



2024-25

FIRST & SECOND ROUND

CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPANT MANUAL

2025 NAIA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: FIRST & SECOND ROUNDS

INTRODUCTION

The following information will assist you in planning if your team qualifies for the 2025 NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship, which begins with the First & Second Rounds (March 14-15, 2025) at 16 different sites and concludes with the NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship Final Site (March 20-25, 2025) in Sioux City, Iowa.

All championship resources are available on the NAIA website – on the [Women's Basketball Coaches' Corner](#) – and will also be sent to all Women's Basketball Head Coaches.

Katie Green, NAIA Athletics Communications Senior Manager and Women's Basketball Media Coordinator, will also be sending an email to your Sports Information Director requesting information/materials for your team as potential qualifiers for the NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship. Please make sure to submit your Official Postseason Roster prior to the start of your first conference tournament game.

IMPORTANT DATES

2024-25 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SPORT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 1	DEADLINE – Bid submission to host First & Second Rounds
FEBRUARY 27	RELEASE – 16 First & Second Round Host Sites
MARCH 4	DEADLINE – Completion of Conference Postseason Qualifying Events
MARCH 6	RELEASE – National Championship Qualifiers and Bracket – 6:00pm CST
MARCH 7	Women's Basketball First & Second Round Qualifier Call Mandatory for all qualified Head Coaches and Athletic Directors
MARCH 14-15	NAIA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP – FIRST & SECOND ROUNDS 16 host sites nationwide
MARCH 17	Women's Basketball Final Site Qualifier Call – 10:00 AM CST Mandatory for all Head Coaches & Athletic Directors advancing to Sioux City
MARCH 20-25	44th NAIA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP – FINAL SITE Tyson Events Center – Sioux City, Iowa

GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE QUALIFIER CALL

A Qualifier Call will be conducted by the NAIA National Office on **March 7, 2025 at 10:00am CT** for all qualified teams, First & Second Round Hosts and designated Site Supervisors before the First & Second Round to review the standards and expectations for all National Championship participants and discuss logistics. Upon qualification, to the National Championship Tournament, each team's Head Coach and Athletics Director will receive meeting information necessary to attend the call.

It is mandatory that each institution's Head Coach and Athletic Director or designated administrator other than a member of the coaching staff participate in the administrative qualifier call.

FORMAT

The NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship is a 64-team, single-elimination tournament, consisting of 16 First & Second Round tournament sites. The NAIA Women's Basketball Championship First & Second Round brackets are four-team, single-elimination format. The winner of each of First & Second Round will advance to the Final Site. The Final Site which takes place March 20-25, 2025 in Sioux City, Iowa will be a 16-team, single-elimination tournament consisting of the 16 First & Second Round site winners.

QUALIFICATION

The 64 teams that will compete in the 2024-25 NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship will be determined using qualification plan approved by the National Administrative Council found on [NAIA Connect](#).

Conference postseason qualifying events must be completed by **Tuesday, March 4, 2025** as conference automatic berths will be finalized at this time. At-large berths will be awarded based on selection by the Women's Basketball National Selection Committee. The Women's Basketball National Selection Committee will meet on March 5-6, 2025 to finalize the field of 64 teams.

Teams that qualify for the 2025 NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship will be seeded #1-#64 by the NAIA Women's Basketball Selection Committee and assigned to a First & Second Round site as follows:

- Selection Committee shall place qualifying teams at First & Second Round sites based on the following prioritized criteria:
 - Geographical location of teams
 - Efforts will be made to limit ground travel to 750 miles or less for the traveling teams to First & Second Round sites.
 - Financial considerations
 - Efforts will be made to reduce air travel for traveling teams to First & Second Round sites.
 - Competitive Balance
 - Efforts will be made to keep integrity of seed lines (i.e., #1, #2, #3 and #4 seed)
 - Flights are not prohibited, but no flights or mileage above 750 can be added in order to keep seeding balanced.
- Teams will then be placed in each First & Second Round bracket.
- Teams from the same conference shall never be matched in the first game of the national championship.
- Teams in the same conference should not be placed at the same First & Second Round site unless this placements saves the team from incurring geographic placement at an First & Second Round site more than 750 miles from their campus.

