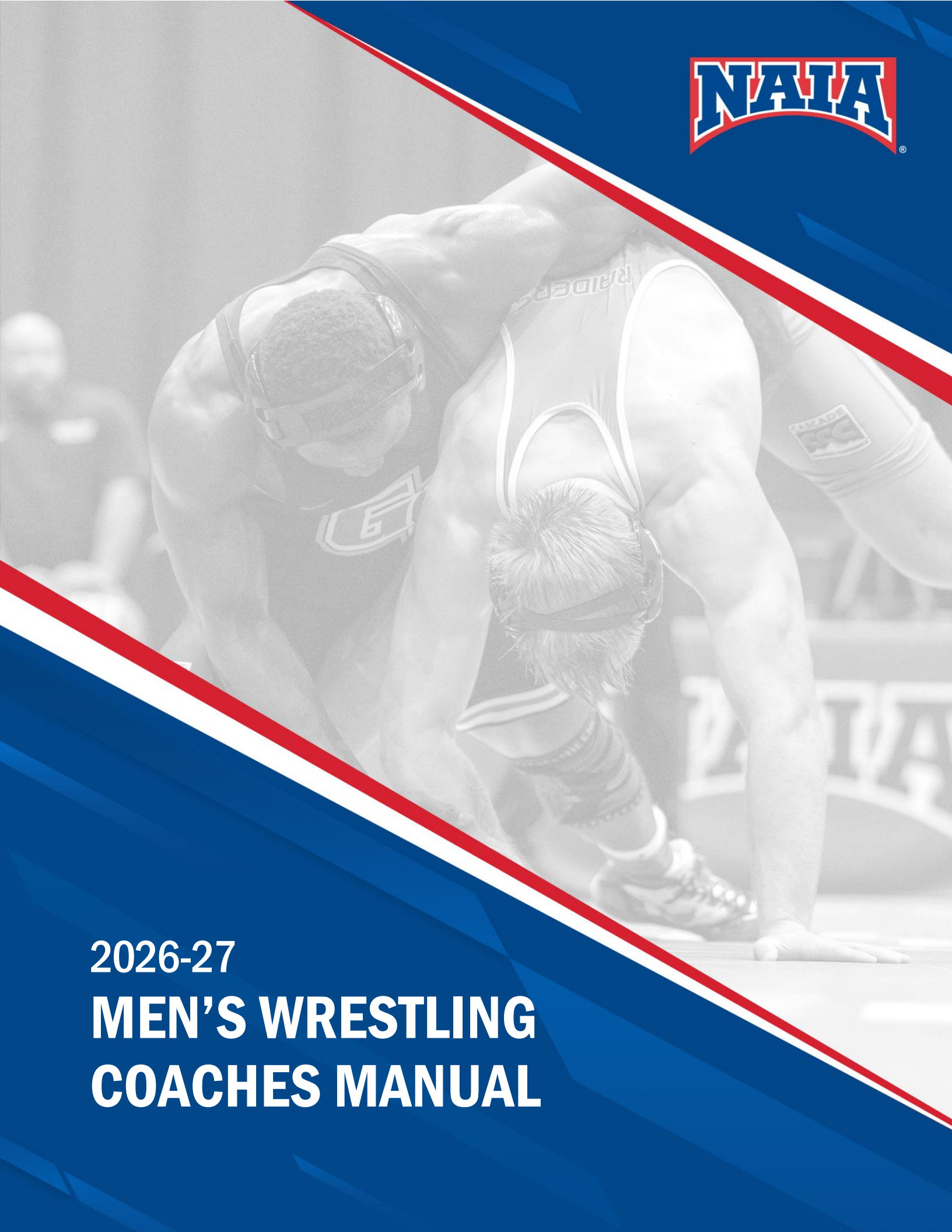


The background of the cover is a grayscale photograph of two male wrestlers in a physical struggle. One wrestler is in a defensive position, with his back to the camera, wearing a singlet with "RAIDERS" and a logo. The other wrestler is attacking from the front. The image is partially obscured by a large blue and red diagonal graphic that runs from the top left to the bottom right.

2026-27 MEN'S WRESTLING COACHES MANUAL



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816-595-8353

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IMPORTANT DATES

2026-27 MEN'S WRESTLING SPORT CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 15	START – Practices, Scrimmages and Exhibitions
OCTOBER 1	DEADLINE – Input the team's competition schedule into the Trackwrestling system
OCTOBER 16	START – Ratings <i>Dates: Oct. 22 (Preseason), Nov. 19, Dec. 10, Dec. 23, Jan. 21 & Feb. 10</i>
OCTOBER 22	START - Competitions
NOVEMBER 4	START – NAIA National Player of the Week Releases <i>Dates: Nov. 4, Nov. 11, Nov. 18, Jan. 13, Jan. 20, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 10</i>
JANUARY 23	DEADLINE – Undeclare from Postseason
JANUARY 31	DEADLINE – Nominations for Scholar-Athletes
FEBRUARY 1	RELEASE – Entry packets and National Championship Information
FEBRUARY 11	Release of Conference Allocations for 2027 NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships
FEBRUARY 15	DEADLINE – NAIA Champions of Character Individual Award nominations
FEBRUARY 20	DEADLINE <i>Affiliated conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Tournaments</i>
FEBRUARY 20	DEADLINE for completed Automatic Qualifier and At-Large forms from each qualifying tournaments (sent by Conference rater/chair)
FEBRUARY 23	RELEASE – National Championship Qualifiers
FEBRUARY 26	RELEASE – Release of Preliminary National Championship Brackets
MARCH 3	Team/Athlete Registration for NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships
MARCH 4-6	NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships – Hartmann Arena, Park City, KS
MARCH 6	RELEASE of NAIA Wrestling Coach of the Year and Most Outstanding Wrestler
MARCH 6	RELEASE of NAIA Men's Wrestling All-America Individuals
JUNE 30	DEADLINE – Nominations for NAIA Scholar Teams
JULY 15	DEADLINE – Nominations for NAIA Hall of Fame
JULY 16	DEADLINE – Sports Motion Due
JULY 30-AUGUST 1	NWCA Convention – Location: Austin, Texas

FIVE-YEAR CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR

	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Conference Tournament Deadline	February 20	February 19	February 17	February 16	February 22
National Championships	March 4-6	March 2-4	March 1-3	Feb 28-Mar 2	Mar 6-8

National Championship Website – [Click Here](#)

PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS

PLAYING RULES

Rules governing competition at the NAIA Wrestling National Championships are specified in [the NCAA Wrestling Rules and Interpretation Book](#), except for approved [NAIA Modifications](#) made by the NAIA-WCA and the NAIA National Administrative Council (NAC).

WEIGHT CERTIFICATION

All NAIA wrestlers must be examined by a certified athletic trainer or other certified medical personnel not sooner than September 1 and no later than November 1 annually. During the initial weight assessment, a wrestler's minimum wrestling weight class for the season shall be determined. Each institution shall keep on file a copy of its wrestlers' NCAA Weight-Management Program forms.

All institutions are required to properly set up and use the NWCA Optimal Performance Calculator (OPC). Wrestlers descending to their lowest certified weight class shall not weigh in more than one weight class above their predetermined lowest weight class.

Hosts of all individual and team-advancement tournaments, including preseason open tournaments, shall record and retain a copy of the NCAA Official Weigh-In form (see Rule 9.2.5), which shall also include the results of medical examinations (See Rule 9.1.1.).

The National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) has created a computer program to assist coaches, trainers, and administrators in completing the weight certification process. The NAIA-WCA passed a motion (which was passed by the CAA) at the 2003 annual business meeting requiring all NAIA coaches use the NWCA weight certification software. NAIA coaches can access the NWCA software at www.nwcaonline.com.

CONDUCT IN COMPETITION

EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

An ejection is an action enforced in conjunction with competition by a game official consistent with the playing rules in that sport. Ejections are not subject to appeal. Some sport rules allow protests through an official process outlined in each sport rule book.

Ejection reports must be completed by the NAIA game official ejecting a student-athlete or coach and the Athletic Director of the ejected student-athlete or coach. The form must be submitted to the NAIA within 48 hours after the completion of the contest.

[Ejection Report Form](#)

In the NAIA, any ejection in any sport carries a mandatory suspension of at least one game (see NAIA Bylaws Article VI, Section B, Item 7). In addition, the specific sport itself may also carry a suspension, as determined by rules of competition for that sport. If both an NAIA and sport rule suspension apply, the two suspensions run concurrently.

