



**NAIA Swimming & Diving
Coaches Business Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 24, 2025 – 1:00pm CST Virtual**

- I. Call Meeting to Order/Welcome Kristy Hepp
 - a. Introduction of Officers
 - i. Kristy Hepp – President
 - ii. Alicia Kemnitz – Vice President
 - iii. Curren Bates – Secretary
 - iv. Adam Epstein – Interim Past President
 - v. Tommy Chasanoff – NAC Liaison
- II. Change in Executive Committee Kristy Hepp
 - a. Adam Epstein added as most recent available Past President.
- III. Attendance Curren Bates
 - a. Kristy Hepp, Aquinas; Alicia Kemnitz, Lindsey Wilson; Curren Bates, The Master's; Adam Epstein, Keiser; Casey Bradstreet, Campbellsville; Stephen Wolcott, IWU; Tom Kerr, Life; Wiktor Perkowski, Midland; Bryan Farris, Morningside; Rob Zamorano, SCAD; Rob Miecznikowski, St. Ambrose; Caesar Asadi, St. Thomas; Dale Heckman, Sterling; Maddison Rice, The College of Idaho; David Bresser, University of Saint Mary; DD Blankenship, University of the Cumberland; Robert Gonzalez, William Carey; Tommy Chasanoff, NAC Liaison, Fred Aubuchon, NAIA.
 - b. Quorum needed – 72 programs, 36 votes needed.
 - i. 37 Women's Programs
 - ii. 35 Men's Programs
 - iii. Votes from schools with both genders are permitted 2 votes.
- IV. Approval of 2026 Agenda Kristy Hepp
 - a. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - b. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - c. Discussion: None
 - d. Vote: 30-0-0
- V. Approval of 2025 Minutes Kristy Hepp
 - a. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - b. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - c. Discussion: None
 - d. Vote: 30-0-0
 - e. Minutes from 2025 NAIA-SDCA meeting are included in meeting packet.
- VI. Reports
 - a. CSCAA Report Adam Epstein
 - i. Convention May 3-5 in Chicago.
 - ii. [Convention Link](#)
 - b. National Office Report Fred Aubuchon
 - i. 2027 & 2028 Nationals will be in Ypsilanti, Michigan at Eastern Michigan University and the Joens Natatorium; hosted by Ann Arbor Sports Commission. The team at Ann Arbor has hosted many NAIA National Championships.
 - ii. Two new members were approved for active membership beginning fall 2025.
 - 1. Mount Mary University (Wisc.), will join the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference
 - 2. Trinity Western University (B.C.) will join the Cascade Collegiate Conference.
 - iii. The NAIA has been actively enhancing membership recruitment and retention, focusing on engaging NCAA Division II and III schools. In the first half of this year, the organization collaborated closely with six institutions in these divisions. As part of our outreach, we refreshed the "Why NAIA" website, aiming to better showcase the value and advantages of NAIA

membership. This initiative has proven effective; last year, we received 12 membership applications, the highest in the past decade.

- c. Executive Committee Report Kristy Hepp
 - i. EC met on a regular basis starting back in August.
 - ii. A lot of focus was on Diving qualification processes and the Relay-only swimmer.
 - iii. Kristy Hepp, DD Blankenship and Fred Aubuchon worked on an official Diving Submission process to be sent to the NAIA.
 - iv. Kristy thanked the Executive Committee for all their hard work and dedication to giving the best experience to the student-athletes.
- d. Rules Committee and National Selection Oversight Reports Adam Epstein
 - i. Oversight information
 - 1. Committee met Monday prior to selection day.
 - 2. Established oversight process.
 - 3. Reviewed new processes for Diving and Relay-only Swimmer.
 - ii. Onsite Rules Committee
 - 1. Two appeals brought forth and both went smoothly.
 - 2. Rules committee and lead official stayed at conclusion of sessions.
 - 3. Two openings for next year (information later in agenda).
- VII. Old Business Kristy Hepp
 - a. None
- VIII. New Business Kristy Hepp
 - a. Sport Motions
 - i. Sport Motion #1 – Publish Top 10 Team Rankings
 - 1. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - 2. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 3. Discussion: Concerns about a discrepancies in rankings based on national results and the quantifying of numbers. This had been a process in the past and we wanted to bring it back for continued campus and national recognition of programs. Question about championship vs. dual meets; it specifically looks at championship ranking. NAIA Swim/Dive is one of the rare sports for which a ranking is not publized.
 - 4. Vote: 26-2-2
 - ii. Sport Motion #2 – Tie for Coach of the Year
 - 1. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - 2. Second: Kemnitz, Lindsey Wilson
 - 3. Discussion: Votes are very divided for Coach of the Year and this year we had a 6-5-5 vote was close to a 3-way tie. Question about cost to purchase additional awards didn't seem to be a major concern. Focus was to honor the 'Coach' of the Year.
 - 4. Vote: 26-6-0
 - iii. Sport Motion #3 – Relay only swimmer, clarity
 - 1. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - 2. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 3. Discussion: This is already a policy, but needed a little more clarity.
 - 4. Vote: 30-0-2
 - iv. Sport Motion #4 – Relay only swimmer addendum to current policy
 - 1. Moved: Wolcott, IWU
 - 2. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 3. Discussion: Many coaches contacted the national office assuming this was already the policy. It would be far easier on the championship committee and Swimcloud. The goal was to improve the national championship and in some cases a team was awarded a relay only swimmer, but that person only got to swim in one or two of the 5 relays. This policy would not add any additional swimmers to the meet; it would enhance the meet.
 - 4. Vote: 32-0-0
 - v. Sport Motion #5 – Diving Coach of the Meet Award
 - 1. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - 2. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 3. Discussion: Original motion was ammended to include the collective of all divers from a team to create the total points. Additional discussion on team's that only sponosred one gender.
 - 4. Vote: 28-2-2

