee recommended for the 2024 Convention. The documents are designed to provide the membership with the information they need to vote on a proposal. The committee offered feedback and approved the documents as amended.

5. Other business.

- a. **Softball date formula recommendation.** Staff and members of the committee who serve on the Division II Management Council updated the group on discussions the council engaged in during its October meeting regarding the proposal to move the Division II

Softball Championship finals to the week after Memorial Day Weekend (Thursday-Wednesday). The proposal would result in the softball championship being removed from the spring championships festival. The council expressed support for the date formula change in non-festival years but referred the matter to the Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee for input regarding the proposal's effect on the festival. The SAAC meets later in November and will discuss the matter at that time, so the Championships Committee will have the opportunity to review that input during its December videoconference and make a recommendation to the Management Council if desired.

- b. Streaming agreement.** The committee noted that the NCAA has negotiated an exclusive partnership with Hudl and NCAA Digital, managed by Warner Bros. Discovery Sports, to stream more than 200 NCAA Division II championship contests in 2023-24. This partnership includes live and on-demand coverage of the Division II Football and Women's Volleyball Championships this fall and the Division II Men's and Women's Basketball Championships this winter. The committee had been apprised of the potential for this agreement during previous meetings and regards this announcement (which as it happens was released publicly during this meeting) as a significant advancement in gaining exposure for Division II championships.

6. Future meetings and videoconferences.

- December 7, 2-3:30 p.m. Eastern time (monthly videoconference).
- January 4, 2024, 2-3:30 p.m. Eastern time (monthly videoconference).
- February 23-24, 2024 (meeting conducted virtually).
- June 17-18, 2024 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- August 29, 2024 (site selection meeting).

Committee Chair: Nathan Gibson, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

*Staff Liaison(s): Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs*

Division II Championships Committee November 2, 2023, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Kristy Bayer, Rockhurst University.	
Terry Beattie, West Chester University of Pennsylvania.	
Marcus Clarke, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.	
Chris Colvin, Conference Carolinas.	
Karen Haag, The College of Saint Rose.	

Regan McAthie, Concordia University, St. Paul.
Courtney Medwin, West Chester University of Pennsylvania.
Nathan Gibson, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.
Carrie Michaels, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania (Management Council chair).
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 of Pennsylvania (Management Council vice chair).
Absentees:
None.
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:
Eric Breece, Ashley Caldwell, Terri Gronau, Leslie Havens, Kendee Hilliard, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones Julia Longo and Angela Red.