Section 1 • Introduction

During the 2016-17 academic year, the Association will sponsor 90 national championships – 42 for men, 45 for women, and three for both men and women. Among the men’s championships, three are National Collegiate Championships, 13 are Division I championships, 12 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. Among the women’s championships, six are National Collegiate Championships, 12 are Division I championships, 13 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. The combined men’s and women’s championships are National Collegiate Championships.

The Pre-Championship Manual will serve as a resource for institutions to prepare for the championship. This manual is divided into three sections: General Administrative Guidelines, Sport-Specific Information, and Appendixes.

The first section applies to policies applicable to all 90 championships, while the other two sections are sport-specific

Section 1•1 Definitions

Pre-Championship Manual. Resource for institutions to prepare for the championship.
Administrative Meeting. Pre-championship meeting for coaches and administrators.
Appendixes. Any supplemental documents to be provided and distributed through the various resources.
Championship Administrator. The NCAA staff member responsible for the operational oversight of the championship.
Games Committee. The committee assigned to supervise the conduct of each championship session at a specific site. For finals sites, the games committee is typically the NCAA National Committee.
NCAA National Committee. The sport committee with direct oversight responsibilities for the championship.
Playing Rules. The rules under which the competition will be conducted.
Predetermined Sites. Those sites that are selected to host before the participant/team selections announcement.
Preliminary Rounds. The rounds of the championship before the final or championship round.
Regional Alignment. The geographic location of institutions or regional advisory committees.
Schedule of Events. Official event schedule – includes all required activities (e.g., practices, banquets, etc.).
Selection Criteria. Policies and procedures in place to guide the selection process.
Site Selection. Policies and procedures in place to guide the site selection process.
Squad Size. Number of student-athletes per team allowed to dress in uniform and participate at the championship.
Tournament Physician. The physician designated by the host institution/conference to serve as the chief medical advisor for the championship.

Section 2 • Championship Core Statement

The championships and alliances staff strives to administer competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner so that the experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

This is attained by:
Ensuring student-athletes’ optimal experience.
Executing championship events reflecting appropriate quality and values to/from stakeholders – student-athletes, coaches, administrators, member institutions, sport committees, fans, broadcast partners and corporate champions/partners.
Coordinating all aspects of the championship in an efficient, effective manner through common operating policies and practices, using internal and external resources.
Integrating championships with broadcast and corporate relationships in a manner that maintains the integrity of the championship.
Assuring effective management of the business aspects of the operation.
Enhancing the assets of the NCAA and their value by collaborating with internal and external expertise to achieve heightened exposure (e.g., community programs, fan events, banquets, anniversaries, etc.).

Section 3 • Concussion Management

[Reference: Concussion Management in Constitution 3.2.4.18 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Constitution 3.3.4.16 in the NCAA Division II Manual, and Constitution 3.2.4.16 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

The NCAA has adopted legislation that requires all active member institutions to have a concussion management plan for their student-athletes. Traveling institutions shall follow their concussion management plan while participating in NCAA championships. If a participating team lacks appropriate medical staff to activate its concussion management plan, the host championship concussion management plan will be activated.

The legislation notes, in part, that a student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from athletics activities (e.g., competition, practice, conditioning sessions) and evaluated by a medical staff member (e.g., sports medicine staff, team physician) with experience in the evaluation and management of concussions; a student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion is precluded from returning to athletics activity for at least the remainder of that calendar day; and medical clearance for return to athletics activity shall be determined by the team physician or the physician’s designee from the student-athlete’s institution. In the absence of a team physician or their designee, the NCAA tournament physician will examine the student-athlete and will determine medical clearance. Within the rules of the sport and policies established for the championship, medical staff should have access to the injured student-athlete without interference (e.g., coach).

A concussion is a brain injury that may be caused by a blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an “impulsive” force transmitted to the head. Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness or other obvious signs. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the previous one (hours, days or weeks) can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having more severe and/or long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage and even death.


Section 4 • Conduct

Section 4•1 Certification of Eligibility/Availability

[Reference: Certification of Eligibility/Availability in Constitution 3.2.4 and Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 31.2.1.7.1, 31.2.1.7.1.2 and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division I, Manuals Constitution 3.3.4 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Bylaws 31.2.2 and 31.2.1.5 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

Only student-athletes eligible under Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 may compete in NCAA championships. Member institutions are required to certify the eligibility of their student-athletes before the beginning of each academic year and to withhold ineligible student-athletes from all intercollegiate competition.

Member institutions are reminded to notify the NCAA national office before the selection date for each championship of any student-athlete who may have participated in regular-season competition but subsequently is determined to be ineligible or unavailable for NCAA championship competition.

DISCOVERY OF INELIGIBILITY OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE AFTER SELECTION

If an institution fails to report an ineligible student-athlete and the omission is not discovered until after the institution is selected to participate in the championship, necessitating the institution’s withdrawal from the championship, that withdrawal...
shall be considered as one of the years of ineligibility, provided another institution participates in the championship in place of
the disqualified institution. If the discovery of the ineligible student-athlete occurs so near the beginning of the championship
that the governing sports committee does not have a reasonable period of time to replace the disqualified institution in the
bracket, that fact shall be taken into consideration in determining the number of years the disqualified institution shall be
ineligible to participate.

Section 4.2 Drug Testing

[Reference: Bylaws 18.4.1.4 and 31.2.3 in the NCAA Division I Manual and Bylaws 18.4.1.5 and 31.2.3 in the NCAA
Division II, and III Manuals.]

Student-athletes who compete in NCAA championships may be subjected to drug tests in accordance with Bylaws 18.4.1.4
(Division I); 18.4.1.5 (Divisions II and III) and 31.2.3, and may be determined to be ineligible as a result thereof. Only student-
athletes who have consented in writing to such testing are initially eligible for these championships; and thereafter, student-
athletes who are tested shall remain eligible only if they test negative.

Section 4.3 Honesty and Sportsmanship

Individuals employed by (or associated with) a member institution to administer, conduct or coach intercollegiate athletics
and all participating student-athletes shall act with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that intercollegiate athletics
as a whole, their institutions and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play and the generally
recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports.

Section 4.4 Misconduct/Failure to Adhere to Policies

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct in an NCAA championship is any act of dishonesty, unsportsmanlike conduct, unprofessional behavior or breach
of law, occurring from the time the championship field is announced through the end of the championship, that discredits the
event or intercollegiate athletics. Each games committee shall hold an administrative meeting with the representatives of
participating institutions to review and explain the policies related to misconduct.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A governing sport committee may assess a financial penalty against an institution for failure of any of its representatives to
adhere to the policies and procedures governing the administration of the competition. This includes, but is not limited to,
failure to comply with the procedures and deadlines for submitting scores, score sheets, schedules, rosters and entry/march-
in forms for qualification and other materials necessary for the efficient administration of the competition. Click here to see
the full misconduct/failure to adhere policy and procedure and fines.

Section 4.5 Sports Wagering Policy

Sports wagering includes placing, accepting or soliciting a wager (on a staff member’s or student-athlete’s own behalf or on
the behalf of others) of any type with any individual or organization on any intercollegiate, amateur or professional team or
contest. Examples of sports wagering include, but are not limited to, the use of a bookmaker or parlay card; internet sports
wagering; auctions in which bids are placed on teams, individuals or contests; and pools or fantasy leagues in which an entry
fee is required and there is an opportunity to win a prize.

The prohibition against sports wagering applies to any institutional practice or any competition (intercollegiate, amateur or
professional) in a sport in which the Association conducts championship competition, in bowl subdivision football and in
emerging sports for women.

