



POLLS MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION	3
SCHEDULES.....	3
POLL POLICIES & PROCEDURES.....	3
SELECTION OF VOTERS.....	4
VOTER EXPECTATIONS	4
CONTESTS RESULTS & REPORTING PERIOD	4
CONFERENCE COMMISSIONER EXPECTATIONS.....	5
GLOSSARY	5
REPORTING RESULTS/SUBMITTING SCORES	5
STATISTICS.....	5
IMPORTANT DATES.....	6

NAIA Contacts

Sport	Championship Sport Manager	Athletics Communications/Polls Administration
Women's Volleyball	Fred Aubuchon, faubuchon@naia.org	Katie Green, kgreen@naia.org
Men's Soccer	Rick Daum, rdaum@naia.org	Reanne Kietlinski, rkietlinski@naia.org
Women's Soccer	Candice Fabry, cfabry@naia.org	Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org
Football	Abby Schultz, aschultz@naia.org	Steve Wilson swilson@naia.org / Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org / Steve Wilson, swilson@naia.org
Men's Basketball	Rick Daum, rdaum@naia.org	Katie Green, kgreen@naia.org
Women's Basketball	Abby Schultz, aschultz@naia.org	Reanne Kietlinski, rkietlinski@naia.org
Baseball	Candice Fabry, cfabry@naia.org	Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org
Softball	Abby Schultz, aschultz@naia.org	Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org
Men's Lacrosse	Bruce Tate, btate@naia.org	Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org
Women's Lacrosse	Rick Daum, rdaum@naia.org	Brandt McCall, bmccall@naia.org
Men's Volleyball	Samantha Walker, swalker@naia.org	Katie Green, kgreen@naia.org
Tennis	Fred Aubuchon, faubuchon@naia.org	Steve Wilson, swilson@naia.org

POLLS MANUAL

GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. **Overall philosophy:** National coaches' polls serve as the primary publicity piece for the NAIA to rank its schools. Coaches' polls are purely for publicity purposes and have no bearing on the selection of the national championship field. For information on the selection process visit the coaches' corner page on naia.org.
- B. **Total Number of Voters:** The voting committee is comprised of one conference or unaffiliated grouping voter from each conference or grouping.
 - a. **Exception**
 - i. If a sport has six or more conferences there will be one voter per conference. If a sport has fewer than six conferences (five or less) there will be two voters per conference.
- C. Polls are compiled from the balloting of each member of the voting committee.
- D. There is a mandatory preseason (educational) webinar. Each voter must have computer access during this call. The national office will facilitate this training session and review the platform where national ballots are submitted during this call. Instructions and the date will be sent to all voters at least one week prior to the call.
- E. Coaches are asked only to send information to their respective conference/group voter only.
- F. If information is inaccurate on any national poll, here is the process for any school administrator to take:
 - a. For incorrect information on the national poll, contact both the respective voter and the NAIA National Office.
 - b. For concerns regarding an individual school's record or results, contact the respective school head coach and SID.
- G. Any questions regarding information in this manual should be directed to the NAIA National Office Department of Athletics Communications.
- H. **CHANGE FROM RATINGS POLICY/PROCEDURES:** Polls will not include any of the following that have been a part of the ratings process
 - a. Conference Ratings
 - b. Conference or National Oversight
 - c. Addition of bonus point per vote received

SCHEDULES

Football

- Monday, 10 a.m. CT – national ballots due
- By Monday, 3 p.m. CT – National office release of national rating on www.naia.org

Men's & Women's Volleyball, Baseball, Softball, Men's & Women's Tennis, Men's & Women's Soccer, Men's & Women's Basketball, Men's & Women's Lacrosse

- Monday, 8 a.m. CT – national voting open
- Tuesday, 10 a.m. CT – national ballots due