If two teams from the same conference are placed at the same First & Second Round site, and seeding dictates they play, the selection committee shall have the right to change First & Second Round match-ups to avoid this match-up.

For example, two teams assigned to the same site are from the same conference and one is the #1 seed and one is the #4 seed. The lower ranked team shall be moved to accommodate teams from the same conference from meeting in the first round. #4 would be moved to #3, and #3 would be moved to #4.

COMPETITION OPERATIONS

LOCKER ROOMS

Participating teams will be assigned a locker room for each game of the First & Second Round, however, all teams are required to dress and shower at their hotel during the First & Second Round before and after each game.

OFFICIAL BALL

The Spalding TF-1000 Legacy is the Official Women's Basketball of the NAIA and is the only ball to be used in all NAIA National Championship First & Second Round and Final Site competition.

FIRST & SECOND ROUND GAME SCHEDULE

In consultation with the host institution, the NAIA Championships Department establishes game times for National Championship and First & Second Round competition.

All First & Second Round matches shall be played on Friday, March 14 and Saturday, March 15. The championship match of the First & Second Round must conclude by 8:00 PM (CT) on Saturday, March 15.

PLAYER INTRODUCTIONS

Following team warm-up, the following protocol will be used for the National Anthem and player introductions at First & Second Rounds:

- Teams return to their benches for team huddles, announcements.
- Teams stand at their benches for the National Anthem.
- The starting lineup of the designated visiting team will be announced first. Players proceed from the team bench as their names are called.
- Home team starting lineup introductions will follow visiting team introductions.
- Officials are introduced after the home team.

PLAYING RULES

The Official [NCAA Women's Basketball Rules](#) are followed with exceptions as specified in the NAIA Women's Basketball Coaches Manual.

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Arrangements have been made with First & Second Round hosts for practice sessions beginning on Thursday, March 13. Practice times will be scheduled based on the arrival times of participating teams.

The NAIA Site Supervisor, in consultation with the Tournament Director of the First & Second Round site and the NAIA National Office Championships Department shall establish a practice schedule for all teams participating in the First & Second Round. One or more alternate practice facilities must be made available to all participating teams. The facility must be exclusively available for all team practices during the following times:

- Day before first game – Noon to 9 PM, maximum of 1 ½ hours of practice for each team
- Day of competition – One hour of practice for all teams
- Practices must end at least 1 ½ hours before the start of the first game

Participating teams should plan to bring their own balls for use at alternate practice locations.

Teams that will require a flight to arrive at their First & Second Round site should work with the First & Second Round Host and Site Supervisor should they require basketballs to be supplied by the host site for alternate practice locations.

PRE-GAME SCHEDULE – FIRST GAME OF DAY

The following time schedule should be followed for the first game of the day at all First & Second Rounds:

1. The court will be set up and available 60 minutes prior to the start of each First & Second Round game.

2. Officials shall be required to report to the playing area at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each game. Their jurisdiction begins upon arrival on the court.
3. A countdown shall be started on the visible clock 60:00 prior to game time.
4. Pre-game protocol follows the following schedule:

60 minutes on the clock	Court available for shared warm up (Visible clock time: 60:00 – 19:00)
20 minutes on the clock	PA – Opening remarks and sponsor reads
0 minutes on clock	Players to Bench National Anthem Visitor Team Starters/Head Coach Introduced Home Team Starters/Head Coach Introduced
Immediately following intros	Tip-Off

5. Team Introductions – Following team warm-up, the following protocol will be used for the National Anthem and player introductions at First & Second Rounds.
 - Teams return to their benches for team huddles, announcements.
 - Teams stand at their benches for the National Anthem.
 - The starting lineup of the designated visiting team will be announced first. Players proceed from the team bench as their names are called.
 - Home team starting lineup introductions will follow visiting team introductions.
 - Referees are introduced after the home team.
6. The NAIA shall provide scripts for sponsor and Champions of Character announcements during timeouts and breaks in play.