- vi. Sport Motion #6 – One diving coach per college
 - 1. Moved: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 2. Second: Wolcott, IWU
 - 3. Discussion: Policy already exists, this is bringing clarity to the intended policy.
 - 4. Vote: 30-0-2
- vii. Sport Motion #7 – Seating Draft for Nationals
 - 1. Moved: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 2. Second: Wolcott, IWU
 - 3. Discussion: Concerns brought forward about why 16 and not 10 or 20? Alicia explained that 16 is a number that we use for a lot in this sport and at nationals (top 16 swimmer for example). 16 is approximately half the teams that compete at nationals as well.
 - 4. Vote: 28-2-2
- viii. Sport Motion #8 – To have the swimming officials double as diving judges at Nationals
 - 1. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - 2. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 3. Discussion: Motion was presented on the floor. This year we had very qualified officials that did a great job at Diving. Kristy noted, that swim officials are often certified in diving as well. It was great that coaches were not pulled in to judge diving. Noted that this was the fairest judging in 10 plus years.
 - 4. Vote: 30-2-0
- ix. Sport Motion #9 – In Diving, select the top 8 divers per board, per gender
 - 1. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - 2. Second: Zamorano, SCAD
 - 3. Discussion: Motion was presented on the floor. There are top Divers that are not getting into the meet due to the current format of selection and limitation to 8 per gender. This would only increase the meet by a handful of athletes.
 - 4. Vote: 24-2-4-6
- b. Committee Nominations
 - i. Executive Committee Open Position
 - 1. Secretary
 - a. Nomination - Rob Zamorano, SCAD
 - ii. Rules Committee
 - 1. Past President, automatic with title.
 - 2. Swim Rep, Adam Epstein, Keiser, completing, 1st year.
 - 3. Diving Rep, DD Blankenship, Cumberlands, 1st year.
 - 4. Swim Rep, Open
 - a. Nomination - Casey Bradstreet, Campbellsville
 - 5. Swim Rep, Open
 - a. Nomination - Rob Zamorano, SCAD
- IX. Hall of Fame Nominations Kristy Hepp
 - a. Alicia presented findings on athletes and coaches.
 - b. Emails will be sent out to those that have a stake in any potential nominations.
- X. Open Discussion Kristy Hepp
- XI. Adjournment Kristy Hepp
 - a. Moved: Epstein, Keiser
 - b. Second: Wolcott, IWU
 - c. Vote: 32-0-0

Coaches Association – National Office Report

NAIA Legislative Process

Use the Legislative Services handout to explain the difference between sport policy and NAIA bylaws, as well as the avenues available for making amendments to each.

Explain the voting process, including:

- On-site straw polls
- Electronic ballots distributed for full votes
- Requirement that 50% of coaches—either in attendance or participating electronically—must vote to move an issue forward to the NAC

NAIA's Role in Coaches Associations

The Sport Manager is present to help coaches associations navigate issues and provide guidance on topics and processes. We do not make decisions; rather, we serve as facilitators to advance the issues that you, the coaches, want to implement within your sport.

NAC's Role

Introduce the NAC representative.

The NAC initiates operational policies for conferences/CAC, national championships, national statistical services, national awards, and event management.