POLL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- A. National ballots need to be submitted in the appropriate platform by their sport-specific deadlines.
 - a. If the voting committee does not have established national voting criteria, then the NAC recommends that each sport poll group use the following (non-weighted) criteria when compiling national polls:
 - i. Overall win-loss record
 - ii. Head-to-head results (with most recent result taking precedence)
 - iii. Win-loss record vs. common opponents
 - iv. Win-loss record vs. nationally voted teams
 - v. Strength of schedule (based on the NAC-approved strength of schedule component per sport)
 - vi. Area Ratings Committee (ARC) public data
- B. Follow this step-by-step process on a bi-weekly basis

1. **National poll submission:** Submission of the national ballot is done in a platform that is designated by the NAIA national office.
 - a. No ties are allowed on national ballots.
 - b. Voters will be able to edit their national ballot up until the deadline. They are not allowed to save their work halfway through submission to come back to it. It is encouraged to write out your Top 30 on paper and then submit.
 - c. National ballots received after the deadline will not be included in poll.
 - d. Prior to the national office tabulating each poll, the highest and lowest votes (a non-vote is a low vote) for each team (including those receiving votes) will be removed and the poll will be recalculated.
 - e. Teams who receive only one point in the national ballot will not be listed in the "Receiving Votes" category of the press release distributed to the public and posted on NAIA.org.

SELECTION OF VOTERS

- A. All voters are selected by their respective conference/group commissioner. Each commissioner is required to send voter contact information to the NAIA national office via the requested form by Aug. 1 of each year. Each commissioner may establish appropriate selection criteria and guidelines for their voter.
- B. For the selection of a voter from an unaffiliated group, it is the responsibility of all commissioners within that group to agree on one voter representing that group.
- C. It is strongly recommended for the voter to be a current NAIA head coach in that sport.

VOTER EXPECTATIONS

- A. The NAIA encourages every voter to have an unbiased and objective opinion as to his or her national ballot. Each voter is expected to rate the top teams in the nation, regardless of affiliation (Conference/CAC/Group).
- B. The NAIA expects every voter to submit requested information by the designated deadlines. Any ballots submitted after the deadline or submission of incomplete ballots will not be counted.
- C. Voters should monitor teams weekly in their conference/group to make sure those teams are posting results and updating their win/loss records within 24 hours after each scheduled contest. If the voter finds that a team is NOT reporting statistics, they should contact the institution (Head Coach and SID) via email.
- D. While it is encouraged to communicate among coaches within a conference/group, it is unethical for coaches to campaign for their school to other conference/group voters.
- E. If a voter is unable to fulfill this commitment, the NAIA National Office must be notified immediately.
- F. Voters are recommended to:
 1. Attend the national championship
 2. Have consistent exposure to teams in several conferences
 3. Have a willingness to serve
 4. Have the support of the conference/independent sport chair

CONTESTS RESULTS & REPORTING PERIOD

The poll period follows the timeline of Monday through Sunday contests. In cases of bi-weekly polls, all results from Monday through Sunday of the following week will be considered for that voting period. (i.e. A poll occurs on Tuesday, Nov. 14, contest results will be considered from Monday, Nov. 6 through Sunday, Nov. 12.)

In cases such as a long break (more than 1 week) between the preseason poll and the first regular season poll, all contests during that time frame will be considered.

In order for any team to be accurately weighed for consideration by the voting committee, all contest results must be reported by that institution to Presto Stats. Once your game has been either stattd in Presto or results uploaded, the game is considered officially reported.

CONFERENCE COMMISSIONER EXPECTATIONS

- A. Submit your sport voter representative (current head coach) for all sports your conference sponsors. This assignment is done by you via a form prior to Aug. 1 each year.
- B. For the selection of a voter from an unaffiliated group, it is the responsibility of all commissioners within that group to agree on one voter representing that group.
- C. Remind all of your sport voters about their mandatory attendance at the preseason instructional webinar.

GLOSSARY

Frequently Used Terms

- NAC = National Administrative Council, which is a membership group comprised of athletic administrators representing all the conferences. This Council has the authority to oversee all policies and procedures related to the national Top 25 Polls.
- Presto Stats = Where all final, official results are submitted by each school. Schools may choose whatever statistics product they would like to use live, but all stats must be entered into Presto Stats within 72 hours of the conclusion of each contest.