PRE-GAME SCHEDULE – SUBSEQUENT FIRST & SECOND ROUND GAMES

The following warm-up schedule should be followed for all remaining games at all First & Second Rounds:

- A minimum of **20 minutes** will be permitted between games on **Friday**. A minimum of **30 minutes** will be permitted between games (at dual gender sites) on **Saturday**.
- The arena clock will run during the pre-game period to indicate when the warm-up period is concluded. There will be two minutes allowed for introductions of teams and coaches prior to game time. The clock will be set at 20 minutes on Friday and 30 minutes on Saturday.

HALFTIME PERIODS

The following halftime protocol should be followed for all First & Second Round games:

- Fifteen minutes are allowed for halftime periods during all First & Second Round games.
- The arena clock will run during the halftime period and will end one minute before starting the second half.
- All teams may use the arena floor for warm-up during halftime of the game immediately before their game.
- The two teams playing in the first game on Friday and Saturday may arrive on the floor no earlier than 60 minutes prior to game time.
- Basketballs are to remain on the arena floor. No basketballs are to be taken into the auxiliary gym, locker rooms, training rooms or hallway area.

TIMEOUT POLICY

All First & Second Round Sites will adopt a uniform media timeout policy. This policy is [detailed here](#).

OFFICIAL PARTY

The official party for each team participating in postseason play is 15 players allowed in uniform and up to 6 support staff. Each team will receive a maximum number of 21 credentials, 15 student-athlete credentials and 6 official party credentials.

Official Postseason Roster forms will now be filled out via [NAIA Connect](#). For assistance, access the Postseason Roster Quick Start How-To Guide can be accessed [here](#).

Postseason Rosters (and ejection disclosures) will be processed electronically and the administrator completing the roster will sign electronically.

If you have trouble with the online roster form, please contact [Katie Green](#), NAIA Manager of Athletics Communications. For any other general questions related to the Official Postseason Rosters, please contact [Abby Schultz](#), NAIA Championship Sport Manager.

The initial list of 15 eligible players must be submitted by Friday, March 7, 2025.

Only players on the official postseason roster may be in uniform. If a team is discovered using a player not on the official postseason roster at any time during the postseason tournament, that team will be immediately disqualified from further postseason play that year. From the point of first infraction by a team using a player not on the official postseason roster, all subsequent matches shall be forfeited by the offending team.

A copy of this roster form must be hand-carried to the site of the Conference/CAC (formerly A.I.I)/Group postseason tournament site and National Championship (both First & Second Rounds and Final Site), and be presented to the NAIA Site Supervisor (for First & Second Rounds), and the NAIA Sport Manager (for the National Championship Final Site) prior to that institution's participation in the tournament.

The deadline for certifying the official roster of 15 players is 30 minutes prior to the first game of any qualifying tournament, or at the coaches meeting of the National Championship First & Second Round or Final Site.

A player may be replaced on the official roster between the Conference Tournament and the NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship First & Second Rounds by any eligible player whose name is included on the NAIA Official Eligibility Form for the current season. A player may be replaced on the official roster between the First & Second Rounds and Final Site.

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.

Sports Information / Media Personnel – Credentials for First & Second Rounds should be obtained through the host institution. Do not apply for First & Second Round credentials through the NAIA website.

Quick Facts Submission Instructions

Each team's Head Coach or SID will be responsible for completing the Quick Facts section online. The information entered will be used by the National Office and National Championship host when creating postseason publications, documents, etc.

Go to <https://www.naiacconnect.org/s/login/> to submit program Quick Facts.

TEAM BENCHES

Each team's bench will include enough space for the following personnel:

- Up to 15 players in uniform
- Up to 6 additional personnel
- Up to 2 athletic trainers

The Head Coach is responsible for designating bench personnel. No additional personnel are allowed on the bench for any matches. Players shall remain seated while the game is in progress.

TOWELS/HYDRATION

Teams are responsible for providing their own towels and water bottles for the duration of First & Second Rounds. Water coolers for refilling water bottles will be provided.