If a suspension is mandated by an NAIA bylaw, it may be appealed starting with the Conference/CAC Commissioner. An institution must submit an appeal to its conference within 72 hours of the completion of the contest. The conference will submit a recommendation to the NAIA within 72 hours of receiving the appeal from the institution. The Conduct and Ethics Committee is responsible for all appeals related to suspensions due to ejections of a coach and/or student-athlete.

Once an appeal with appropriate signatures has been submitted to the conference, the student-athlete/coach may continue to participate through the appeal process. If the appeal is not approved, then the student-athlete/coach must sit out of the next scheduled contest(s).

A suspended person cannot be in the competitive venue the day of the contest or communicate with any team personnel or game officials the day of the contest. The student-athlete/coach will normally be removed from the venue during a suspension. However, the game manager will use their best discretion on what is appropriate for risk management procedures regarding their venue.



POSTSEASON COMPETITION

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

OFFICIAL PARTY

Entry fee for the National Championship is \$150.00 per individual entry and payment is due upon registration. Qualifiers for the 2027 NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships will be released February 23, 2027.

All entries certified on the Official Entry Form MUST be listed on the affiliated/conference ranking form in order to enter the 2027 NAIA Wrestling National Championships.

Coaches may confirm up to twelve (12) wrestlers during registration. No roster/entry changes can be made after the close of registration. Specific information regarding official party, roster and credentials is included on the official roster entry form.

In the case of an injury to a national tournament qualifier prior to registration at the national championships, the head coach of the injured wrestler's institution will contact Candice Fabry (cfabry@naia.org). The head coach of the alternate wrestler will then accept or decline the invitation.

MEDICAL PERSONNEL

Each team is allowed up to two athletic training/medical personnel on the team sideline. One of which must be an ATC, MD, or DO. A licensed health care provider's license information/number must be submitted in the application in order to receive any medical/athletic training credentials for your team. Applications will close 72 hours before the event starts. Medical personnel credentials can be picked up during team check-in/registration only with a photo ID.

Please [apply here](#) for medical personnel credential.

SPORTS INFORMATION/MEDIA PERSONNEL

All SIDs/Media personnel will need to apply for a credential for the final site. Applications will close 72 hours before the event starts. Media Credentials can be picked up at the box office only with a photo ID. Media credentials will NOT be included in the team packets at coaches pick up.

Please [apply here](#) for a Final Site Media Credential.

ADMINISTRATOR PERSONNEL

All Presidents and Athletic Directors from qualifying teams will each receive two credentials. These credentials can be picked up at the box office. All other administrators will receive free admission with their NAIA membership card when presented at the box office.

Official Postseason Roster forms will now be filled out via NAIA Connect (<https://www.naiiaconnect.org/s/login>) and sent to the NAIA National Office. If you do not have a login account, please contact naiiaconnectsupport@naia.org. Once you login, please follow these [instructions](#).

Postseason rosters (and ejection disclosures) will be processed electronically and the administrator completing the roster will sign electronically. Postseason rosters no longer need to be sent to the NAIA National Office.

If you have trouble with the online roster form, please contact naiiaconnectsupport@naia.org. For any other general questions related to the official postseason rosters, please contact the NAIA Sport Manager.

UNIFORMS

Sponsor Logos

Approved NAIA uniform rules modifications to allow sponsor logos/patches during competition in Men's Wrestling.

- Limit of one sponsor logo or patch on a uniform.
- The logos may not exceed a standard size of 2.25 inches square.



- Sponsors of alcohol, tobacco, or any other legalized drugs (for example, Oregon marijuana) are not permitted.
- Sponsors whose sole or primary business function is sports gambling (e.g., FanDuel, DraftKings, etc.) are not permitted.
- Sponsor logos must be in the same location on each set of uniforms (e.g., if the home whites patch is on the neckline, all home whites must be the same; away jerseys could be in a different permissible location)

No sport-specific location restrictions. Placement - Primary Location: Front shoulder panel, opposite the manufacturer's logo. Between the apex of the neckline and the shoulder seam. Secondary Permissible Location: If neither of the above locations is available on the back of the jersey, the apex/center of the neckline is as close to the neckline as is possible.

EXPENSES

Each participating teams shall be responsible for its own expenses en route to, during and from all postseason events.

PARTICIPATION AT EVENTS

All participating teams and individuals competing in a National Championship, including Opening Rounds, must attend all event functions including, but not limited to – Parade of Champions, coaches meetings and Champions of Character initiatives. Failure to comply will result in a penalty of a \$1,500 fine to the institution.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITY

The coach or designated person for each participating team must be in attendance and is responsible for their team at all times while at the site of the National Championship. This person shall accept the responsibility for the conduct of his student-athletes at the National Championship site, during the championship and at all activities connected with the team's participation. In case of property damage, the offending institution shall be held financially responsible.

INSURANCE

Each participating team shall provide its own medical, hospitalization, travel and accident insurance for all members of its official party.

AFFILIATED CONFERENCE/CAC/UNAFFILIATED GROUP TOURNAMENTS

The Affiliated Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions)/Unaffiliated Group wrestling tournaments are planned and administered by the Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Wrestling Committee under the leadership of their respective chair and subject to approval of all standards and conditions as may be prescribed by the Affiliated Conference/CSC/Unaffiliated Group Executive Committee/Commissioner.

Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group tournament plans for all Winter sports must be submitted to the National Office no later than **November 1, 2026**.

DATES AND SITES

The deadline for completion of the NAIA wrestling national qualifying tournaments is midnight Saturday, February 20, 2027. Each conference/CAC/affiliated group is required to have a plan in place to alternate the hosting of their national qualifying tournament within the conference/CAC/affiliated group on an annual basis.

SELECTION OF WRESTLERS

Each school may enter up to 12 wrestlers in the conference/CAC/affiliated group tournament, with no more than two per weight class.

ADMINISTRATION

The conference/CAC/affiliated group wrestling chair (rater) will assist the host site coach and athletic director in the administration of the conference/CAC/affiliated group tournament. The group rater will oversee the pre- and post-tournament coaches' meetings and is responsible for completing the final group wrestler rating form.

SEEDING AND BRACKETING GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

All conference/CAC/affiliated groups will use the following criteria for seeding at that weight:

PRIMARY (in order listed below)

1. Head to head results – most recent results takes precedence
2. Results vs. common opponents

**SECONDARY (no weight order given)**

1. Common tournament place finishes
2. Past National Championship or Conference Tournament finishes
3. Overall records – quality/strength of opponents and schedule hold precedence win-loss record

The Conference tournament shall not seed more than 12-wrestlers in a given weight class.

Separating teammates in conference/CAC/affiliated group tournaments/national brackets - The following seeding/bracketing criteria will be used for separating teammates and during the national qualifying tournament and National Championships brackets:

1. Teammates will be separated onto the opposite sides of the bracket unless seeding dictates otherwise (i.e. #1 vs. #4, #2 vs. #3).
2. No wrestler will compete against another teammate in the "pig tail" and first round of competition in the National Championship brackets unless seeding of individuals dictates otherwise.
3. In the event of a conference/CAC/affiliated group having 9 or more qualified competitors in a weight class at the National Championships, seeded wrestlers will be placed by using the pairing formula and the remaining wrestlers will be drawn into the bracket randomly creating a pairing of opponents from the same conference/CAC/affiliated group in the round of 16. If a conference/CAC/affiliated group does not have four seeded wrestlers in a weight class to place into the National Championship bracket formula, then the seeds will be drawn at random from all of the non-seeded qualifiers in the weight class.

Note: Conference/CAC/affiliated group tournament hosts are required to use the same tournament seeding & scoring software that is used at the NAIA National Championships.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

DATES

The 2027 NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships will take place March 4-6, 2027.

ADMINISTRATION

The NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships is under the direct control and supervision of the NAIA National Office and the NAIA Wrestling Coaches Association Officers. The NAIA Wrestling Coaches Association Officers are responsible for carrying out the policies approved by the NAIA National Administrative Council (NAC), including seeding the participants, managing the National Championships, and overseeing the welfare of the participating athletes and coaches.

NAIA matches are intended to provide National Championships competition among the best eligible student-athletes and teams at the conclusion of the respective sport season.

The NAIA will not consider a protest regarding the eligibility of a duly certified student-athlete within 15 calendar days prior to the beginning of national competition. Protests will be investigated after the event.