A wager is any agreement in which an individual or entity agrees to give up an item of value (e.g., cash, shirt, dinner, etc.) in
exchange for the possibility of gaining another item of value.
STUDENT-ATHLETES

A student-athlete involved in sports wagering on the student-athlete’s institution permanently loses all remaining regular-season and postseason eligibility in all sports. A student-athlete who is involved in any sports wagering activity that involves college sports or professional athletics, through internet gambling, a bookmaker, a parlay card or any other method employed by organized gambling, will be ineligible for all regular-season and postseason competition for at least one year.

POSTSEASON

In championships in which a bracket format is used, student-athletes, coaches and administrators may not participate in bracket competitions where there is both a required entry fee and an opportunity to win a prize. Student-athletes and administrators may participate under current NCAA rules in bracket contests where there is no entry fee but a possibility of winning a prize. Some NCAA member schools, however, have chosen to ban student-athletes from participating in these types of bracket contests.

HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

No predetermined or non-predetermined session of an NCAA championship may be conducted in a state with legal wagering that is based on single-game betting on the outcome of any event (i.e., high school, college or professional) in a sport in which the NCAA conducts a championship.

Section 4•6 Student-Athlete Experience Survey

After each championship, student-athletes will be asked to participate in a post-event survey intended to capture feedback on their recent championship experience. Institutional administrators will be copied on the email and asked to ensure participation from all student-athletes and coaches.

Section 5 • Elite 90 Award

The Elite 90 award was created to recognize the true essence of the student-athlete by honoring the individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in his or her sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among his or her peers. The award is presented in every sport, every division, and goes to the student-athlete who has the highest cumulative GPA of all student-athletes on all teams competing at the finals site. Each institution that has at least one student-athlete qualify for the final round/site is eligible to nominate a student-athlete for the award. One student-athlete per championship will receive the award, and the announcement of the winner will be made at the finals site.

Institutions that wish to nominate a student-athlete must do so through an online nomination process. To receive more information or access the online form and submit a nomination, go to NCAA.org.

Section 6 • Fan Travel

NCAA Travel provides an easy and affordable way for family and fans to follow their favorite student-athletes and team(s) as they participate in NCAA championships competition. Travel arrangements completed through NCAA Travel help support NCAA student-athletes. Please direct your fans to NCAA.com/travel to search and book online hotel, car and air travel, all in one easy transaction.

Section 7 • Logo Policy

[Reference: Bylaws 12.5.4, 31.1.7 and 31.1.8 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaw 12.5.4 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Bylaw 12.5.3 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

A student-athlete may use athletics equipment or wear athletics apparel that bears the trademark or logo of an athletics
equipment or apparel manufacturer or distributor in athletics competition and pre- and postgame activities (e.g., celebrations on the court, pre- or postgame press conferences), provided the following criteria are met:

1. Athletics equipment (e.g., shoes, helmets, baseball bats and gloves, batting or golf gloves, hockey and lacrosse sticks, goggles and skis) shall bear only the manufacturer’s normal label or trademark, as it is used on all such items for sale to the general public; and

2. The student-athlete’s institution’s official uniform (including numbered racing bibs and warm-ups) and all other items of apparel (e.g., socks, headbands, T-shirts, wristbands, visors or hats, swim caps and towels) shall bear only a single manufacturer’s or distributor’s normal label or trademark (regardless of the visibility of the label or trademark), not to exceed 2 ¼ square inches in area (rectangle, square, parallelogram) including any additional material (e.g., patch) surrounding the normal trademark or logo. The student-athlete’s institution’s official uniform and all other items of apparel shall not bear a design element similar to the manufacturer’s trademark/logo that is in addition to another trademark/logo that is contrary to the size restriction.

Section 8 • Research

It is essential that all research efforts be coordinated by a single entity within the national office structure in order to ensure maximum efficiency and quality, avoid unnecessary duplication of effort on the part of staff and membership, allow the NCAA to prioritize research efforts given the limited time and resources of our members and adhere to federal guidelines on the responsibilities of researchers to properly protect research participants from harm.

For the purpose of this policy, “research” is defined as any systematic collection of data for the purpose of drawing generalized conclusions.

Any proposal to conduct research must be submitted to the NCAA research staff for review at least six weeks before the project begins. Research to be conducted during NCAA championships or related events, and which involves competing student-athletes or attendees, is also subject to review. This includes all research, including that conducted by or under the direction of any employee, contractor or paid consultant of the NCAA. It also includes any research conducted by other persons, but funded totally or in part by the NCAA. Any research that detracts from the student-athlete experience or requires physical activity may not be permitted at the championships (preliminary and finals sites). The NCAA retains sole discretion as to whether to allow such research.

Examples of activities considered research include: Conducting surveys of athletics administrators, college presidents, faculty, coaches and student-athletes; leading an organized focus group; funding an outside study under the auspices of the NCAA; conducting market research at championship events; secondary analysis of data originally collected by the NCAA from people for other purposes; any systematic collection of data from the membership or other entities; etc.

Section 9 • Religious Conflicts

[Reference: Bylaws 31.1.4.1 and 31.1.4.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual.]

Institutional Policy. If a participating institution has a written policy against competition on a particular day for religious reasons, it shall inform the NCAA national office on or before September 1 of each academic year in order for it or one of its student-athletes to be excused from competing on that day. The championship schedule shall be adjusted to accommodate that institution. (Adopted: 4/22/98, Revised: 8/11/98, 10/28/99, 5/2/13)

Individual Championships. In individual championships, an athlete must compete according to the institution’s policy regarding Sunday competition (if the institution has no policy against Sunday competition, the athlete shall compete on Sunday if required by the schedule).
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<td>Section 1.6 Rules</td>
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# Section 1.2 National Committee

| National Committee | 8 |

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Section 1 • General Administration

Section 1•1 NCAA Tournament Operations
Staff Contact Information

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Championships and Alliances
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Section 1•2 National Committee

Current members of the committee are:

CENTRAL REGION
Keisha Dunlap
Associate Commissioner for Sport Services
Conference USA

EAST REGION
Brandi Stuart
Senior Associate Athletics Director/SWA
University of Central Florida

MIDWEST REGION
Natalie Shock
Assistant AD for Compliance/SWA
University of Central Arkansas

NORTHEAST REGION
Michelle DePolo
Head Softball Coach
U.S. Military Academy

SOUTH REGION
Chris Helms
Senior Associate Athletics Director
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

For additional information about the softball championship, contact:

Sharon Cessna, NCAA
Director, Championships and Alliances
317-917-6519 / scessna@ncaa.org

Keisha Dunlap, chair
Associate Commissioner for Sport Services
Conference USA
214-774-1355 / kdunlap@c-usa.org
Section 1•3 Regional Advisory Committees

[Reference: Regional Advisory Committees in the Division I General Section and Bylaw 21.4.1.5 in the Division I NCAA Manual.]