The NAC meets four times a year (January, April, June, and August) to review motions. Review when sport-specific motions will be considered by the NAC.

Sponsorship Update

Solicit feedback from coaches on-site regarding potential sponsors they would like the national office to explore.

Site Selection

Ann Arbor Sports Commission and the Jones Natatorium on the Campus of Eastern Michigan University will be the host for 2027 and 2028.

Solicit on-site coach feedback regarding:

- What factors are important to them

- Likes and dislikes of current or previous championship/invitational locations

NAIA Membership Recruitment and Retention

Two new institutions were approved for active membership beginning fall 2026:

- **Wesleyan College (Ga.)**, planning to join the Southern States Athletic Conference
- **Andrew College (Ga.)**, also planning to join the Southern States Athletic Conference

The NAIA has enhanced its membership recruitment and retention efforts, with a particular focus on NCAA Division II and III institutions. As part of these initiatives, the “Why NAIA” website was refreshed to better highlight the value and advantages of NAIA membership. This strategy has been effective; last year, the NAIA received 12 membership applications—the highest number in the past decade.

Collaboration plays a key role, with NAIA members involved in 80% of current recruitment efforts. Members are encouraged to support this work by connecting the NAIA with potential schools. If you know of interested institutions or helpful contacts, please reach out to **Nick Davidson at ndavidson@naia.org**.

NAIA Championship Streaming

The NAIA is entering year two of its agreement with **Urban Edge Network (UEN)**. Over the past year, many NAIA conferences have also partnered with UEN, enhancing visibility and alignment across the association.

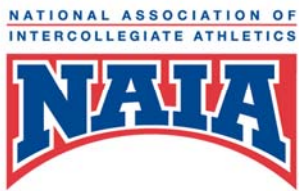
In year two, the national office has expanded coverage to include early-round competitions during national championships.

For winter 2026:

- Swimming & Diving National Championships were streamed for free.

Postseason Roster Adjustments

The Council approved increases to Swim teams that qualified 3-5 swimmers to potentially add a Relay-only Swimmer.



Coach's Guide: Legislation, Policies & Sport Rules

A coaches association takes action through sport motions, but different processes apply for motions that implicate sport rules, policy changes and legislative amendments.

Sport Rule: Sport rules are those specific rules that dictate on-field conduct and playing rules of the game. The NAIA has adopted the NCAA rulebook in nearly all sports (exceptions: tennis, golf, competitive cheer and dance, and bowling), though specific NAIA rule modifications can be made by the coaches association and National Administrative Council (NAC). The NAIA may have some general policies that apply to game management or conduct in competition (e.g. suspensions resulting from ejections, etc.), but these NAIA policies only apply if the sport rule is silent or more lenient. Sport rule books can be found on each "Coaches Corner" page (www.naia.org)

How to make a change:

- Sport motion by coaches association
- Must be approved by NAC
- Will be considered an NAIA rule modification

Policy: Regulations found in the official policy sections of the handbook. Each governing council of the NAIA has a policy section that covers specific topics within that council's purview. The NAC oversees all coaches association and any issues arising from coaches associations. Policy can be changed at the will of the council. NAC, COP, CFAR and CSA policy can be found in the NAIA Handbook (www.naia.org/legislative)

How to make a change:

- Sport motion by coaches association
- Changes to NAC Policy: Must be approved by full NAC (occurs at convention or NACDA). Will be added to the NAC policy.
- Changes to COP, CFAR or CSA policy: Coaches associations do not have a direct line to propose changes in these policies. Should a sport motion apply to one of these policy sections, the sport's officers and national office liaison can share the motion with the applicable council as a recommendation. It will be that council's discretion to determine if any action is warranted.

Legislation: Anything found in the NAIA Constitution or Bylaws. Any change or amendment to the constitution or bylaws can only be done through a vote of the full membership at the annual NAIA national convention. The constitution and bylaws can be found in the NAIA Handbook (www.naia.org/legislative)

How to make a change:

- Any association, council, standing committee or conference can sponsor a legislative amendment, and in some cases a co-sponsor is required. (Coaches associations must receive co-sponsorship from any of those groups except another coaches association.)
- Proposals must be submitted to the office by mid-January.
- All submitted proposals that have requisite co-sponsorship will be voted on by the full membership at the annual convention.





Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #1

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

To have the National Office, using SwimCloud's Championship ranking tool, promote/publish 7, Top 10, NAIA Swimming and Diving Men's and Women's Team Rankings each season.