FORMAT

The NAIA Wrestling National Championships are conducted in a three-day format. Individual National Championships are determined in 10 weight classes, and the team National Championship is determined by using tournament scoring as stated in the NCAA Wrestling Rule Book with the exception of no bonus point scoring involving matches between wrestlers from the same team. For seeding & bracketing information at the NAIA Championships, see the seeding/bracketing guidelines listed above in the Postseason National Qualifying Tournaments section.

VIDEO REVIEW

Third-party registered officials will be used to execute video review challenges

QUALIFICATION

National Tournament qualifying numbers will be 320, with a distribution protocol that will ensure the best possible wrestlers are represented at the National Tournament.

Qualifying standards through conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions)/affiliated group tournaments:

- 250 automatic qualifiers (25 per weight class)
- The top finisher in each weight class at the conference/affiliated group tournaments will receive an automatic berth to the National Championships.
- Additional automatic qualifier allocations for the National Championships will be determined based on the final top 25 individual regular season rankings. (e.g., four wrestlers from the Mid-South Conference are ranked at 125 lbs. in the final regular season ratings, the Mid-South will receive four automatic qualifiers at 125 lbs. to the National Championships.)
- If a conference does not have an individual ranked in the top 25 an allocation will be deducted from the 7 national at-large at that weight class. (e.g. The Mid-South does not have an individual ranked in the top 25 at 125 lbs. the number of at-larges from 125 lbs. will be reduced to 6 to ensure all conferences receive one qualifier per weight class.)
- NOTE: If a ranked wrestler does not compete at their conference tournament, that conference allocation will be removed and an additional at-large position will go into the national at-large pool. (e.g. four wrestlers from the Mid-South Conference are ranked at 125 lbs. in the final regular season ratings, John Doe is ranked at 125, however does not compete at 125 during the conference tournament. The Mid-South will receive three allocations at 125 for the National Championships).
- NOTE: Athletes cannot compete in another weight class at the National Championships than they competed in at the postseason national qualifying tournament.

At-Large Qualifying - Individual wrestlers can qualify for the NAIA Wrestling National Championships by:

1. National At-Large Bids – the remaining national bids will be selected by the **NATIONAL SELECTION COMMITTEE** via individual vote using the current at-large criteria until 320 wrestlers have been selected. Selection of these at larges will be conducted in the following manner:
 - A 16-member committee consisting of the rater and oversight member from each qualifying group will vote for national at-large selections
 - Up to 30 (three per weight class) national at-large nominees from each qualifying group will be emailed to the national office following the completion of the national qualifying events. Submissions must be received by 12 a.m. CST (midnight) on Saturday, February 20.
 - All qualifiers and at-large nominees will be distributed to the entire coaching body by the national office on February 21.
 - Specific information regarding national at-large nominees should be directed by the individuals head coach to a conference-specific committee member.
 - Each of the 18-committee members will submit online votes to the national office.
 - Each committee member votes on their top three wrestlers at each weight class.
 - Each tally mark is awarded one point.
 - The points will be tabulated at the NAIA National Office. The individual(s) with the seven most points garner the available at-large positions at each weight class.
 - The individual(s) with the eighth most points will be named as the one alternate in each weight class.
 - Note - In the case of ties for at-large selection, the regular seeding criteria will be used to break the tie. In the case that the seeding committee ties on the deciding vote, the NAC liaison will vote to break the tie.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SEEDING AND BRACKETING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The National Seeding Committee will use the following criteria for seeding at each weight:

New for 2026-2027 – Remove secondary criteria from the seeding and bracketing guidelines and procedures for the National Championship.

PRIMARY (in order listed below)

1. Head-to-head results – most recent results takes precedence
2. Results vs. common opponents

Each weight class will seed the top 16 seeds.

A committee of two coaches from each conference/affiliated group consisting of the rater and oversight person, will vote on the seeds for the National Championships. Each coach on the committee will submit votes on the top 19 seeds from each weight class. The 17, 18 and 19 seeds are considered alternates to the 16 seed. A #1 seed receives 19 points, #2 seed receives 18 points, a #3 seed receives 17 points, and down the line to the #19 seed receives 1 point. To ensure any outlying votes do not skew the results, the highest and lowest voted for each wrestler will be removed.

The coaches on the Seeding Committee are not to work together or communicate with each other at any point during this process.

New for 2026-2027 - Removing the National Oversight Committee, with the exception of the NAC Liaison, from the National Seeding Conference Call.

Change to the point differential requirement to propose a seed switch and identify the rank order of discussion.

National Seeding Committee to a 70% quorum for proposed seeding switch.

The votes will be submitted electronically. The point totals will determine the preliminary seeds. The National Oversight Committee, comprised of two athletic administrators and an executive committee member who is not a member of the National Seeding Committee, will review the preliminary seeds and contact a member of the National Seeding Committee in the event of any extreme outliers discovered. The results are sent to the National Seeding Committee. The National Seeding Committee and NAC Liaison will meet via conference call to discuss any seeding changes that may need to be made. In the Seeding committee meeting, a discussion and vote will take place to switch wrestlers' seeds if wrestlers are within 20 points of each other and there is a head-to-head, or if wrestlers are within 10 points of each other for common opponents. Discussions of wrestlers' moving seeds will always begin with the highest vote total and work down the list for each weight class. With a proposed switch, it will require a quorum of 70% to vote in favor of the seed switch to secure. All members of the National Seeding Committee are permitted to vote. If a quorum is not met, the decision to switch the wrestlers' seeds will be referred to the National Oversight Committee.

The National Oversight Committee has the ultimate decision in some cases. For example, if a #3 and #4 seed have wrestled during the year and the #4 seed beat the #3 seed, the National Oversight Committee has the ability to change those seeds, even if the two individuals are not within 20 points of one another. If there is a situation where A beat B, B beat C, and C beat A, no change will be made, and the voted point totals will hold up.

The National Oversight Committee also reviews the votes and can decide if one or more people on the coaches' committee should be removed for the following year due to voting discrepancies.

Separating teammates in the national brackets - The following seeding/bracketing criteria will be used for separating teammates and during the National Championships brackets by the National Bracketing Committee:

1. Teammates will be separated onto the opposite sides of the bracket unless seeding dictates otherwise (i.e. #1 vs. #4, #2 vs. #3).
2. No wrestler will compete against another teammate in the "pig tail" and first round of competition in the National Championship brackets unless seeding of individuals dictates otherwise.
3. In the event of a conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions)/affiliated group having 9 or more qualified competitors in a weight class at the National Championships, seeded wrestlers will be placed by using the pairing formula and the remaining wrestlers will be drawn into the bracket randomly creating a pairing of opponents from the same conference/CAC/affiliated group in the round of 16. If a conference/CAC/affiliated group does not have four seeded wrestlers in a weight class to place into the National Championship bracket formula, then the seeds will be drawn at random from all of the non-seeded qualifiers in the weight



Note: Conference/CAC/affiliated group tournament hosts are required to use the same tournament seeding & scoring software that is used at the NAIA National Championships

New for 2026-2027 - NAC approved the replacement procedures the National Bracketing Committee will take when wrestlers withdraw from the National Championship after the release of the preliminary bracket.

When a wrestler withdraws from the championship after the bracket release, an alternate is identified in accordance with the NAIA Wrestling Selection Procedures. The following procedures will then be applied.

1. Withdrawal of a Seeded Wrestler. If a seeded wrestler withdraws:
 - a. All seeded wrestlers in the weight class will move up one seed position.
 - b. The first-seeded alternate will become the 16th seed, and the second-seeded alternate will become the first-seeded alternate.
 - c. The alternate list for that weight class will be contacted, beginning with the wrestler having the highest point total, until an available wrestler accepts the alternate position. That wrestler will be added to the championship field as an unseeded wrestler.
 - d. The championship bracket for that weight class will be redrawn at the on-site National Bracketing Committee meeting.
2. Withdrawal of an Unseeded Wrestler. If an unseeded wrestler withdraws, the identified alternate will replace the withdrawn wrestler using the following procedure at the on-site National Bracketing Committee meeting.
 - a. No teammate conflict: If placing the alternate into the withdrawn wrestler's bracket position does not result in the alternate being on the same side of the bracket as a teammate, the alternate will be placed directly into that position. The bracket will not be redrawn.
 - b. Teammate conflict: If placing the alternate into the withdrawn wrestler's bracket position results in the alternate being on the same side of the bracket as a teammate, the Bracketing Committee will:
 - i. Identify all unseeded wrestlers on the opposite side of the bracket who could exchange bracket positions with the alternate without creating a teammate conflict.
 - ii. Randomly draw one wrestler from the eligible pool.
 - iii. Exchange the bracket positions of the selected wrestler and the alternate. The bracket will not be redrawn.