Each conference shall appoint a member of the advisory committee in its respective region to assist in the evaluation of teams throughout the season. Below are the members of the 2016 Division I softball regional advisory committees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>CONFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CENTRAL REGION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keisha Dunlap</td>
<td>Conference USA</td>
<td>Conference USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnette Johnson</td>
<td>Ole Miss</td>
<td>SEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobin Echo-Hawk</td>
<td>UTEP</td>
<td>Conference USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Smith</td>
<td>Mississippi Val.</td>
<td>SWAC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandy Montgomery</td>
<td>SIUE</td>
<td>Ohio Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Lawson</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>SEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAST REGION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandi Stuart</td>
<td>Central Florida</td>
<td>American Athletic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Kvilhaug</td>
<td>St. John’s (NY)</td>
<td>Big East</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natalie Poole</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>American Athletic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill Karowski</td>
<td>Quinnipiac</td>
<td>MAAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy Kortmann</td>
<td>LIU Brooklyn</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDEAST REGION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Baumgartner</td>
<td>Rutgers</td>
<td>MAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarisa Crowell</td>
<td>Miami (OH)</td>
<td>MAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darren Mueller</td>
<td>North Dakota State</td>
<td>Summit League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Norris</td>
<td>Cleveland State</td>
<td>Horizon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Lehotak</td>
<td>Penn State</td>
<td>Big Ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDWEST REGION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalie Shock</td>
<td>Central Arkansas</td>
<td>Southland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Hesse</td>
<td>Missouri State</td>
<td>Missouri Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Kincaid</td>
<td>Georgia State</td>
<td>Sun Belt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenn Moore</td>
<td>Baylor</td>
<td>Big 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Picket</td>
<td>Northwestern State</td>
<td>Southland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NORTHEAST REGION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Allard</td>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>Ivy League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle DePolo</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Patriot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Sweeney</td>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>Ivy League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Shoemaker</td>
<td>La Salle</td>
<td>Atlantic 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristy Norton</td>
<td>UNC Wilmington</td>
<td>Colonial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Henderson</td>
<td>UMass Lowell</td>
<td>America East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fran Troyan</td>
<td>Lehigh</td>
<td>Patriot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section 1.4 Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, March 20</td>
<td>Bid information to host regional and super regional competition available online (NCAA.org).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, April 17</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting bid materials (proposed budgets) for hosting regionals and super regionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 14</td>
<td>10 p.m. Selection Show aired live on ESPNU. Selection and notification of teams participating in the championship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday-Sunday, May 19-21</td>
<td>Regionals (regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Thurs-Fri-Saturday, May 25-27 | Super regionals.  
  Note: Super Regionals will be a three-day format |
| Thursday-Wednesday, June 1-7 | Finals, ASA Hall of Fame Stadium, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; sponsoring agency – Oklahoma City All-Sports Association; host – University of Oklahoma. |

### CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

| Regionals | Friday-Sunday, May 19-21, 2017 (regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy). |
| Super regionals | Thursday/Friday/Saturday or Friday/Saturday/Sunday, May 25-28, 2017. |
Women’s College World Series Thursday-Wednesday, June 1-7, 2017; ASA Hall of Fame Stadium, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Hosted by the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma City All-Sports Association.

DATE FORMULA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regionals (16)</th>
<th>Super regionals (eight)</th>
<th>College World Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two weeks before finals (Friday through Sunday)</td>
<td>Thursday before Memorial Day (Thursday/Friday, Friday/Saturday or Saturday/Sunday)</td>
<td>Thursday after Memorial Day (Thursday-Wednesday)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FUTURE DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regionals</th>
<th>Super Regionals</th>
<th>WCWS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>May 18-20</td>
<td>May 24-27</td>
<td>May 31-June 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>May 17-19</td>
<td>May 23-26</td>
<td>May 30-June 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>May 15-17</td>
<td>May 21-24</td>
<td>May 28-June 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 1•5 Equipment

BALL
The Rawlings NC12L is the official softball for the championship. Rawlings will supply balls for all championship rounds; no other softball shall be used.

BATS
Bats used in competition MUST appear on the NCAA Approved Softball Bat List. The bat list will be updated on the first Monday of January, March, April and July. You can access the list at www.sup.arbitersports.com. Additional lists will be posted when a manufacturer withdraws a bat model or the results of bat testing dictate assessing strikes and/or removing a model.

Coaches are reminded bats are to be checked before every game. Please provide umpires with a current bat list and highlight the bats your team will be using during each game.

BAT TESTING
Bat testing will be conducted on competition days (not practice days) during all NCAA Division I postseason rounds.

PRELIMINARY ROUNDS
All teams at the site will have access to all equipment. If there is a discrepancy in the quality of the equipment (i.e., batting cages), all teams will be provided equal time to use the best equipment.

Section 1•6 Rules

Per NCAA Bylaw 17.30, member institutions shall conduct all of their intercollegiate competition in accordance with the playing rules of the Association in all sports for which the NCAA develops playing rules. For those sports in which the Association follows rules developed by other governing bodies and are modified by the governing sports committee, the adopted playing rules shall be used. The governing sports committee will not consider any results for selection purposes not played in accordance with the NCAA rules book, or those rules adopted by an outside organization.

The NCAA Softball 2016 and 2017 Rules and Interpretations shall be followed for the championship.

PROTEST PROCEDURES
Please refer to the 2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Rules Book, Rule 7.2.6 on page 71, which outlines protest procedures for NCAA championship play.
LENGTH AND SCHEDULE OF GAMES

All games will be scheduled for seven innings. However, a five-inning, eight-run rule will be used in all rounds of the championship except the Women’s College World Series (best-of-three series). If play is stopped before a seven-inning game is completed and the eight-run rule is not in effect, it will resume at the point of interruption. Every attempt should be made to complete regional and super regional competition by Sunday. Competition may go to Monday when the following occurs: (1) weather or emergency situations occur which prevent completion of competition; (2) any one team has to play more than three games in a day; or (3) in order to complete competition by Sunday, it would be necessary to begin competition after 11 p.m. Sunday.

If competition has to be extended to Monday, it must be completed without starting a game after 11 p.m. Monday (if the regional final begins before 11 p.m. and an “if necessary” game becomes necessary to determine the regional champion, that game will immediately follow). Note: Each round gets one extra day to finish the round.

The committee reserves the right to revise the game schedule because of inclement weather.

**Regional.** If inclement weather limits play, every effort has been made to complete competition by Sunday and if competition cannot be completed by Monday, the team that will advance to the super regional will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Games Played</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Highest seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Highest seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Highest undefeated seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Highest undefeated seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Highest undefeated seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Highest undefeated seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Winner of Game 6 unless each team has one loss, therefore the teams are tied, then:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) Head-to-head competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Highest remaining seed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Super Regional.** If inclement weather limits play, every effort has been made to complete competition by Sunday, and if competition cannot be completed by Monday, the team that will advance to the Women’s College World Series will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Games Played</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Highest seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Winner of Game 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If each team has a loss, the highest seed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 1.7 Uniforms**

[Reference: Bylaw 12.5.4 in the Division I NCAA Manual.]

The home team shall select the desired uniform color first and it is the responsibility of the visiting team to wear a contrasting uniform color to the jersey of the home team. Discrepancies will be settled by the site representative in consultation with the umpire. As a reminder, when teams play back-to-back games, they must be prepared to change uniforms, if necessary. Determination of uniform colors must be approved by the NCAA representative. Noncompliance with this policy may result in “failure to follow procedures” as outlined in the NCAA Division I Manual. On the field, including the practice areas and dugout, each team is limited to eligible players in uniform and coaches, trainers, student-athletes and managers, all of whom shall be in appropriate team colors and within the allotted bench size.

**LOGOS**

Refer to General Administrative Guidelines, Section 7.
Section 2 • Determination of Championship Participation

Section 2.1 Championship Format

The championship provides for a field of 64 teams. Sixteen teams will be seeded and each of the seeded teams will be placed at one of the regional sites. Four teams will participate at each of 16 regional sites in a double-elimination tournament. The 16 teams advancing from regional competition will participate in a two-team, best-of-three super regional at eight sites.

The Women’s College World Series will include the eight super regional winners.

Four-Team Regionals. The procedures outlined below shall be used in the conduct of all 16 softball regional competitions.