UNIFORMS

Teams must have both light and dark colored uniforms available. Home teams (higher seed) wear light colored uniforms and visitors (lower seed) wear dark. It is mandatory that numbers be easily distinguishable from the predominant background color(s) and pattern. Numbers must be displayed on front and back of each player's jersey.

TEAM TRAVEL

ARRIVAL AT FIRST & SECOND ROUND SITE

All participating teams will need to plan on arriving at their First & Second Round site by no later than Thursday, March 13, 2025. Please make sure to coordinate your travel plans with your First & Second Round Site Supervisor and First & Second Round Tournament Director.

HOUSING

All participating teams will be assigned to a hotel by the First & Second Round host and must stay at that property for the duration of their stay at the National Championship First & Second Round. A team representative should contact the assigned hotel property by no later than end of business day on Monday, March 10, 2025 and provide a rooming list, date/time of arrival and a method of payment for all hotel charges.

A room block of 13 double/double hotel rooms will be reserved on behalf of each participating team, however, each participating team is financially responsible for the cost of the rooms (as well as all other travel expenses & meals). If traveling teams need hotel rooms in addition to the room block provided by the host, traveling teams will be responsible for requesting and securing those needs. Head coaches will have an opportunity to receive hotel booking information from their host Tournament Director during the Qualifier Administrative Zoom Call to take place on Friday, March 7.

All traveling teams must stay at the designated hotel for the duration of their stay at the NAIA Women's Basketball National Championship First & Second Rounds to be eligible for possible reimbursement.

REIMBURSEMENT

Travel and lodging reimbursement to member institutions participating in postseason events is not guaranteed by the NAIA for any event. All transportation and housing expenses incurred to attend an NAIA First & Second Round shall be the financial responsibility of the institution.

The NAC and COP have approved a flat fee reimbursement rate for traveling teams in First & Second Round competition.

Traveling teams will be responsible for a minimum amount of their transportation and housing expenses prior to being eligible for expense reimbursement. The traveling team will receive and pay the transportation bill (air and/or ground) and housing bills incurred to and from, and while at the First & Second Round site. Exceptions will not be made to these policies unless approved in advance in writing by the NAIA CEO.

At the conclusion of the First & Second Rounds the NAIA Championship Sport Manager will send participant Athletics Directors and Head Coaches the Traveling Team Expense Report.

TRANSPORTATION

There are two categories for transportation reimbursement:

1. Trips less than 750 miles:
 - Air travel will not be eligible for reimbursement without prior written approval from the NAIA.
 - Expenses for one standard 55 passenger bus, or up to two 15-passenger vans. Institutions are responsible for arranging all ground transportation needs.

- Teams traveling close to 750 miles may submit a written request to the NAIA for approval to use air travel. Written request must be accompanied by –
 - The estimated cost of ground transportation,
 - A quote for the cost of airline tickets.
 - Any airline tickets purchased without written approval from the NAIA Department of Championships will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- 2. For trips over 750 miles:
 - Air transportation will typically be used.
 - Commercial airline flights for up to 21 members of the Official Party.

Traveling teams are no longer required to receive a quote from Short's Travel to be eligible for postseason reimbursement.

EXPENSE REPORT

Within 15 days after participating in a First & Second Round, traveling teams shall submit the Traveling Team Expense Report Form, with receipts, to the NAIA National Office. The institution's CEO and Athletics Director will be notified when expense reports are not submitted within 15 days following the First & Second Round competition.

Submitting incomplete or late expense reports may jeopardize the institution's eligibility for reimbursement.

FIRST & SECOND ROUND PERSONNEL

NAIA CHAMPIONSHIP SPORT MANAGER

The NAIA Championship Sport Manager is a member of the NAIA Department of Championships responsible for the overall operation and supervision of National Championship First & Second Round and Final Site competition and events. Please note that the Championship Sport Manager will not be on-site during First & Second Rounds.