CHAMPIONSHIP SELECTION APPEALS PROCESS

If there is a misapplication of NAIA policy and procedures regarding tournament selection, an institution may appeal to the NAIA National Office.

Criteria for filing an appeal –

1. A written appeal citing the specific NAIA policies and/or procedures that have been misapplied must be submitted to the NAIA National Office within 24 hours from the time the tournament field has been released.
2. Once an appeal has been submitted a response will be provided within 24 hours from receipt of appeal.
3. Appeals must be submitted and signed by the Athletics Director and President of the institution.

NOTE – The NAC sport liaison will be on-site at the selection to listen to the discussion of tournament selection.

The NAC liaison will report any concerns to the NAIA National Office immediately following the conclusion of the selection. The National Oversight Committee will review ratings to prevent any ratings process violations or unethical use of the ratings process.

HOUSING

All participating teams **MUST** stay at the designated hotels. Failure to do so would make a team **INELIGIBLE** for participation.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

If inclement weather should cause travel delays for any team(s) competing in the National Championship, it will be up to the discretion of the NAIA Sport Manager and the Games Committee to make changes to the schedule to accommodate such delays.

It is the responsibility of the host Medial Director/Athletic Trainer at NAIA Championship events to determine when an event should be suspended and when it is safe to return to play as the result of severe weather. The AT is to notify the NAIA Championship Manager who, in collaboration with the appropriate personnel (i.e. Games Committee) will implement the predetermined action plan for both player and spectator safety.

OFFICIALS

Per NAIA-WCA guidelines, a minimum of 2.5 officials (with NCAA certification) per mat will be contracted to work the NAIA



National Championships.

The NAIA Wrestling Sport Manager works with the national supervisor of officials to identify, contract and retain National Championship officials. A minimum of three evaluators are also contracted to work the national tournament and provide feedback/evaluations to the NAIA, the supervisor of officials, and the championship officials. Coaches will also complete a written evaluation/rating of the championship officials.

RELATED INFORMATION

Code of Conduct

All wrestlers participating in the NAIA Wrestling National Championships shall agree to abide by the following standards of conduct:

- a) The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited.
- b) Exemplary conduct is expected in team travel, at eating establishments, at the championship site and overnight accommodations before, during and after the National Championships.
- c) FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT may result in either or all of the following actions:
 - i. The university or college president and athletics director will be notified by letter.
 - ii. The athlete will be banned from the following year's championship. If the athlete is a senior, his team will be ineligible for the following year's championship.
 - iii. All honors and awards, including All-America status and all points scored, will be taken away from the offending athlete.
- d) Upon notification of any violation of the Code of Conduct, the NAIA-WCA will review the case and take prompt, appropriate action which may include the above.

NAIA coaches are responsible for ensuring that their athletes adhere to these rules of conduct.

* - Per NAC guidelines, teams failing to attend **required** meetings/functions (or failing to submit Champion of Character individual player nominations) are subject to a \$1,500 fine.

Meetings

A pre-championship coaches' meeting will be held on the Wednesday afternoon/evening prior to the start of the championship.

Medical Care/Weigh-Ins/Skin Checks

Training facilities and certified trainers will be available to the competing teams courtesy of the host. Medical doctors will be on-call and participants will have access to a medical facility. Weigh-ins and medical/skin checks must be conducted for each day prior to competition per NCAA guidelines. The first weigh-in/skin check for the National Championships will take place two hours prior to the first session.

Official Party Admission/Credentials

All athletes and coaches must have credentials (participant passes) on their person in order to be admitted to the championship and have floor access in the arena. Each school will be limited to an official travel party of 25, which excludes participating student-athletes and includes coaches, assistants, managers, warm-up partners, support staff, etc. Each school will be issued four credentials for coaches, assistants, and support staff. Four additional coach/support staff credentials can be purchased for \$30.00 apiece. Additional credentials for assistants/support staff can be purchased at \$60.00 apiece up to the maximum limit of 25 for the official travel party.

Radio, Television and Online Broadcasting

The broadcast of any championship event is governed by the NAIA broadcast policies as printed in the NAIA Policy Handbook. For information relative to these policies, contact:

NAIA Athletics Communications
120 W. 12th Street, Suite 700
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
Phone – 816.595.8000

TRAVEL



SHORTS TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

Qualifying institutions are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to the National Championship.

The Official Travel partner of the NAIA is Short's Travel Management. Please contact **Short's Travel (816-323-6405)** to book your travel arrangements.

Short's Travel has contacts with charter air travel as well as charter buses for ground travel.

NATIONAL CAR RENTAL

National Car Rental/Enterprise Rent-a-Car is offering special rates for the NAIA National Championship. Teams will be able to access these special rates by providing the special NAIA contract ID #XZ05146.

Click [here](#) for account setup and instructions to use code.

MASTER'S TRANSPORTATION

Master's Transportation is the official provider of all shuttles/buses for your sale, lease and rental needs. Please contact Ron Haley at **(816) 979-3493** or mduran@MastersTransportation.com for more information.



NAIA POLICY HANDBOOK INFORMATION

The NAIA Policy Handbook can be found at [HERE](#). Please refer directly to the NAIA Policy Handbook for the following –

Competition

- A. Declaration of Intent to Participate – Bylaws, Article I, Section L
- B. Frequency of Play and Scheduling – Bylaws, Article I, Section F
- C. Criteria for Countable Contests – National Administrative Council, Article XXV, Section A, Item 12
- D. Reporting Results – National Administrative Council, Article XXV, Section A
- E. Forfeits – National Administrative Council, Article XI
- F. Conduct in Competition Guidelines – National Administrative Council, Article IV
- G. Ejection Policy – Bylaws, Article VI Section B Item 7
- H. Drug Testing and Reinstatement Procedures – Bylaws, Article VIII

Eligibility

- A. Definitions for Eligibility – Bylaws, Article V, Section B
- B. Eligibility Requirements – Bylaws, Article V, Section C
- C. Transfer Rules – Bylaws, Article V, Sections F-H
- D. Amateur Rules and Reinstatement – Bylaws, Article VII

Recruiting & Financial Aid

- A. Recruitment – Bylaws, Article II, Section D
- B. Campus Visitations and Tryouts of Prospective Students – Bylaws, Article II, Section C
- C. Financial Assistance – Bylaws, Article II, Section B
- D. Financial Aid Limits – Council of Presidents, Article XII

SUNDAY POLICY PLAY

As a matter of policy, NAIA Opening Round and National Championship competition will not be scheduled on Sunday. See NAIA Policy Handbook, National Administrative Council, Article XXIII for additional information.

DRUG TESTING

Drug testing may be done at any randomly selected NAIA National Championship competition for performance enhancing drugs. In accordance with the guidelines set forth by the National Drug Testing and Education Committee, the National Office will select which championships will incorporate drug testing each year. Student-athletes may be tested before, during and/or after NAIA National Championships.

For more information regarding championship drug testing, the [National Administrative Council Drug Testing Policy Manual](#), the safety of supplements and over-the-counter medications and resources to increase awareness on your campus, please visit – <https://www.naia.org/student-athletes/current/wellness-center/>

DRUG TESTING CONSENT FORM

Each academic year all eligible NAIA student-athletes must sign a [Drug Testing Consent Form](#) in which they consents to be tested for the use of drugs prohibited by the NAIA Banned Substance List to participate in any NAIA National Championship competitions. This consent form shall be administered by the institution.

To ensure all student-athletes participating in NAIA National Championship competitions have signed a consent form and such form is on record with the institution, a representative of each institution participating in any NAIA National Championship competition must sign an Official Certification of Student-Athlete Consent Form at check-in.

It is recommended that before the season begins that an institution has all student-athletes complete the form to minimize the possibility of issues occurring when the postseason roster is submitted at a NAIA National Championship.