The regionals will be conducted for a three-day period beginning Friday, May 19. (Regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no competition on Sunday policy.) All regional competition should be completed no later than the Sunday prior to super regionals. [Exceptions (i.e., weather) may preclude the completion of competition by Sunday, however competition must be completed not later than Monday.]

If the regular game schedule is altered because of weather or unforeseen circumstances, the following guidelines may be used and teams will be informed by the NCAA representative: (1) No more than three games by any one team will be scheduled in one day; (2) If possible, games will not be scheduled to begin before 9 a.m. or after 11 p.m.; (3) If competition cannot be completed Sunday, the last time to start a regional championship game (i.e., Games 6 and “if” 7) to complete regional finals is the Monday immediately preceding the super regional at 11 p.m.; (4) If play is suspended before games 6 and 7 and the regional competition ceases, see the rain-delay advancement formula (page 12) outlined in this manual. Prospective host institutions must submit recommended starting times for all games with the pre-bid materials for approval by the NCAA Softball Committee and are subject to change.

For all four-team regional competitions, Games 1 and 2 will be played on the first day; Games 3, 4 and 5 will be played on the second day; Games 6 and 7 (if necessary) will be played on the third day.

The following procedure will be observed (games follow in chronological order — no exceptions to game order will be permitted):

**DAY 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game 1</th>
<th>No. 2 vs. No. 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Game 2</td>
<td>No. 1 vs. No. 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DAY 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game 3</th>
<th>Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Game 4</td>
<td>Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game 5</td>
<td>Winner Game 4 vs. Loser Game 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DAY 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game 6</th>
<th>Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Game 7</td>
<td>Winner Game 6 vs. Loser Game 6 (if necessary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For additional information regarding the regional bracket, please refer to Appendix A.

In all two-team super regional tournaments, Game 1 will be played on the first day; Games 2 and 3 (if necessary) will be played on the second day. If there is a weather delay during super regional competition, teams will have three days to complete the super regional competition before the inclement weather policy will be applied.

The following procedure will be observed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Game 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Games 2 and 3 (if necessary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regionals</th>
<th>Friday-Sunday, May 19-21, 2017. (Regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy. The host must be prepared to host Thursday if necessary.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Super regionals</td>
<td>Thursday/Friday/Saturday or Friday/Saturday/Sunday, May 25-28, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s College World Series</td>
<td>Thursday-Wednesday, June 1-7, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

START TIMES

Starting times for regionals and super regionals will be recommended by the host institutions during the bid process, subject to the approval of the NCAA Softball Committee. Game times should be set 2 1/2 hours apart and must follow the championship format below.

Regional and super regional game-time policies:

- Thursday or Friday games shall be scheduled between noon and 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday games shall be scheduled between 10 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.
- Sunday games shall be scheduled between noon and 8:30 p.m.

The committee shall determine game times for the finals.

Note: Game 7 only of regional competition will begin 30 minutes after the conclusion of game 6 or earlier by mutual consent of both teams. (Changes subject to television.)

TRAVEL PARTY

Transportation expenses will be provided for an official traveling party of 28 persons (30 for the Women’s College World Series).

The travel party for the Women’s College World Series is 30, the squad size is 20 student-athletes in uniform and the dugout size will be 35. The travel party size for regionals and super regionals will remain at 28 (20 student-athletes) and dugout size at 35.

Reimbursable ground transportation. For team championships, if the institution is located more than 50 round-trip miles from the site of competition or the departure airport, or if the arrival airport is located more than 50 round-trip miles from the site of competition, the institution is eligible for reimbursement of ground transportation costs. The NCAA will not reimburse actual costs for ground transportation. Instead, a flat rate will be given to all eligible institutions. This amount may vary by championship, so please refer to the NCAA travel policies for specific details. The travel policies can be found at: http://www.ncaa.org/championships/travel/championships-travel-information.

SQUAD SIZE

Each team is limited to 20 eligible players in uniform and an official traveling party of 28 at regionals and super regionals, including one sports information director.

After a regional or super regional has begun, no changes may be made in a team roster for any reason. This procedure also will be followed at the finals, although the same players need not be designated for preliminary rounds and finals competition.

The number of individuals in the dugout shall not exceed 35; if the host institution provides bat handlers, 36 individuals shall be permitted.

An institution that is advised it is in violation of this regulation and does not promptly conform to it automatically shall forfeit the competition. There shall be no inordinate delay of the contest to allow a competing institution to conform to the rule.

Section 2•2 Results

TEAM SCHEDULES AND ROSTERS

Deadline — January 18: Team schedules must be input on the stats site. Reference the schedule instructions for more information. Rosters should be updated before the team’s first contest.
**RATING PERCENTAGE INDEX (RPI)**

The RPI is intended to be used as one of many valuable resources provided to the committee in the selection, seeding and bracketing process. It never should be considered anything but an additional evaluation tool. No computer program that is based on pure numbers can take into account subjective concepts (e.g., how well a team is playing down the stretch, what the loss or return or a top player means to a team or how emotional a specific conference game may be).

Several independent elements are combined to produce the RPI. These elements are part of the statistical information that can be utilized by each member in an objective manner. Each committee member independently evaluates a vast pool of information available during the process to develop individual preferences. It is these opinions — developed after many hours of personal observations (e.g., games watched); review of regional rankings submitted by coaches; discussion with coaches, directors of athletics, senior woman administrators and commissioners; and review and comparison of objective data — that dictate how each individual ultimately will vote on all issues related to the selection, seeding and bracketing process.

While the various elements of the RPI are important in the evaluation process, the tournament bracket each year is based on the subjectivity of each individual committee member to select the best at-large teams available and to create a nationally-balanced championship.

**Section 2•3 Selection Information**

**ALLOCATION OF BERTHS**

The championship provides for a field of 64 teams. Thirty-two conferences are provided automatic qualification and the remaining 32 teams are selected at-large. Sixteen teams will be seeded. Each of the seeded teams will be placed at one of the regional sites and will host regional competition provided a team bids to host and meets the hosting requirements. Four teams will participate at each of 16 regional sites in a double-elimination tournament. The 16 teams advancing from regional competition will participate in a two-team, best-of-three super regional at eight sites.

The eight super regional winners will advance to the NCAA Women’s College World Series.

**AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION**

Conferences that have been granted automatic-qualification privileges for the 2017 championship are:

- America East Conference
- American Athletic Conference
- Atlantic Coast Conference
- Atlantic 10 Conference
- Atlantic Sun Conference
- Big East Conference
- Big Sky Conference
- Big South Conference
- Big Ten Conference
- Big 12 Conference
- Big West Conference
- Colonial Athletic Association
- Conference USA
- Horizon League
- The Ivy League
- Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference
- Mid-American Conference
- Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference
- Missouri Valley Conference
- Mountain West Conference
- Northeast Conference
- Ohio Valley Conference
- Pac-12 Conference
- Patriot League
- Southeastern Conference
- Southern Conference
- Southland Conference
- Southwestern Athletic Conference
- The Summit League
- Sun Belt Conference
- West Coast Conference
- Western Athletic Conference

**AT-LARGE SELECTION**

To be considered during the at-large selection process, a team must have an overall won-lost record of .500 or better.

**Bylaw 31.3.3.1 – Countable Competition**

For NCAA team-championship selection purposes, competition is countable only when the teams played are varsity intercollegiate teams of four-year, degree-granting institutions that conduct a majority of their competition in that team...
sport against varsity intercollegiate teams (see Constitution 3.2.4.5) of United States four-year, degree-granting institutions. Competition against service teams, professional teams, semiprofessional teams, amateur teams, two-year colleges and club teams shall be excluded.

**PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES**

An institution desiring to participate in the championship must complete all games (including conference tournament games) before the final scheduled selection Sunday, May 14.

**TRAVEL INFORMATION**

**Air Travel.** If you are located more than 400 miles from the host site, please contact Short’s Travel Management at 866/655-9215 as soon as possible to make your air travel arrangements. Be prepared to provide the names of the members of the travel party of 28 (30 for the Women’s College World Series).

**Ground Travel.** If you are within 400 miles from the host site, you will travel via bus and must make your arrangements via Shorts Travel and GO Ground at 866/386-4951. The ground transportation portal may be accessed at www.gochampionships.com (same username/password used for Short’s Travel expenses). You must advise the host institution of your travel arrangements by noon Wednesday, May 17.

**Lodging.** The host institution has reserved 18 rooms for each team. Please obtain hotel information from the tournament director. All teams must stay at the designated hotel and use the appropriate number of rooms unless you receive a written release from the hotel manager. Otherwise, you will be financially responsible for the rooms.

**Section 2.4 Selection Criteria**

The following criteria shall be employed by a governing sports committee in selecting participants for NCAA championships competition [Bylaw 31.3.3; Criteria for Selection of Participants]:

- Won-lost record;
- Strength of schedule; and
- Eligibility and availability of student-athletes for NCAA championships;

In addition to Bylaw 31.3.3, the Softball Committee has received approval from the Division I Championships/Competition Cabinet to consider the following criteria in the selection of at-large teams for the softball championship (not necessarily in priority order):

**PRIMARY CRITERIA**

- Rating Percentage Index (25% the institution’s winning percentage; 50% opponents’ success; 25% opponents’ strength of schedule); also bonus points for wins against the top 50 teams and penalty points for losses against the teams 225 and below.
- Head-to-head competition.
  - Results of the RPI
    - record against ranked teams 1-25; 26-50, 51-100; 101-150;
    - average RPI win;
    - average RPI loss.
  - Results versus common opponents.
  - Significant wins and losses.
  - End-of-season results

In making bracket assignments, the closest geographical consideration will be used as well as the ability to separate conference opponents during regional competition. Per Bylaw 31.1.3.2.5, seeded teams will have an opportunity to host regional competition provided they meet all hosting requirements and have submitted a bid to host by the April 16 deadline. Selection of teams shall be completed Sunday, May 15.
Section 2.5  Site Selection

Any institution or conference interested in hosting a preliminary round of the 2017 NCAA Division I Softball Championship must submit a proposed budget, facility evaluation form, key contacts form and video board questionnaire (if applicable) to be considered to host. A separate proposed budget and key contacts form must be submitted for each round that an institution or conference is interested in hosting.

Committee/site representative’s per diem, mileage and luggage fees will be paid directly by the NCAA and not the host institution. Game officials will be reimbursed via the ArbiterPay system for their game fee, per diem, mileage and luggage fees. Hosts will no longer pay these fees.

For both the game officials and committee/site representatives, hosts will pay lodging expenses and be reimbursed by the NCAA through the budget process. However, if the NCAA manages the hotel block for the game officials, the officials’ lodging expenses shall be directly billed to the NCAA. The NCAA typically manages the officials’ hotel block at the final site for championships.

All bid-related forms can be accessed via the following website: https://web1.ncaa.org/champsBidV20/exec/login. The deadline to submit all materials for hosting preliminary rounds is April 17, 2017.

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT
[Reference: Bylaw 31.4 in the NCAA Manual.]

A final financial report from each championship site must be submitted via the online host reporting system to the NCAA not later than 60 days after the competition.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding the bid process, please contact the NCAA Championships and Alliances staff at 317/917-6397 or championshipbid@ncaa.org.

PROSPECTIVE HOSTS

Host bid information and deadlines will be included in NCAAconnect in the coming months. The list below provides facility requirements for softball championship hosts.

1. Field dimensions: The distance of the outfield fences shall not exceed 235 feet. Outfield fences shall be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields (200 preferred). If a portable fence is used, it must be placed at a distance of 200 feet in left and right fields, and 220 feet in center field. All portable fencing must be secured so as to prevent balls from rolling under. The outfield fence is required to be a minimum of four feet but highly recommended to be a minimum of six feet. Please see page 24 of the 2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Rules Book for future requirements.

2. Backstop, sideline and outfield fences must enclose the playing field.

3. The infield must be skinned; the outfield must be natural grass or grass-like synthetic surfaces.

4. There must be a minimum of 25 feet and a maximum of 30 feet from home plate to the backstop.

5. The facility must be enclosed in order to charge admission, with minimum seating capacity of 500 unobstructed-view seats.

6. Concessions and an athletic training facility must be available on site. If permanent facilities are not available, tents may be used to meet this requirement.

7. Restroom facilities must be available, readily accessible and reserved exclusively for student-athletes and team personnel during the course of the game (e.g., permanent restrooms). Adequate restrooms at the facility also must be made available for the spectators. Permanent restrooms are preferred; however, portable are acceptable if this is the only option for private and team-use-only facilities.

8. An electronic scoreboard, public address system (including backup, if possible).

9. A warm-up area must be provided for the two non-playing teams. Minimally, designated restricted areas for throwing and stretching only must be provided to teams in the immediate proximity to the playing field.

10. On-site parking must be provided for teams, tournament personnel and umpires.
11. A covered interview area must be provided separate from spectator and hospitality areas.

12. A tarp must be available for inclement weather.

13. Dugouts must be covered and enclosed from spectators.

14. A minimum of six phone lines and Internet access must be available for use at press row (radio, Internet, phone, fax).

15. Press box: Institutions are required to have minimally a three-sided, covered press box with Internet access and telephone.

16. Two separate bullpen areas of comparable composition to the competition field (dirt is preferred) and distance from dugouts must be provided. Bullpens must be separated from the spectator access area. Dirt bullpens are required at the Women’s College World Series.

17. A full complement of grounds crew personnel must be on site at all times during practice and competition.

18. Umpire facilities: A private dressing area (to accommodate both males and females) must be provided. Portable locker rooms, recreation vehicles, etc., may be used; however, a tent does not fulfill this requirement.

19. In order to host preliminary rounds, a lighted facility is required. (Minimum lighting requirement for television is 125 footcandles).

20. Hosts must provide, in the participant manual, a list of equipment available to all teams (i.e., screens, pitching machines, etc.) and a list of indoor facilities.

21. Videotaping. All team camera locations will be located in the center field area and be unmanned. The site representative or a designee will check them periodically to ensure they are operational. The host will provide three-foot-high platforms in both right- and left-center fields approximately 20 feet from center field. Teams that do not comply with these policies will forfeit all video footage. (See camera protocol on page 33 for specifications.)

HOST REPORTING SYSTEM

An online proposed budget must be completed for each round of competition you wish to host. For those institutions submitting bids for multiple rounds, a “copy” function is available and will allow you to transfer budget information between rounds. The appropriate round and date of competition must be indicated on each budget. Please be sure to include projected ticket sales in the Receipts section.

As a result of the restructuring of the online budget system, there no longer is an “unbudgeted disbursements” section. Therefore, all lodging expenses for officials and site representatives (if needed) must be included in your budget. Officials’ fees, per diem and travel expenses do not need to be included, nor do per diem and travel expenses for site representatives — the NCAA will pay those expenses directly.

FACILITY EVALUATION FORM

A facility evaluation form must be completed by each institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition.

If you submitted a facility evaluation form for this championship last year, the responses to a number of questions will auto-populate with information you submitted last year. Please verify or edit those responses as needed, and provide responses to all blank questions. Please refer to page 17 of this manual for alternate sites and site selection procedures.

