



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S FENCING COMMITTEE  
JUNE 6, 2017, TELECONFERENCE**

**KEY ITEMS.**

1. **Regional host site selection.** Submission of proposed host sites for 2018 regional competition.
2. **Wheelchair fencing.** The committee discussed and made recommendations regarding the participation of a wheelchair fencer in NCAA competition.

**ACTION ITEMS.**

1. **Legislative items.**

- None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

- **Site Selection - Regionals.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the Competition Oversight Committee approve the following institutions as hosts for the 2018 National Collegiate Fencing Championships regional round of competition:

**Northeast** - Brandeis University; Waltham, Massachusetts.

**Mid-Atlantic/South** - Lafayette College; Easton, Pennsylvania.

**Midwest** - Cleveland State University; Cleveland, Ohio.

**West** - California Institute of Technology; Pasadena, California.

- (2) Effective date. 2018 championships.
- (3) Rationale. Each region's national committee members work with their regional advisory committee to determine a host rotation/selection for each year. The national committee approved these sites after discussions amongst the respective regional committees, and confirming availability of each institution.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. There will be no additional budgetary impact. [Note: Each regional host will receive a \$7,000 stipend. In total, regional competition will have a

planned budget impact of \$28,000. Currently, the NCAA does not reimburse travel or per diem expenses for participants.]

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

**1. Wheelchair fencing.** The Ohio State University approached the NCAA playing rules staff regarding whether a member of the school's fencing team, who is in a wheelchair, could participate in NCAA fencing competition. The playing rules staff referred this question to the committee for consideration.

With assistance from the playing rules staff, the committee considered three guiding principles that have been used when requests of this nature have been fielded from other sports: (1) safety or increased potential risk of injury; (2) the change of an essential element that would fundamentally alter the nature of the competition; and (3) the creation of an unfair advantage over other participants.

NCAA fencing relies on the US Fencing Rules book for all competitions. When it comes to wheelchair fencing, US Fencing defers to the International Wheelchair Amputee Sports Federation rules. There is no mention in either of these books about any rules or structures that pertain to fencing between a wheelchair fencer and a non-wheelchair fencer. As such, the committee determined that allowing a student-athlete in a wheelchair to compete in fencing against a fencer not in a wheelchair would change an essential element that fundamentally alters the nature of the sport (moving back and forth on the strip, as a wheelchair fencer is "locked" in one position). Given the lack of rules pertaining to this type of competition and the fundamental differences between fencing and wheelchair fencing, the committee determined that it would not be appropriate to alter the current rules to allow a student-athlete in a wheelchair to compete in NCAA fencing competition.

The committee did note, however, that it would support Ohio State welcoming this student-athlete as a member of the team, even though the athlete would not be able to compete, as it would continue to grow the diversity of the campus fencing community as well as bring awareness to wheelchair fencing in general. This also prompted a discussion on how the committee can promote wheelchair fencing in and around communities hosting the NCAA championships. Accordingly, the committee will continue this conversation to explore whether opportunities exist.

*Committee Chair:* Maureen McNamara, University of Notre Dame, Atlantic Coast Conference  
*Staff Liaison(s):* Eric Breece, Championships and Alliances

<b>NCAA Men's and Women's Fencing Committee June 6, 2017, Teleconference</b>	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
David Baker, Pennsylvania State University; Big Ten Conference.	
Liz Jarnigan, U.S. Air Force Academy; Mountain West Conference.	
Rob Lichten, Northwestern University; Big Ten Conference.	
Maureen McNamara, University of Notre Dame; Atlantic Coast Conference.	
David Poolman, Columbia University; The Ivy League.	
Lisa Posthumus, Stanford University; Pac-12 Conference.	
Bill Shipman, Brandeis University; University Athletic Association.	
Chris Spencer, Haverford College; Centennial Conference.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
None.	
<b>NCAA Liaison in Attendance:</b>	
Eric Breece, Championships and Alliances.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Carla Laster, Championships and Alliances.	
Andy Supergan, Playing Rules and Officiating.	