MEDICAL EXEMPTION FORM

The NAIA recognizes that some banned substances are used for legitimate medical purposes. Accordingly, the NAIA allows exemptions to be made for those student-athletes with a documented medical history demonstrating the need for regular use of such a drug. Exemptions may be granted for substances included in the following classes of banned drugs – Stimulants, anabolic agents, beta blockers, diuretics, peptide hormones, anti-estrogens, and beta-2 agonists. [Medical Exemption Form](#)



COACHES ASSOCIATION

NAIA-WRESTLING COACHES ASSOCIATION

The NAIA-Wrestling Coaches Association (NAIA-WCA) is an organization of collegiate wrestling coaches at NAIA member institutions. The NAIA-WCA meets annually, conducting its business in conjunction with the NAIA Wrestling National Championships.

PAST PRESIDENTS

1959-60	Bob Bringham, Northern Illinois	1984-85	Jim Koch, Wisconsin-Parkside
1960-62	John Hancock, Colorado Mines	1988-90	Milt Martin, Westmar (Iowa)
1962-63	Eugene Hill, Illinois State	1990-91	Fran Hummel, Northern State (S.D.)
1963-64	Russell Houk, Bloomsburg (Pa.)	1991-92	Craig Olsen, Pacific (Ore.)
1964-65	Tony Schavone, Black Hills State (S.D.)	1992-93	Jason Liles, Northern Montana
1965-66	Chester Sanders, Indiana State	1993-95	Mike Jones, Simon Fraser (B.C.)
1966-67	Kenneth Cox, St. Cloud State (Minn.)	1995-97	Paul Bartlett, Northwestern (Iowa)
1967-68	Gray Simons, Lock Haven (Pa.)	1997-99	Mike Machholz, Missouri Valley
1968-69	Frank Powell, Adams State (Colo.)	1999-01	Dan Payne, Embry-Riddle (Ariz.)
1969-70	Don Benning, Nebraska-Omaha	2001-03	David Ray, Montana State-Northern
1970-74	Mertz Mortorelli, Wisconsin-Superior	2003-05	Mike Ritchey, Southern Oregon
1974-75	Howard Morris, Oregon Tech	2005-07	Thadd O'Donnell, Dickinson State (N.D.)
1975-76	Arnie Brandt, Morningside (Iowa)	2007-09	Mike Machholz, Missouri Valley
1976-77	Byron James, Wisconsin-River Falls	2009-10	John Petty, California Baptist
1977-78	Fred Caro, Edinboro State (Pa.)	2010-12	Tim Jager, Morningside College
1979-80	Willie Myers, Wisconsin-Whitewater	2012-14	Shawn Kelley, Hastings College (Neb.)
1980-81	Vince Monseau, W. Liberty State (W.Va.)	2014-15	Archie Randall, Oklahoma City
1981-82	Gerald Hampton, Graceland (Iowa)	2015-17	Franky James, Campbellsville University (Ky.)
1982-83	Vern Tate, Huron (S.D.)	2017-19	Rik Dahl, Northwestern College (Iowa)
1983-84	Bob Riehm, Southern Oregon	2019-20	Caleb Schaeffer, Providence (Mont.)
1984-85	Jim Koch, Wisconsin-Parkside	2020-22	Nick Mitchell, Grand View (Iowa)
1985-86	Vince Monseau, W. Liberty State (W.Va.)	2022-25	Corey Ruff, Cumberland (Ky.)
1986-87	Don Elia, Carson-Newman (Tenn.)	2026-	Thomas Pompei, Indiana Tech

NATIONAL WRESTLING COACHES ASSOCIATION (NWCA)

The National Wrestling Coaches Association, established in 1928, is a professional organization dedicated to serve and provide leadership for the advancement of all levels of the sport of wrestling with primary emphasis on scholastic and collegiate programs. The membership welcomes all interested in amateur wrestling.

The NWCA, through its organizational structure, promotes communication, recognizes achievement, recommends rules and regulations, sponsors events, and serves as an educational and informational source. Additionally, the NWCA strives to foster sportsmanship and integrity as cornerstones of athletic competition.

All NAIA wrestling coaches are mandated to use the NWCA Weight Certification software annually and can access the software at www.nwcaonline.com. All NAIA coaches are also required to submit their results on the NWCA College Scoreboard.

NAIA-WRESTLING COACHES ASSOCIATION VOTING

NAIA Coaches Associations must have a quorum (at least 50% of eligible voters) in order for a sport motion to be heard by the National Administrative Council. All voting will be completed using an online process following the business meeting in order to ensure all head coaches have an opportunity to vote. Motions will still be presented and discussed at the Annual Business meeting. If desired, a "straw poll" can be taken by those present to determine if a motion will be opened for vote to the full coaches association.



**2026-2027 NAIA-WCA STANDING COMMITTEES
OFFICERS (First year of two-year terms)**

EXEC. COMMITTEE POSITION	NAME, SCHOOL & CONTACT INFO
President	Dana Vote , Doane University (Neb.), dana.vote@doane.edu
First Vice President	Travis Patrick , Southeastern University (Fla.), tmpatrick@seu.edu
Second Vice President	Tyson Thivierge , Montana State University Northern, tyson.thivierge@msun.edu
Secretary	Dustyn Azure , Eastern Oregon University, dazure@eou.edu
Past President	Thomas Pompei , Indiana Institute of Technology, tapompei@indianatech.edu
NAC Liaison	Eric Ward , Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference, eward@whac.net



NAIA Wrestling Coaches Association Constitution & Bylaws

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be called the NAIA-Wrestling Coaches Association, hereinafter referred to as the NAIA-WCA.

ARTICLE II - ORGANIZATION

Section 1 NAIA-WCA membership is comprised of wrestling coaches whose institutions are current members of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). The NAIA-WCA is charged with the responsibility of carrying out programs beneficial to the sport of wrestling, and to the NAIA member coaches. The programs of this section shall be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NAIA, and under the guidance of the NAIA National Administrative Council (NAIA-NAC).

Section 2 The NAIA-WCA shall submit to the NAIA-NAC recommendations for approval to enhance the program, and in every way cooperate with the Council in furthering the stated aims and objectives of the organization.

ARTICLE III - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The NAIA-WCA shall supervise and conduct programs, utilizing the guidance of the NAIA-NAC. The NAIA-WCA will foster and promote interest and enthusiasm in wrestling programs at the conference and national levels, and provide international recognition for teams, competitors, and coaches.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Any active wrestling coach (assistant or head coach) from a member institution of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics shall automatically be a member of the NAIA-WCA.

ARTICLE V - DUES

No dues are currently assessed.

ARTICLE VI - VOTING POWER

Current membership in the NAIA-WCA entitles the member (head coach only) to one vote in all democratic action held in open assembly of the NAIA-WCA.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS

Section 1 Officers shall be elected from the active membership of the Association at the annual meeting as follows: The members shall elect a secretary from the membership. Normal rotation from secretary to second vice president to first vice president to president will occur. The position of ex-officio tournament host shall be filled by the tournament director of the next championship, and he shall then be moved to the position of ex-officio past tournament host the following year.

Section 2 The term of office of the president, first vice president, second vice president and secretary shall be for two years.

Section 3 The progression in the office shall be from secretary to second vice president to first vice president to president; each office to be held for two years. In the event a vacancy occurs, the Executive Committee of the NAIA-WCA is empowered to appoint members from the membership at-large to fill normal progression officers unless duly elected by the membership at the next annual meeting.

Section 4 The NAIA-WCA officers will serve as members of the Executive Committee (see Article IX).

Section 5 The progression of office shall be from Secretary to second Vice President to first Vice President to President. Each office is to be held for two years from September 1st to August 31st.

ARTICLE VIII - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 The duties of the president are to afford leadership and guidance to NAIA-WCA through all possible channels and to direct his efforts specifically to conducting the annual meeting of the Association, as well as conducting committee meetings and clinics. The president is the executive officer of all appointed and standing committees of the Association.

Section 2 The duties of the first vice president are to assume leadership at all meetings unattended by the president and to serve as a member of the Games Committee at the National Championship.

Section 3 The duties of the second vice president are to assume leadership at all meetings unattended by the president and first vice president, and to serve as a member of the Games committee at the National Championship.

Section 4 The secretary shall make an annual report to the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee, supervise the Association correspondence, maintain a roster of members, notify members of meetings, and other duties which are incidental to the office. The secretary will assume leadership at all meetings unattended by the president, first vice president and second vice-president; and will serve as a member of the Games Committee at the National Championship.

ARTICLE IX - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 The NAIA-WCA Executive Committee is composed of the officers of the Association, the Association's immediate past president and the rating committee.