KEY CONTACTS FORM

The key contacts form and instructions are available online. Please complete a key contacts form for each round of competition you wish to host. A “copy” function is also available for the key contacts form, allowing you to transfer this information between rounds. The appropriate round and date of competition must be indicated on each key contacts form. NOTE: The tournament director must be institutional staff with decision making responsibilities, preferably with oversight of the softball program.

Personnel who will administer the competition should be listed on the key contacts form. Please include the proper mailing address for overnight deliveries. P.O. Box addresses are not acceptable.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

Based upon a review of current and future Championships competition venues, discussions with safety and security experts, and their own expertise and knowledge, the NCAA has established a Safety and Security Advisory Group (SSAG) to develop a compilation of Best Practices for NCAA Championships, which can be found in the “Help/Other Resources” tab in the
championship host portal. We urge each competition venue to take these Best Practices into account when developing its safety and security program.

As part of your bid, please submit a safety and security plan for your venue, which would be inclusive of the NCAA Championships Safety and Security Team contact information form, located in Appendix A of the Best Practices document. This information should be submitted to Laura Peterson-Mlynski at the NCAA (lpetersen@ncaa.org) as part of your bid to be considered for championship site selection.
Appendixes

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Appendix A • Brackets

2017 NCAA Division I
SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

REGIONALS
May 19-21

SUPER REGIONALS
May 25-28

SUPER REGIONALS
May 25-28

REGIONALS
May 19-21

Women’s College World Series
June 1-7

Women’s College World Series Teams

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

ALL GAME TIMES ARE EASTERN STANDARD TIME.
All ESPN games are also available on WatchESPN.

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NCAA Women’s College World Series
## Appendix B • Sport Sponsorship

### Northeast Region

**America East Conference (7)**
- University at Albany
- Binghamton University
- University of Hartford
- University of Maine, Orono
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- University of Massachusetts Lowell (2017)
- Stony Brook University

**Atlantic 10 Conference (10)**
- University of Dayton
- Fordham University
- George Mason University
- George Washington University
- La Salle University
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- University of Rhode Island
- Saint Bonaventure University
- Saint Joseph’s University
- Saint Louis University

**Colonial Athletic Association (8)**
- College of Charleston (South Carolina)
- University of Delaware
- Drexel University
- Elon University
- Hofstra University
- James Madison University
- University of North Carolina Wilmington
- Towson University

**The Ivy League (8)**
- Brown University
- Columbia University-Barnard College
- Cornell University
- Dartmouth College
- Harvard University
- University of Pennsylvania
- Princeton University
- Yale University

**Patriot League (7)**
- Boston University
- Bucknell University
- Colgate University
- College of the Holy Cross
- Lafayette College
- Lehigh University
- U.S. Military Academy
# SOUTH REGION

## Atlantic Coast Conference (11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston College</td>
<td>University of Notre Dame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida State University</td>
<td>University of Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Syracuse University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Louisville</td>
<td>University of Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill</td>
<td>Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina State University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Atlantic Sun Conference (8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida Gulf Coast University</td>
<td>University of North Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville State University</td>
<td>Northern Kentucky University (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennesaw State University*</td>
<td>University of South Carolina Upstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lipscomb University</td>
<td>Stetson University</td>
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## Big South Conference (9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campbell University</td>
<td>Longwood University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston Southern University</td>
<td>Presbyterian College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal Carolina University</td>
<td>Radford University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner-Webb University</td>
<td>Winthrop University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty University</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethune-Cookman University</td>
<td>Morgan State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppin State University</td>
<td>Norfolk State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware State University</td>
<td>North Carolina A&amp;T State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida A&amp;M University</td>
<td>North Carolina Central University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton University</td>
<td>Savannah State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard University</td>
<td>South Carolina State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maryland Eastern Shore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Southern Conference (7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Tennessee State University</td>
<td>Samford University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furman University</td>
<td>University of Tennessee at Chattanooga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer University</td>
<td>Western Carolina University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina at Greensboro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**NCAA PRE-CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL**

DIVISION I SOFTBALL

24 NCAA PRE-CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL
### MIDEAST REGION

#### Big Ten Conference (14)
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Indiana University, Bloomington
- University of Iowa
- University of Maryland, College Park
- University of Michigan
- Michigan State University
- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- University of Nebraska, Lincoln
- Northwestern University
- The Ohio State University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Purdue University
- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick
- University of Wisconsin-Madison

#### Horizon League (8)
- Cleveland State University
- University of Detroit Mercy
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- Oakland University
- Valparaiso University
- University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
- Wright State University
- Youngstown State University

#### Mid-American Conference (12)
- University of Akron
- Ball State University
- Bowling Green State University
- University at Buffalo, the State University of New York
- Central Michigan University
- Eastern Michigan University
- Kent State University
- Miami University (Ohio)
- Northern Illinois University
- Ohio University
- University of Toledo
- Western Michigan University

#### The Summit League (7)
- Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne
- Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis
- University of Nebraska Omaha (2016)
- North Dakota State University
- University of South Dakota
- South Dakota State University
- Western Illinois University
### MIDWEST REGION

#### Big 12 Conference (7)

- Baylor University
- Iowa State University
- University of Kansas
- University of Oklahoma
- Oklahoma State University
- University of Texas at Austin
- Texas Tech University

#### Missouri Valley Conference (10)

- Bradley University
- Drake University
- University of Evansville
- Illinois State University
- Indiana State University
- Loyola University Chicago
- Missouri State University
- University of Northern Iowa
- Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
- Wichita State University

#### Southland Conference (12)

- Abilene Christian University (2018)
- University of Central Arkansas
- Houston Baptist University
- University of the Incarnate Word
- Lamar University
- McNeese State University
- Nicholls State University
- Northwestern State University
- Sam Houston State University
- Southeastern Louisiana University
- Stephen F. Austin State University
- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

#### Sun Belt Conference (9)

- Appalachian State University
- Georgia Southern University
- Georgia State University
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- University of Louisiana at Monroe
- University of South Alabama
- University of Texas at Arlington
- Texas State University
- Troy University
## CENTRAL REGION

### Conference USA (12)
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Florida Atlantic University
- Florida International University
- Louisiana Tech University
- Marshall University
- Middle Tennessee State University
- University of North Carolina, Charlotte
- University of North Texas
- University of Southern Mississippi
- University of Texas at El Paso
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- Western Kentucky University

### Ohio Valley Conference (12)
- Austin Peay State University
- Belmont University
- Eastern Illinois University
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Jacksonville State University
- Morehead State University
- Murray State University
- Southeast Missouri State University
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- University of Tennessee at Martin
- Tennessee State University
- Tennessee Technological University

### Southeastern Conference (13)
- University of Alabama
- University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
- Auburn University
- University of Florida
- University of Georgia
- University of Kentucky
- Louisiana State University
- University of Mississippi
- Mississippi State University
- University of Missouri, Columbia
- University of South Carolina, Columbia
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Texas A&M University, College Station

### Southwestern Athletic Conference (10)
- Alabama A&M University
- Alabama State University
- Alcorn State University
- University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff
- Grambling State University
- Jackson State University
- Mississippi Valley State University
- Prairie View A&M University
- Southern University, Baton Rouge
- Texas Southern University
## WEST REGION

**Big Sky Conference (8)**
- California State University, Sacramento
- Idaho State University
- University of Northern Colorado
- University of North Dakota
- University of Montana
- Portland State University
- Southern Utah University
- Weber State University