RATIONALE:

The National Office's publication of sport rankings is one of the best ways for NAIA teams to gain recognition for their athletic accomplishments. It's an effective way to promote swimming and diving, while recognizing various schools and teams that might not be mentioned otherwise.

By using SwimCloud's championship ranking tool, the National Office can get the rankings quickly.

This aids in recruiting and informs college administration that swimming and diving teams on their campuses are successful and recognized. This sort of recognition is important for Olympic sports like Swimming and Diving.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

When the National Office announced rankings for swimming and diving several years ago, after never having done so before, there was a sizable uptick in attention given to NAIA Swimming. Even on campuses that have sponsored swimming for many years, administrators, students, and other coaches took note of swimming and diving's success. However, many Sports Information Departments will not promote rankings unless they are officially released from the National office. So, when the National Office stopped publishing swimming/diving rankings, one of the best promotional tools for NAIA Swimming and Diving ended abruptly. This made swimming and diving one of the few sports in the NAIA whose rankings were not publicized by the National Office.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

START DATE:

2026-27 Academic Year



National
Administrative
Council

Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #2

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

In the event of a tie in the voting for NAIA Coach of the Year, the tie shall be broken by a vote of the NAIA onsite Rules Committee, Host Director, and onsite Media Coordinator, which will determine the final recipient of the award.

RATIONALE:

Currently, there is no formal procedure outlined to resolve a tie in the voting for NAIA Coach of the Year. Establishing a clear tie-breaking mechanism ensures the voting process remains transparent, efficient, and fair. Utilizing the Meet Committee provides a knowledgeable and neutral group with a comprehensive understanding of the championship performance to make a final determination.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

This year, there was a tie for one of the coaches of the year awards. At present, no formal tie-breaking procedure exists within the NAIA Swimming & Diving Coaches Association awards process. This motion is intended to establish a clear and consistent method for resolving a potential tie.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Would avoid additional costs to host in ordering additional awards.

START DATE:

2026-27 Academic Year



Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #3

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

NAIA Relay-Only Swimmer Clarification:

- No more than one relay-only swimmer is permitted per qualifying team.
- The relay-only swimmer provision does not apply to teams adding an officially invited swimmer through the scratch/alternate process. Teams utilizing the scratch process remain governed solely by existing alternate procedures and do not receive additional relay-only swimmer eligibility as a result.

RATIONALE:

This proposal clarifies the eligibility and application of the relay-only swimmer provision. Current language creates ambiguity regarding how relay-only swimmers interact with team size, relay qualification standards, and automatic relay entry for teams with four or more individual qualifiers. This motion ensures consistent application across all programs and preserves the intent of rewarding relay qualification performances without expanding competitive advantages beyond earned standards.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

There was a new rule introduced in 2025–26 allowing teams with 3–5 individual national qualifiers and an automatic relay qualifying time to add one relay-only swimmer. Clarification is needed following initial implementation. Current rules per policy:

- Any school who has 4 or more individual swimmers qualified for the national meet is automatically entered into all 5 relays.
- A team qualifying three 3 to 5 individual swimmers for the NAIA National Championship may add one relay-only swimmer to its roster, provided the team has achieved at least one automatic relay qualifying standard.
- Automatic relay standards are to be the average of 10th place times in the previous 3 national championships.
- The relay-only swimmer may only participate in relay events for which the team has achieved an automatic qualifying standard during the qualification period.
- The relay-only swimmer must compete in at least one qualified relay event for which they are entered.
- The relay-only swimmer may not compete in any individual event.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

START DATE:
2026-27 Academic Year





Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #4

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

Amendment to relay-only swimmer – The relay-only swimmer may compete in any of the 5 available relays provided that the school has achieved at least one NAIA relay standard.

RATIONALE:

This swimmer will already have a deck credential and be included in the official party, so this motion provides the opportunity for the relay-only athlete and school to help fill the available relay scoring positions. This year, we only had 5 out of 10 relays (men's and women's combined) that scored out to 16th place. At a national meet, we should be filling every competitive opportunity.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

The new provision introduced in 2025–26 allows teams with 3–5 individual qualifiers and an automatic relay qualifying time to add one relay-only swimmer. In addition to the clarification needed, the relay-only rule restricted the athlete to only competing in the relay with the NAIA qualifying times.

- A team qualifying 3 to 5 individual swimmers for the NAIA National Championship may add one relay-only swimmer to its roster, provided the team has achieved at least one automatic relay qualifying standard.
- Automatic relay standards are to be the average of 10th place times in the previous 3 national championships.
- The relay-only swimmer may only participate in relay events for which the team has achieved an automatic qualifying standard during the qualification period.
- The relay-only swimmer must compete in at least one qualified relay event for which they are entered.
- The relay-only swimmer may not compete in any individual event.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None, the relay only swimmer is already invited to compete in the meet.