Section 2 The NAIA-WCA Executive Committee shall approve the appointment of the national qualifying group/committee representatives to one, two, or three-year terms of office.

Section 3 The members of the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee, the NAIA-WCA president, first vice president, second vice president, secretary, and the qualifying group chairs shall act as the Games Committee for the NAIA Wrestling National Championships.

ARTICLE X - MEETINGS

Section 1 The annual business meeting of the Association shall be held in conjunction with the NWCA National Convention at the time and place set by the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee.

Section 2 A wrestling clinic or rules interpretations meeting may be held in conjunction with national events, or at a time and place designated by the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee.

Section 3 The NAIA-WCA Executive Committee shall meet prior to weigh-in time, and immediately following weigh-in time of the NAIA Wrestling National Championship to carry out the duties of the Games Committee.

Section 4 Voting on all issues shall be by voice or hand in executive sessions or in open meetings of the Association. The national qualifying group chairs (solely) shall have votes with regard to seeding issues.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENT

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at the regular or special meeting of the Association by a two-thirds majority of the members present at such meeting. Any contemplated change or changes in the Constitution and/or Bylaws must be fully explained, in writing, to the members of the Association and the Executive Committee at least 30 days prior to the date on which such a change will be presented for discussion.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business at the open business meeting shall be as follows:



- A. Reading of the Minutes
- B. Report of Officers



- C. Committee Reports
- D. Old Business
- E. New Business
- F. Adjournment

ARTICLE II - COMMITTEES

Section 1 Standing and temporary committees shall be appointed by the president as deemed desirable by the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee or the president. The term of the office of the appointed members shall be at the discretion of the NAIA-WCA president.

Section 2 The NAIA-WCA president is empowered to appoint committees which will assist in programs designed to produce conference, group, and national recognition of teams, athletes, and coaches. The president is also encouraged to appoint competent NAIA-WCA members who will assist in any and all ways to foster the aims and objectives of the NAIA as they relate to the sport of wrestling, the participants, coaches, spectators, and individual institutions represented by their individuals, and groups.

ARTICLE III – NATIONAL QUALIFYING GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1 The NAIA-WCA Executive Committee shall appoint two NAIA-WCA members to represent each national qualifying group listed in the NAIA Wrestling Coaches Manual.

Section 2 The duties of the qualifying group representatives shall include the following:

- A. To serve the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee.
- B. To organize, promote and conduct the NAIA Wrestling National Championships.
- C. To function as an advisory, games, and seeding committee for the National Championship.
- D. To coordinate the rating process within the qualifying group and participate in the national rating system.
- E. To coordinate the weight class ratings (which will be forwarded to national office for seeding) at the conclusion of their respective qualifying group championship.
- F. To recommend conference and qualifying group competition in wrestling.
- G. To organize and establish a set of criteria, practices, and procedures for NAIA Wrestling National Championships.
- H. To recommend individuals, coaches, and participants for special awards.
- I. To appoint a proxy when unable to attend a regular meeting of the NAIA-WCA Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV - DATE AND SITE OF WRESTLING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Section 1 The date to be recommended for the annual NAIA Wrestling National Championships will be the first week of (or weekend of) March.

Section 2 Each member institution sponsoring wrestling shall have the opportunity to bid to host the NAIA Wrestling National Championships. When two or more bids of equal support are received, the NAIA-WCA recommends that sites be rotated as follows: From West to Midwest, to East to Midwest, to West, and continue in that order.

AMENDED: Revised – 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2020

RESULTS

CONTESTS RESULTS & REPORTING PERIOD

- A. All NAIA teams must have their schedule inputted into Trackwrestling by October 1.
- B. **Mandate for reporting scores:** In order for schools to be eligible for group or national ratings, results **must** be reported to Trackwrestling **within** 48 hours of completion of contest. It is the responsibility of each school to report its results. Institutions failing to report statistics and/or results for two consecutive weeks or four total weeks during the season will not be eligible for the national statistical reports or ratings for the remainder of the season and subject to a monetary penalty.
 - a. The first violation will continue to be a warning.
 - b. Any second violation (first penalty) will be a \$500 fine.
 - c. The third violation will be a \$1,000 fine and a loss of postseason awards.
 - d. The fourth violation will be a \$1,000 fine and will be dealt with at the discretion of membership services.
 - e. Fines will be due within 30 days of notification.
- C. **Avenues for reporting:** All results must be entered on-line using Trackwrestling. To access the Trackwrestling site go to <https://www.trackwrestling.com/tw/TWHome.jsp?TIM=1537548147843&twSessionId=jubsniriejbcfbp>. You must be a current member of the NWCA (which is also required of all NAIA coaches for weight certification & management using the NWCA's OPC software).

AWARDS

NATIONAL WRESTLER OF THE WEEK

Conference/Affiliated Group Wrestler of the Week

All NAIA member institutions are encouraged to nominate candidates for Conference/Group Wrestler of the Week honors for all sports in which they declare for NAIA postseason.

National Wrestler of the Week

All NAIA member institutions are permitted to nominate candidates for National Player of the Week for all sports in which they declare for NAIA postseason. Nominations from the conference/independent/unaffiliated information director or their designated representative must be received by the NAIA Department of Athletics Communications by 5:00pm (CST) each Monday, ending February 9.

The nomination process is handled through the [NAIA Awards Platform](#). Release of National Player of the Week will be made after weekly on Tuesdays during the season. National Players of the Week are selected from the pool of Conference/CAC/Group Players of the Week. A full calendar of National Player of the Week release dates are located [HERE](#).

NAIA SCHOLAR-ATHLETE

Criteria for the NAIA Scholar-Athlete Award are as follows:

1. Nominee must be a sophomore or above in academic standing;
2. Nominee must have been in attendance at the nominating institution one full academic year at the time of the nomination deadline (Jan. 31)
3. Nominee has a minimum grade point average of 3.50 (on a 4.0 scale) at the time of the nomination deadline (for transfer students the GPA is only at current NAIA institution).
4. Nominee has been certified as eligible and is listed on the eligibility certificate submitted to conference eligibility chair.
5. Nomination form is complete and submitted through NAIA Connect.
6. All the above information is to be received by Jan. 31 to be eligible for national press release/website, certificate and honors database – All criteria must be met by this date.

NOTE – There are no statistical/playing requirements needed to receive this award.



This release form does not need to be turned into the NAIA National Office. You are asked to retain it for your institutional records. The administrator nominating the student-athlete will sign electronically. To be eligible for listing on website, honors database or receive a certificate, forms MUST BE SUBMITTED BY January 31. LATE nominations will not be accepted.

RED BANNER SCHOLAR AWARD

New in 2026-27: The Red Banner Scholar Award recognizes the highest level of academic achievement among student-athletes competing at each NAIA National Championship Final Site. The award celebrates the NAIA's commitment to developing champions in the classroom, character, and competition by honoring the student-athlete(s) with the highest cumulative institutional grade point average participating in the national championship.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the Red Banner Scholar Award, a student-athlete must:

1. Be listed on the official active championship roster (team sports) or be an official qualifier and active participant (individual sports) at the NAIA National Championship Final Site.
2. Be recognized as an NAIA Scholar-Athlete for the applicable academic year.
3. Meet all established NAIA Scholar-Athlete eligibility requirements and be submitted through the official NAIA Scholar-Athlete nomination process by the applicable sport deadline.

Selection Process

The NAIA National Office will determine the recipient(s) using approved NAIA Scholar-Athlete data.

- The eligible student-athlete with the highest cumulative institutional GPA at the national championship final site will receive the Red Banner Scholar Award.
- In the event of a tie for the highest GPA, all tied student-athletes will be recognized as co-recipients.
- No additional nomination is required beyond the NAIA Scholar-Athlete submission process.

SCHOLAR TEAM

In recognition of academic achievement, the NAIA names a Scholar Team for all sports in which Scholar-Athletes are recognized. Based on a 3.0 season GPA on a 4.0 scale, all members of the team who appear on the eligibility certificate will be included in the GPA compilation.

Download the NAIA Scholar Team Award Form at

http://www.naia.org/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=27900&ATCLID=205502236. **Deadline is June 30.**

NATIONAL WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

The NAIA National Wrestler of the Year is voted upon by all participating coaches at the NAIA Wrestling National Championships.