**Big West Conference (8)**
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Riverside
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- California Polytechnic State University
- California State University, Fullerton
- California State University, Northridge
- University of Hawaii, Manoa
- Long Beach State University

**Western Athletic Conference (6)**
- California State University, Bakersfield
- Grand Canyon University (2018)
- University of Missouri-Kansas City
- New Mexico State University
- Seattle University
- Utah Valley University

## PACIFIC REGION

**Mountain West Conference (9)**
- Boise State University
- California State University, Fresno
- Colorado State University
- University of Nevada, Reno
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of New Mexico
- San Diego State University
- San Jose State University
- Utah State University

**Pac-12 Conference (9)**
- University of Arizona
- Arizona State University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of Oregon
- Oregon State University
- Stanford University
- University of Utah
- University of Washington

**West Coast Conference (6)**
- Brigham Young University
- Loyola Marymount University
- University of the Pacific
- St. Mary’s College of California
- University of San Diego
- Santa Clara University
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<td>Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus</td>
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<td>Mount Saint Mary’s University</td>
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**Appendix C • Postseason Preliminary Rounds Information**

**ATMOSPHERE**

Hosts must provide a neutral atmosphere that enhances the student-athlete experience for all participating teams (e.g., announcer, in-venue fan treatment, equitable locker rooms, access to facility and equipment).

**AWARDS-PARTICIPANT MEDALLIONS**

Participant medallions will be given at regional and super regional sites to the non-advancing teams. Each non-advancing team will receive 20 medallions (squad size). Teams may purchase additional medallions at the following link http://www.mtmrecognition.com/ncaa/.

**ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS**

The use of artificial noisemakers, air horns, cow bells, ball buckets, etc., and electronic amplifiers by student-athletes and team personnel is prohibited while on site for competition. For the purpose of this rule, the field, bullpens and dugouts are considered to be on site. See Rule 5.11 (page 53) of the 2016 and 2017 NCAA softball rules book.

Fans also are prohibited from using artificial noisemakers while on site.

**EQUIPMENT**

All teams at the site will have the same access to all equipment. If there is a discrepancy in the quality of the equipment (batting cages, for example), all teams will be provided equal time to use the best equipment.

**DETERMINATION OF HOME/AWAY AND UNIFORM COLORS**

The home team will occupy the third base dugout and shall select the desired uniform color first. The visiting team must wear a contrasting uniform color to the jersey of the home team. Discrepancies will be settled by the site representative in consultation with the umpire. As a reminder, when teams play back-to-back games, team must be prepared to change uniforms, if necessary. Noncompliance with this policy may result in misconduct as outlined in the Softball Pre-Championship Manual.

The home team for the first round will be the higher-seeded team. In subsequent games, the home team will be determined according to the following formula:

1. The games committee will designate as home team the institution that has been home team the fewest times (regionals and finals are considered separately).
2. If two teams have been home team an equal number of times but visiting team an unequal number of times, the team that has been the visitor most often will be designated as the home team.
3. If two teams have been both home team and visiting team an equal number of times, and if the two teams previously met, the visitor in the initial game shall be the home team in the second game.
4. If games between the same teams are back to back, the home team will be the visitor from the previous game regardless of the number of times either team has been home or visitor.
5. If two teams have been both home team and visiting team an equal number of times, the team that was the visitor in its preceding game will be the home team, unless both teams were the visitor in their preceding games.
6. If the preceding formula does not prevail, the higher-seeded team shall determine if it would like to be home or visitor.
7. When teams play back-to-back games, they must be prepared to change uniforms and dugouts, if necessary.

**SQUAD SIZE/DUGOUT SIZE AND CREDENTIALS**

**Squad Size/Travel Party.** Each team is limited to 20 eligible players in uniform and an official traveling party of 28, including one sports information director.

The travel party for the Women’s College World Series will increase from 28 to 30, the squad size is 20 student-athletes in uniform and the dugout size will be 32. The travel party size for regionals and super regionals will remain at 28 (20 student-athletes) and dugout size at 35.

**Dugout Size.** The number of individuals in the dugout shall not exceed 35.
Credentials. The following credentials will be distributed at the administrative meeting: 30 participant credentials, one media credential for the sports information director, two all-access credentials for institutional administrators and five to be used at the institution’s discretion. (total of 33 credentials). Only the personnel with the appropriate credential will be permitted in credential-required areas (e.g., team warm-up areas, locker/team rooms, etc.). The squad size and official travel party will remain at 20 and 28, respectively. (20 and 30 at the Women's College World Series)

FIELD REQUIREMENTS

- **Field Surface.** For all NCAA postseason competition, the infield must be skinned (no turf), and the outfield must be natural grass or a grass-like synthetic surface.

- **Field Dimensions.** The distance of the outfield fences shall not exceed 235 feet. Outfield fences shall be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields (200 preferred). If a portable fence is used, it must be placed at a distance of 200 feet in left and right fields, and 220 feet in center field. All portable fencing must be secured so as to prevent balls from rolling under. The outfield fence is required to be a minimum of four feet but highly recommended to be a minimum of six feet. Please see page 26 of the 2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Rules Book for future requirements.

- **Backstop.** Backstop, sideline and outfield fences must enclose the playing field. When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, it must be padded from dugout to dugout, beginning no higher than one foot off the ground and extending to the top of the wood, cement or brick or six feet from the ground, whichever is shorter.

- **Bases.** While Rule 2.5 makes it permissible to stick a label on the rise of the base, for NCAA postseason competition, only a sticker or label with NCAA branding may be used.

- **Batting Cages.** If only one batting cage is available at the site, all teams will have equal time to its use before their game. The home team uses it first. The batting cage may be used while another game is being played as long as it does not interfere with the game in progress. If two batting cages of equal quality are available, each team will use one cage for warm-ups. (All teams have access to all equipment.)

- **Bullpens.** Two separate bullpen areas of comparable composition to the competition field (dirt is preferred) and distance from dugouts must be provided. Bullpens must be separated from the spectator access area.
  - **Pitchers.** Pitchers for the upcoming game may use the bullpen area provided it does not interfere with the game in progress and only when the bullpen area is not in use by either of the participating teams (i.e., both bullpens must be open for this opportunity to be used and the opportunity ends if either participating team desires to use a bullpen).

- **Dugouts.** Dugouts must be covered and enclosed from spectators. In the case of an "if" game, it may become necessary to change dugouts. If both teams agree, teams may stay in the previous game’s dugout; however, the determination of home teams is followed, no exceptions. Only 30 people are allowed in the dugout. (32 at WCWS - see Dugout size)

- **Electronic Scoreboard.** An electronic scoreboard, public address system (including backup, if possible) and press box telephone must be available.

- **Lights.** Required in order to host a preliminary round.

- **Press Box.** Institutions are required to have minimally a three-sided, covered press box with internet access.

- **Tarp.** A tarp must be available for inclement weather.

ADDITIONAL FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **Restrooms.** Restroom facilities must be available, readily accessible and reserved exclusively for student-athletes and team personnel during the course of the game (e.g., permanent restrooms). Adequate restrooms at the facility also must be made available for the spectators. Permanent restrooms are preferred; however, portable are acceptable if this is the only option for private and team-use-only facilities.

- **Scouting Seats.** Three scouting seats per team will be reserved behind home plate (rows 1 or 2). Official members of the coaching staff only are permitted in the scouting seats.

- **Field Stencils.** Institutional field stencils are not permitted on the competition field.

- **Warm-up Area.** A warm-up area must be provided for the two non-playing teams. Minimally, designated restricted areas for throwing and stretching only must be provided to teams in the immediate proximity to the playing field.