Abby Schultz
 NAIA Women's Basketball Sport Manager
 816.595.8184
rdaum@naia.org

HOST TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

The Host Tournament Director is the representative working directly with NAIA National Office and the NAIA Site Supervisor for on-site First & Second Round event administration including but not limited to: officials, administrative services, publicity and promotion, event personnel, certificates of insurance, programs, facility, equipment rental and medical services.

The Host Tournament Director is the liaison between the NAIA National Office, the Site Supervisor, participating teams and all local entities including competition and practice facilities' personnel, hotel personnel, local media, sponsors and merchants.

NAIA SITE SUPERVISOR

NAIA National Championships are under the direct control and supervision of the NAIA with assistance from each coaches association and the assigned Site Supervisor for each site. The NAIA, in conjunction with the First & Second Round host, will designate a representative to serve as the Site Supervisor for each site. Site Supervisors are selected to work the First & Second Rounds by the host institution and Host Tournament Director. Site Supervisors should have no direct affiliation to the First & Second Round Host institution. This includes school administrators, athletic directors, conference commissioner, other sport coach, etc.

The First & Second Round host provides housing, mileage reimbursement, meals and/or meal expenses up to \$35 per diem for the assigned NAIA Site Supervisor. Duties of the NAIA Site Supervisor include, but are not limited to:

Supervision of Participating Teams

- Conduct administrative meeting with personnel from all participating teams prior to the First & Second Round.
- Confirm itineraries for traveling teams from time of arrival to time of departure from host site. The itinerary is given to head coaches of each traveling team upon arrival to the host site, and adjustments in the schedule, if necessary, are made at that time.
- Confirm arrangements for housing and meals for traveling teams.
- Confirm practice schedule and site for traveling teams.
- Confirm local transportation (if needed) for traveling teams.
- Communicate with the Host Tournament Director and Host SID and prepare schedule for all participating coaches and their players (if necessary) with the news media.
- Attend practice session(s) of all teams.
- The NAIA Site Supervisor will be stationed in press row for all First & Second Round games.
- The NAIA Site Supervisor will provide assistance (as necessary) to the participating coaches to ensure the best possible conditions for all teams before, during and after each game.

Supervision of Game Officials

- Meet and brief officials upon their arrival at the venue.
- Confirm dressing and shower facilities for officiating team at the venue. Notify officials if these facilities are not available or inadequate so other arrangements can be made.
- Secure roster of officials from the Host Tournament Director.
- Conduct pre-game meeting with officials to review expense reimbursement, game fees, standards and expectations as applicable. Officials will be paid through Arbiter.

Supervision of the Venue and Court Preparation

- Complete a full facility walkthrough to ensure setup is complete and compliant with all championship specifications
- Check scoreboard and official clock for proper operation the day before each game.
- Check the PA system for proper operation. Confirm PA announcer is prepared with copies of team scripts, sponsorship announcements and Champions of Character PA scripts.
- Confirm National anthem(s), US/Canadian flags displayed and properly scripted in opening ceremony.
- Confirm proper court markings.
- Check competition area to eliminate safety hazards that might exist.
- Check locker room facilities at venue for use before and after each game. Should include adequate lockers, showers, towels and taping facilities. If any of the facilities are inadequate, notify the coaches of both teams the day before the match, work with Host to secure alternate facility.
- Confirm appropriate signage is displayed in accordance with NAIA marketing and sponsorship agreements (checklist to be provided by NAIA National Office)
- Confirm with Host Tournament Director that trained statisticians, scorekeepers, clock operators, etc. will staff the event.

HOST SPORTS INFORMATION DIRECTOR (SID)/MEDIA COORDINATOR

The Host Sports Information Director/Media Coordinator is the representative from the host institution working directly with NAIA National Office and the NAIA Site Supervisor for on-site First & Second Round sports information and media needs, including but not limited to: press box/media room, video-streaming, media credentials, press conferences and live statistics.

HOST ATHLETIC TRAINER

The Host Athletic Trainer is the representative from the host venue that shall be responsible for providing the visiting team medical assistance at all practices and during all First & Second Round matches. Host Athletic Trainers should contact all visiting teams to see if teams will be traveling with Athletic Trainers and to prepare for any special needs a visiting team may have.