NATIONAL COACH OF THE YEAR

The NAIA National Coach of the Year is voted upon by all participating coaches at the NAIA Wrestling National Championships. The NWCA also sponsors a NAIA-NWCA National Coach of the Year Award, which is presented to the coach of the winning NAIA team at the annual NWCA National Duals Championship.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

Official NAIA individual awards for All-America recognition will be presented to the top eight (8) individuals in each weight class at the National Championships. Team trophies will be awarded to the top **four** teams. The team champion will also receive the traditional NAIA championship banner.

There is also an award for the Most Outstanding Wrestler at the National Championships and an award for the wrestler with the most falls/pins in the least amount of time (Manuel Gorriaran Memorial Award).

CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AWARD

Each participating team shall nominate one student-athlete that has shown a documented display of exemplary character and sportsmanship during competition, on campus and in the community that exemplify the core values of Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Sportsmanship and Servant Leadership.



ORDERING AWARDS

Conference/independent awards are ordered by the Conference/Independent Commissioner and are the financial responsibility of the conference/independent or postseason host institution. Official NAIA awards MUST be ordered from:

Collegiate Awards, 18081 E. Trafficway St., Springfield, MO 65802

Contact: Brad Stout, brads@collegiateawards.com, 417-873-9280



NAIA National Wrestling Coaches Association Annual Business Meeting Agenda

NWCA Convention – Ponte Vedra, Florida

Friday, August 1, 2025 – 2:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. – Players D

Saturday, August 2, 2025 – 11:35 a.m. – 12:25 p.m. – Players D

I. CALL TO ORDER THOMAS POMPEI, NWCA PRESIDENT

Attendees: Tyson, Thivierge, Montana State University – Northern; Bo Bettinson, St. Ambrose University (Ill.); Caleb McElfresh, Missouri Baptist University (Mo.); Nick Mitchell, Grand View University (Iowa); Grant Henderson, Grand View University (Iowa); Paul Reedy, Grand View University (Iowa); Aden Reeves, Grand View University (Iowa); Jason Schweer, University of Rio Grande (Ohio); Dalton Weidl, Ottawa University (Kan.); Cole Manion, Keiser University (Fla.); Nolan Harris, Corban University (Ore.); Omi Acosta, Life University (Ga.); Jake Laden, Life University (Ga.); Jameel Bryant, Lindsey Wilson University (Ky.); Travis Patrick, Southeastern University (Fla.); Jake Henderson, Defiance University (Ohio); KC Rock, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Ariz.); Corey Ruff, University of the Cumberlands (Ky.); Thomas Pompei, Indiana Tech; Jake Lords, Baker University (Kan.); Evan Hansen, Graceland University (Iowa); Marc Burchard, NAIA; Candice Fabry, NAIA; Bruce Tate, NAIA

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA THOMAS POMPEI, NWCA PRESIDENT

Motion to approve: Patrick/Bettinson

Vote: 18-0-0

III. APPROVAL OF 2024 BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES THOMAS POMPEI, NWCA PRESIDENT

Motion to approve: Mitchell/Patrick

Vote: 18-0-0

IV. NAIA NATIONAL OFFICE REPORT MARC BURCHARD, NAIA DIRECTOR OF CHAMPIONSHIPS

a. National Office Report

a. Legislative Path of Sport Motions

- i. Any motions that are approved here at the business meeting will then need to be voted on by the full coaches association and if supported the motions will then go to the NAC for final approval to be implemented
- ii. The NAC will meet on August 12 and 13 to review.

b. National Championship Host Site

- i. Will remain in Wichita for 2026 and 2027
- ii. At the 2025 championship finals there were many issues with teams bringing in alcohol. Beginning with the 2026 finals session only, there will not be any outside food or drink allowed into the building or backpacks (finalists will be allowed to bring in backpacks)

c. National Championship Streaming

- i. The 2026 Championship will be simulcast through Flo and the NAIA Network.
 1. Streaming on the NAIA Network will be entirely free

d. NAIA Path Forward Task Force

- i. The NCAA DII Management Council has recommended five years of eligibility

- ii. The NAIA has had a committee evaluating this same topic, along with others for some time now.
- iii. The Path Forward Task Force will be meeting in Kanas City in August and September and most likely to come out with some recommendations following their September meeting
- b. 2025-26 NAIA Men's Wrestling Qualification Plan
- c. 2025-26 Ratings Dates

Pre-season	October 16, 2025 (Thursday)
#1	November 6, 2025 (Thursday)
#2	November 20, 2025 (Thursday)
#3	December 11, 2025 (Thursday)
#4	December 31, 2025 (Wednesday)
#5	January 15, 2026 (Thursday)
#6	January 29, 2026 (Thursday)
Final	February 11, 2026 (Wednesday)

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Executive Committee, Thomas Pompei, Indiana Tech
 - a. The Executive Committee has meet regularly throughout the academic year through the championships
 - b. Mostly focused on improving the experience at the national championships
 - c. There are still things that we would like to see done at the championships – mini team trophies for all-Americans, however, the championships have improved with additions like the DJ last year.
- b. Coaches' Manual/Constitution Rules, Rik Dahl, Northwestern
 - a. The coaches manual will be released October 1 ahead of the season.
- c. Bracketing, Tyson Thivierge, Montana State – Northern
 - a. The bracketing committee is responsible for ensuring that teammates do not match up on the same side of the bracket, unless they are seeded. If they are seeded they are not moved.
 - b. Unseeded wrestlers are drawn into the bracket at random.
- d. National Ratings Oversight Committee, Nick Mitchell, Grand View
 - a. The reduction of oversight members this past year helped streamline the process.
- e. USA Wrestling, Thomas Pompei, Indiana Tech
 - a. Thomas will be attending the upcoming USA Wrestling meetings next month and updates will be sent to the full body.
- f. NWCA Report , Thomas Pompei, Indiana Tech
 - a. Jim Fallis will provide updates on the scholar all-america process during tomorrow's session.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Sport Motions
 - a. Motion #1: Increase number of national championship qualifiers from 280 to 320.
Discussion: This will increase the access ratio close to the top allowed by the NAIA Council of Presidents. Presidents are concerned about controlling costs and see increasing championship access as more expenses. This proposal was reviewed by some NAC members and their feedback was to put an additional motion to limit the number of official party members at the championship through an additional motion.
Motion to approve: Bettinson/Schweer
Vote: 18-0-0
 - b. Motion #2: Qualification Plan if tournament field is increased to 320 National Qualifiers

Automatic Qualifying - Individual wrestlers can qualify for the NAIA Wrestling National Championships by: Qualifying standards through conference/Continental Athletic

Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions)/affiliated group tournaments:

- 250 automatic qualifiers (25 per weight class)
- The top finisher in each weight class at the conference/affiliated group tournaments will receive an automatic berth to the National Championships.
- Additional automatic qualifier allocations for the National Championships will be determined based on the final top 25 individual regular season rankings. (e.g., four wrestlers from the Mid-South Conference are ranked at 125 lbs. in the final regular season ratings, the Mid-South will receive four automatic qualifiers at 125 lbs. to the National Championships.)
- If a conference does not have an individual ranked in the top 25 an allocation will be deducted from the 7 national at-large at that weight class. (e.g. The Mid-South does not have an individual ranked in the top 25 at 125 lbs. the number of at-larges from 125 lbs. will be reduced to 6 to ensure all conferences receive one qualifier per weight class.
- NOTE: If a ranked wrestler does not compete at their conference tournament, that conference allocation will be removed and an additional at-large position will go into the national at-large pool. (e.g. four wrestlers from the Mid-South Conference are ranked at 125 lbs. in the final regular season ratings, John Doe is ranked at 125, however does not compete at 125 during the conference tournament. The Mid-South will receive three allocations at 125 for the National Championships).
- NOTE: Athletes cannot compete in another weight class at the National Championships than they competed in at the postseason national qualifying tournament.

At-Large Qualifying - Individual wrestlers can qualify for the NAIA Wrestling National Championships by:

1. National At-Large Bids – the remaining national bids will be selected by the NATIONAL SELECTION COMMITTEE (2 members per conference (raters and oversight)) via individual vote using the current at-large criteria until 320 wrestlers have been selected. Selection of these at larges will be conducted in the following manner:

- A 16-member committee consisting of the rater and oversight member from each qualifying group will vote for national at-large selections
- Up to 70 (seven per weight class) national at-large nominees from each qualifying group will be emailed to the national office following the completion of the national qualifying events. Submissions must be received by 12 a.m. CST (midnight) on Sunday, Feb. 23.
- All qualifiers and at-large nominees will be distributed to the entire coaching body by the national office on Feb. 23.
- Specific information regarding national at-large nominees should be directed by the individuals head coach to a conference-specific committee member.
- Each of the 16-committee members will submit online votes to the national office.
- Each committee member votes on their top seven wrestlers at each weight class.
- Each tally mark is awarded one point.
- The points will be tabulated at the NAIA National Office. The individual(s) with the seven most points garner the available at-large positions at each weight class.
- The individual(s) with the eighth most points will be named as the one alternate in each weight class.
- Note - In the case of ties for at-large selection, the regular seeding criteria will be used to break the tie. In the case that the seeding committee ties on the deciding vote, the NAC liaison will vote to break the tie..