REPORTING RESULTS AND STATISTICS

REPORTING RESULTS/SUBMITTING SCORES

Mandated by the NAC, all contest results must be reported to Presto Stats. Institutions failing to report statistics and/or results any **two consecutive weeks, or a total of four weeks**, during the reporting period will not be eligible for the national statistical reports.

Institutions failing to report results for two consecutive weeks, or four total weeks during the season, will be subject to a monetary penalty. The first violation will continue to be a warning. Any second violation (first penalty) will be a \$500 fine. The third violation will be a \$1,000 fine and a loss of postseason awards. The fourth violation will be a \$1,000 fine and will be dealt with at the discretion of membership services. Fines will be due within 30 days of notification.

Every school must have access to the Presto Stats system. If your institution does not have the ability to use Presto Stats (ordinarily, access is given to the school SID), please contact the NAIA National Office Department of Athletics Communications.

STATISTICS

National Statistics (located at naiastats.prestosports.com/admin) is produced utilizing Presto Stats. To be eligible for statistical leaderboards, a student-athlete must play in 75 percent of team games played. Only statistics from games against varsity teams from upper-level degree-granting institutions should be submitted. Categories will be determined on a sport-by-sport basis and by the NAIA Athletics Communications Department.

The host institution is responsible for both teams' official statistics. If official stats will not be provided, the home team must notify the opposing team at least 72 hours before the contest. The opposing team can file an appeal if they feel an error was made in the official stats up to 72 hours after the conclusion of the contest. The appeal must be filed with the home team up to 72 hours after the contest, and both teams must change the stats.

It is vital that sports records maintain a certain level of integrity and accuracy. The NAIA urges the official statistician for every sport to become familiar with and have a working knowledge of the statistical manual.



2026-27 Polls Important Dates

FALL

Football	Poll Submission Deadline	Soccer	Poll Submission Deadline	Women's Volleyball	Poll Submission Deadline
Pre	Aug. 24 (Mon.)	Pre	Aug. 18 (Tues.)	Pre	Aug. 11 (Tues.)
#1	Sept. 14	#1	Sept. 1	#1	Sept. 1
#2	Sept. 21	#2	Sept. 15	#2	Sept. 15
#3	Sept. 28	Remainder of polls will come from selection committee		Remainder of polls will come from selection committee	
#4	Oct. 5				
#5	Oct. 12				
#6	Oct. 19				
Remainder of polls will come from selection committee					

WINTER

Basketball	Poll Submission Deadline	Poll Release Date
Pre	TBD	TBD
#1	TBD	TBD
#2	TBD	TBD
#3	TBD	TBD
#4	TBD	TBD
#5	TBD	TBD
#6	TBD	TBD
Final	TBD	TBD

SPRING

Baseball & Softball	Poll Submission Deadline	Poll Release Date	Lacrosse	Poll Submission Deadline	Poll Release Date	Men's Volleyball	Poll Submission Deadline	Poll Release Date	Tennis	Poll Submission	Poll Release Date
Pre	TBD	TBD	Pre	TBD	TBD	Pre	TBD	TBD	Pre	TBD	TBD
#1	TBD	TBD	#1	TBD	TBD	#1	TBD	TBD	#1	TBD	TBD
#2	TBD	TBD	#2	TBD	TBD	#2	TBD	TBD	#2	TBD	TBD
#3	TBD	TBD	#3	TBD	TBD	#3	TBD	TBD	#3	TBD	TBD
#4	TBD	TBD	#4	TBD	TBD	#4	TBD	TBD	#4	TBD	TBD
Final	TBD	TBD	Final	TBD	TBD	#5	TBD	TBD	#5	TBD	TBD
Postseason	TBD	TBD	Postseason	TBD	TBD	Final	TBD	TBD	Final	TBD	TBD
						Postseason	TBD	TBD	Postseason on Poll	TBD	TBD