START DATE:

2026-27 Academic Year



Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #5

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:
Establish one Dive Coach of the Meet Award, to be presented annually at the NAIA National Championships. The award recognizes the diving coach whose athletes record the highest collective total over all 4-boards (men's and women's).

RATIONALE:
Both swimming and diving events contribute toward team points and overall finishes; however, only swim coaches are recognized with a Coach of the Year award. In order to properly grow the sport of diving within the NAIA, we need to properly recognize the athletes' and coaches' accomplishments.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:
None.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:
Cost of the award.

START DATE:
2026-27 Academic Year



Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #6

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

This is a clarification to a current policy - One diving coach per college will be provided an Official Party Credential (with deck access) for NAIA Nationals provided that the school they represent has at least 1 diver competing in the meet. This credential is in addition to the already allotted credentials each team receives for their swimming programs and support staff.

RATIONALE:

This motion is meant to provide clarification on the current policy, specifying that diving deck passes are provided on an institutional (singular) basis, not by gender. Therefore, if a college has both male and female divers participating in the meet, one Official Party Credential will be provided, not two. This was the intent behind last year's changes to the policy. With minimal deck space, we need to limit the number of non-swimmers on pool deck.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

Clarity to current policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

START DATE:

2026-27 Academic Year



Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #7

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

Prior to the Championship, a seating assignment chart of the pool deck will be developed and organized based on the previous season's final scores at Nationals and conducted as a draft. A point average will be calculated for each scoring team by combining each program's men's and women's final score. The top 16 teams' head coach will choose their seating area in order of highest to lowest average. Institutions that sponsor only one gender will retain their whole score (not average). After the top 16 teams, deck assignments will be chosen based on the remaining teams' overall swimmer/diver count for the current meet. Those coaches will work with the meet committee to identify their team's seating areas.

RATIONALE:

Seating at Nationals is always complicated because deck space is usually limited and teams have preferences on where they want to be. Variations of this assigned seating selection process has been in place for over a decade, but it has never been in writing, and it has caused confusion each year. The motion is meant to provide clarity and streamline the process. For new teams or teams that did not score at the previous meet, this policy allows teams with the more qualifiers to choose their seating next since they have more people to accommodate. Since 16 swimmers and relays score in each event, it follows that we base the seating selection process on the top 16 scoring teams as well. This creates consistency and is not arbitrary.

To make this policy fair for institutions that only sponsor one gender, using their previous base score is more in line with the intended spirit behind this procedure. The programs do not control the fact that their schools do not sponsor both sexes in the sport or that their institution is one gender. Specifying the policy for programs like these, then allows them the opportunity to choose seating that reflects their prowess on the National level and they are not limited by their base score being divided by 2 when they only have 1 team.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

When we first developed this seating selection process around 2013, the coaches' association agreed to use the base score (or double their score and divide by 2) for single-sex sponsored programs. Apparently, this was lost along the way. To my knowledge this seating process, or some version of it, has been used since 2013 and we changed the single-sex policy the year after in 2014 (all OKC years).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

START DATE:
2026-27 Academic Year





National
Administrative
Council

Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #8

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:
To have the swimming officials at the national championships also double as diving judges.

RATIONALE:
Non-biased judges. The Swimming officials have to also know how to judge diving for their certification, so there is no need to bring in additional diving only judges.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:
Prior to 2025 the judges were competing diving coaches with athletes in the competition, which led to biased based judging at the National Championships.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:
N/A

START DATE:
2026-27 Academic Year



National
Administrative
Council

Men's & Women's Swimming & Diving #9

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

In Diving, select the top 8 divers per board, per gender. Divers will need to have the national qualifying score and degree of difficulty.

RATIONALE:

Creates the most competitive experience for divers. As the best athletes will be at the meet for their respective events.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

Currently only divers with both boards qualification standards have preferential selection. If a school's facilities only have access to one board, that athlete would now have a legitimate opportunity to qualify for the National Championships on their own merit.

During the 2026 National Championships, a diver was scratched into the meet, and only had a 1M list. This athlete finished in 3rd place. Without the scratch, they would not have been able to compete in the meet since they did not have a qualifying 3M list.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The potential for 0-5 new athletes at the Swimming and Diving National Championships

START DATE:

2026-27 Academic Year