- **Video Review Area.** To accommodate postgame review per Rule 5.9.9, for NCAA postseason competition a host shall provide an area for review (a private area as close to the field as possible) and television or institutional replay equipment may be used. Note: Institutional equipment includes video from either participating institution.
Videotaping. All team camera locations will be located in the center field area and be unmanned. The site representative or a designee will check them periodically to ensure they are operational. The host will provide three-foot-high platforms in both right-and left-center fields approximately 20 feet from center field. If a facility cannot provide this, then teams should be given equitable access in a similar location to videotape.

Rule 5.9.1 – A team may film or videotape only contests that it is playing, but may record (from video truck, satellite feed or airwaves, not video camera) any game that is or will be televised. Recording from the dugout is PROHIBITED during NCAA postseason play. Exception: A tournament host may stream video of all games in its tournament and is not restricted to filming and streaming video of only games in which it is a participant.

TEAM/LOCKER ROOM USAGE

- Host teams must provide equal accommodations to facilities (i.e., locker room or team room) for all teams.
- If two locker/team rooms are available at the softball facility, the two competing teams will have full access to its assigned locker room beginning at the start of its on-field warm-ups until the completion of the game. The host institution may not access its locker room until the final game of each day is complete.
- If only one locker/team room is available at the softball facility, no team will have access to the host institution locker room. The host institution may access its locker room only after they have completed its final game of each day.
- Plans need to be made for inclement weather situations for all teams, which may include staying on team buses.
- A visiting team designated as the home team during competition will be allowed access to the host team’s locker/team room two hours before the game and during the game if any of the following are true: 1) there are only two locker/team rooms at the competition field; 2) the locker room/team rooms are attached to the dugouts; or 3) the visiting team is assigned to the host team’s dugout based on the determination of home team formula. The visiting team will be allowed access to the host team’s facilities after the last out of the previous game, during pregame warm-ups and during the game if there are multiple games on any given day.
- Teams will maintain possession of the locker/team room during delayed games (e.g., rain delay) until the contest has been completed. Two equitable areas must be designated for participating teams if locker rooms are not available. Plans need to be made for inclement weather situations for all teams, which may include staying on team buses.
- At super regionals, the host institution will be permitted to use its locker/team room regardless of being designated as the home or visiting team; however, if the locker/team room is attached to the dugout designated to a visiting team, the home team must vacate the locker/team room two hours before the scheduled start of the game. Regardless of locker/team room location, the designated visiting team will bat first and occupy the first base dugout and the designated home team will bat second and occupy the third base dugout.

TICKETS

- Hosts are required to provide each team 75 tickets behind team dugouts and up to an additional 25 tickets elsewhere in the stadium for regionals and 100 premium tickets for super regionals. Hosts must hold tickets for teams until the team confirms the number of tickets to be used not later than Tuesday before the first scheduled competition by 5 p.m. local time.
- Host institution may choose to purchase tickets for students; however, the institution is financially responsible for those tickets. Tickets may not be charged to the championship budget.

COMPETITION

Game Times. Game times must be set 2 1/2 hours apart.

Regional: Games may be scheduled on Friday and Sunday, noon to 8:30 p.m. local time, and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. local time. (Regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy. (Thursday games may be scheduled noon to 8:30 p.m. local time.)

Super regionals: All super regionals are televised by ESPN, which will set the game days and times in conjunction with the Softball Committee. Games for super regionals may be Thursday-Saturday or Friday-Sunday.

Length of Game — Halted and Interrupted Games

All games shall be seven innings except if the Eight-Run Rule (6.13) is applied. If play has been stopped before seven innings have been completed, the Halted and Interrupted Game Rule shall be in effect. (Rule 6.17.)
Eight-run Rule
The Eight-Run Rule (Rule 6.13) will be in effect for all postseason games until the best-of-three championship final games are played (between the final two teams of the championship). For the championship best-of-three series, the Eight-Run Rule will be set aside.

Super Regional Weather Delays
If there is a weather delay during super regional competition, teams will have three days to complete the super regional competition before the inclement weather policy (section 1.6) will be applied.

PRACTICE
Equipment
Screens and chalk should be available for teams upon arrival on the practice fields. If possible, a groundskeeper should be present when the team arrives to assist with any immediate needs. Two dozen practice balls in buckets, two hitting tees and one protective screen should be available in each cage. Any equipment available for use by the host team must be available to the visiting teams.

Practice Times
Practice times should be assigned in accordance with first-day competition schedule. Team practices on the competition field will be at least one hour; however, practice sessions may be longer as long as the length is equal for all participating teams. Note: A team may not arrive at a site a day early due to its practice time (see NCAA reimbursement policies).

PROTOCOLS

- **Camera Protocol.** All team camera locations will be in center field, and they will be unmanned and checked periodically by the site representative or a designee to be sure they are operational.
  - **Right View Pro Cameras or Similar Electronic Devices.** The cameras must be covered during competition.

- **Pregame Protocol.** If a practice field is available, teams may warm up on the practice field (equal amount of time for each team). Each team is allowed five minutes for its individual line drills/warm-up practice on the competition field and will complete line drills on the field at the same time: home team along the baseline between third and second and visiting team along the baseline between first and second.

  After both teams have completed use of the batting cages and warm-up areas (use of those facilities is established by the tournament director), it is permissible to move onto the game-field area for warm up under the following conditions:

  The preceding game has ended and both participating teams have cleared the field and dugout area.

  Team equipment is stored in the dugout or along the outfield fence so the grounds crew may water the entire infield area (including foul territory).

  Warm up before the designated pregame protocol (24 minutes before game) is limited to the outfield area nearest the team’s dugout until the infield crew has left the field.

  If time remains after the grounds crew has completed its work, and before the start of the designated 24-minute pregame protocol, a team may field groundballs on the dirt in foul territory behind first or third base in the outfield.

Postgame Interviews Protocol

- Mandatory for the head coach and requested student-athletes.
- There will be a 10-minute cooling-off period and following the conclusion of the cooling-off period, the winning team will attend the press conference first, followed by the non-winning team.
- Only credentialed members of the media and participating institutions’ administration shall attend the postgame press conference.

Team Introductions Protocol — (non-starters followed by starters)

- Visiting team (lines up on baseline in front of dugout, facing dugout; first player lines up nearest home plate, with last person named lining up nearest first base).
- Home team (lines up on baseline in front of dugout, facing dugout; first player lines up nearest home plate, with last person named lining up nearest third base).
- Introduction of umpires (stand behind home plate).
WEATHER POLICY

If the regular game schedule needs to be altered due to weather or unforeseen circumstances, the following guidelines shall be used before the NCAA representative informs the teams:

- No more than three games by any one team will be scheduled in one day.
- If possible, games will not be scheduled to begin before 9 a.m. or after 11 p.m.
- If regional competition cannot be completed Sunday, the last time to start a regional championship game (i.e., Games 6 and “if” 7) to complete the regional finals is the Monday immediately preceding the super regional at 11 p.m.
- If super regional competition cannot be completed as scheduled, the last time to start a super regional championship game (i.e., Game 3) to complete the super regional finals is the Monday immediately preceding the Women’s College World Series at 11 p.m.
- If play is suspended before the completion of the regional and super regional and competition ceases, teams will be advanced per the formula (see the rain delay advancement formula; length and schedule of games) in the pre-championship manual.
- If the game schedule cannot be adhered to, time must be permitted for field maintenance and warm-up periods for both teams before the start of the next scheduled game. There should be no less than 45 minutes between games except for between Games 6 and 7 at regionals (30 minutes). The grounds crew should be allowed 15 minutes, with five minutes for line drills and four minutes for team introductions.