Discussion: If the tournament increases to 320 a new allocation process is needed.

Motion to approve: Schweer/Bettinson

Vote: 18-0-0

c. Motion #3: Ratings Tie Breaker

In the case of a tie during the individual ranking process, we will use criteria to determine who will be ranked higher. The following criteria will be used in order. If criteria A doesn't solve the tie, we will move to B and so forth

Criteria

- A. The wrestler with the most individual votes from the raters
- B. The wrestler with the most points before the highs and lows were removed
- C. In the case of a tie still existing, we will have a revote
- D. If a tie can not be broken on a revote, it will go to oversight to decide

Example A

Jon Smith and Cael Sanderson are tied at 18th with 48 points each. all 8 raters voted for Jon Smith. Only 7 raters voted for Cael Sanderson. Jon wins based on criteria A and will be ranked 18th. Cael will be ranked 19th.

Example B

Jon Smith and Cael Sanderson are tied at 18th with 48 points each. all 8 raters voted for Jon Smith and Cael Sanderson. Before the highs and lows were dropped, Jon had 54 points and Cael had 51 points. Jon will win on criteria B and will be ranked 18th. Cael will be ranked 19th.

Example C

Jon Smith and Cael Sanderson are tied at 18th with 48 points each. all 8 raters voted for Jon Smith and Cael Sanderson. Before the highs and lows were dropped, Jon had 54 points and Cael had 54 points. There is still a tie and the raters will have to have a revote on these 2 individuals

Discussion: This would create a consistent approach to breaking ties during the season in ratings.

Motion to approve: Mitchell/McElfresh

Vote: 18-0-0

d. Motion #4: Conference Tournament Dates

To require conference tournaments to be held between Wednesday-Saturday prior to the conference tournament deadline. Beginning in 2026-27.

Discussion: Currently not all conferences hold their tournaments the same weekend. Some the week before others and this causes the final rating to take place sooner than some think it should to accurately determine national championship allocations.

Motion to approve: Bettinson/Manion

Vote: 14-0-4

e. Motion# 5: Official Party Limits

Limit the official party at the national championship to 25 – coaches, managers, warm-up partners...

Discussion: Based on the feedback from NAC members this would help increase the possibility of increasing the number to 320 participants at the national championships. The official party would be: a teams qualifiers plus up to 25 coaches, managers, assistant coaches, etc...

Motion to approve: Mcelfresh/Mitchell

Vote: 18-0-0

VIII. OPEN DISCUSSION

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Thievierge/McElfresh

Vote: 18-0-0

APPENDIX B

For a sports motion to be considered for a vote at a business meeting it must go through the following steps on its way to becoming a by-law or procedure:

1. **SUBMISSION** - An individual coach would submit his sports motion to the NAIA office (i.e. – Marc Burchard) sixty days before the NWCA Business Meeting to allow for designation and deliberation.
2. **DESIGNATION** - NAIA Office would forward the sports motion to the WEC (Wrestling Executive Counsel) and the WEC would determine which standing committee should review and sponsor the motion or if a task force should be formed to review and sponsor the motion.
 - a. The WEC could also decide to sponsor the sports motion if the motion doesn't fit within the duties of a current committee.
 - b. The WEC has the discretion to by-pass steps 1-3 (including the submission deadline) and sponsor a motion on the floor.
3. **DELIBERATION AND REVISION** - The sports motion is forwarded to the committee chair and the chair contacts members of his committee and the author of the sports motion to schedule a time to discuss, ask questions, get input from across qualifying groups, and revise to include necessary information to present motion to the coaches' body.
4. **APPROVAL** - The sports motion is brought to the WCA (Wrestling Coaches Association) by committee. The committee can now speak to the motions merit and impact on NAIA wrestling. The sports motion is discussed and voted on by the body and if passed can be revised to prepare to go to the NAC for a vote.



APPENDIX C | 2027 NAIA Wrestling National Championships – Selection Timeline

Saturday, February 20

- NAIA Conference Qualifying Tournament Deadline
 - o After the event – each conference can submit up to 30 additional wrestlers (3 per weight class), along with accolades to be considered for at-large selection
- Qualifying Conference forms due to the national office – **DEADLINE midnight (local time to host site)**
 - o National office recommends that this be submitted directly after the Saturday night coaches' meeting
 - o Additionally, the national at-large nominees are due to the national office
 - o Conference qualifying forms must be emailed to Candice Fabry (cfabry@naia.org)
- National office compiles conference forms
- National office distributes automatic berths and national at-large nomination forms to the entire coaching body.

Sunday, February 21

- The entire coaching body has the ability to comment and cross-check information distributed by the national office.
 - o Specific information regarding national qualifiers should be directed to conference-specific committee members

Monday, February 22

- National Seeding Committee Conference Call - 2 p.m. EST/1 p.m. CST/12 p.m. MST/11 a.m. PST
 - o Goal is to review roles and responsibilities during the seeding process.

Tuesday, February 23

- All national qualifier information returned to conference rater and oversight – by 9 a.m. EST/ 8 a.m. CST/7 a.m. MST/6 a.m. PST
- National Selection Committee Zoom conference call –11 a.m. EST/10 a.m. CST/9 a.m. MST/8 a.m. PST.
 - o Goal is to allow each conference to give some additional feedback on wrestlers. At least one representative from each conference must be present on the call.
- National Selection Committee At-Large Voting – **DEADLINE 3 p.m. EST/ 2 p.m. CST/1 p.m. MST/ 12 p.m. PST**
- National office will release the qualifiers for the national championships – 5 p.m. CST
- National office will send list of qualifiers (by weight class) to seeding committee for review – by 7 p.m. CST
- Qualifier spreadsheet emailed to Trackwrestling for upload into the national championship system
 - o Done by the national office

Wednesday, February 24

- National seeding committee votes due – **DEADLINE 6 p.m. EST/5 p.m. CST/4 p.m. MST/3 p.m. PST**
 - o Email Candice Fabry (cfabry@naia.org) once completed



- National office compiles votes and distributes to the seeding oversight committee and voting committee
 - *Note – the high and low vote are eliminated from each point total in order to eliminate outliers.*
- Postseason roster information due to the national office – 12 p.m. CST
 - Submission via NAIA Connect (<https://www.naiiaconnect.org/s/login/>) – two forms total
 - Original request will go to both SIDs and Coaches.

Thursday, February 25

- National seeding grid will be distributed by the national office for review by 9 a.m. EST/8 a.m. CST/ 7 a.m. MST/6 a.m. PST
- 8 a.m. CST – 10 a.m. CST Oversight reviews grid.
- 10 a.m. CST – 11 a.m. CST Raters/Oversight Available for rationale requests.
- 1:30 p.m. CST – Seeding Grid Finalized and Distributed for National Seeding Committee Conference Call
- National Seeding Committee Zoom conference call – 3:30 p.m. EST/2:30 p.m. CST/1:30 p.m. MST/12:30 p.m. PST
 - Goal is to discuss potential changes to the seeding. The only seeding changes that can be discussed are between two individuals whose point totals are within 10, in which case the coaches committee will provide insight, and the oversight committee will rule.
 - Following the call, the national office will distribute seeding to the national championship official scorer.

Friday, February 26

- National Bracketing Committee Zoom conference call – 12 p.m. EST/11 a.m. CST/10 a.m. MST/9 a.m. PST
 - Goal is to set the preliminary brackets for the national championships
- National office releases the preliminary brackets – by 5 p.m. CST

Wednesday, March 3

- Team/Athlete registration for the national championships completed – 2 p.m. CST
- National bracketing committee meeting – 3 p.m. CST
 - Finalize the brackets based on entries
 - Official brackets will be released on NAIA.org following the committee approval

Thursday, March 4 – Saturday, March 6

- NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships