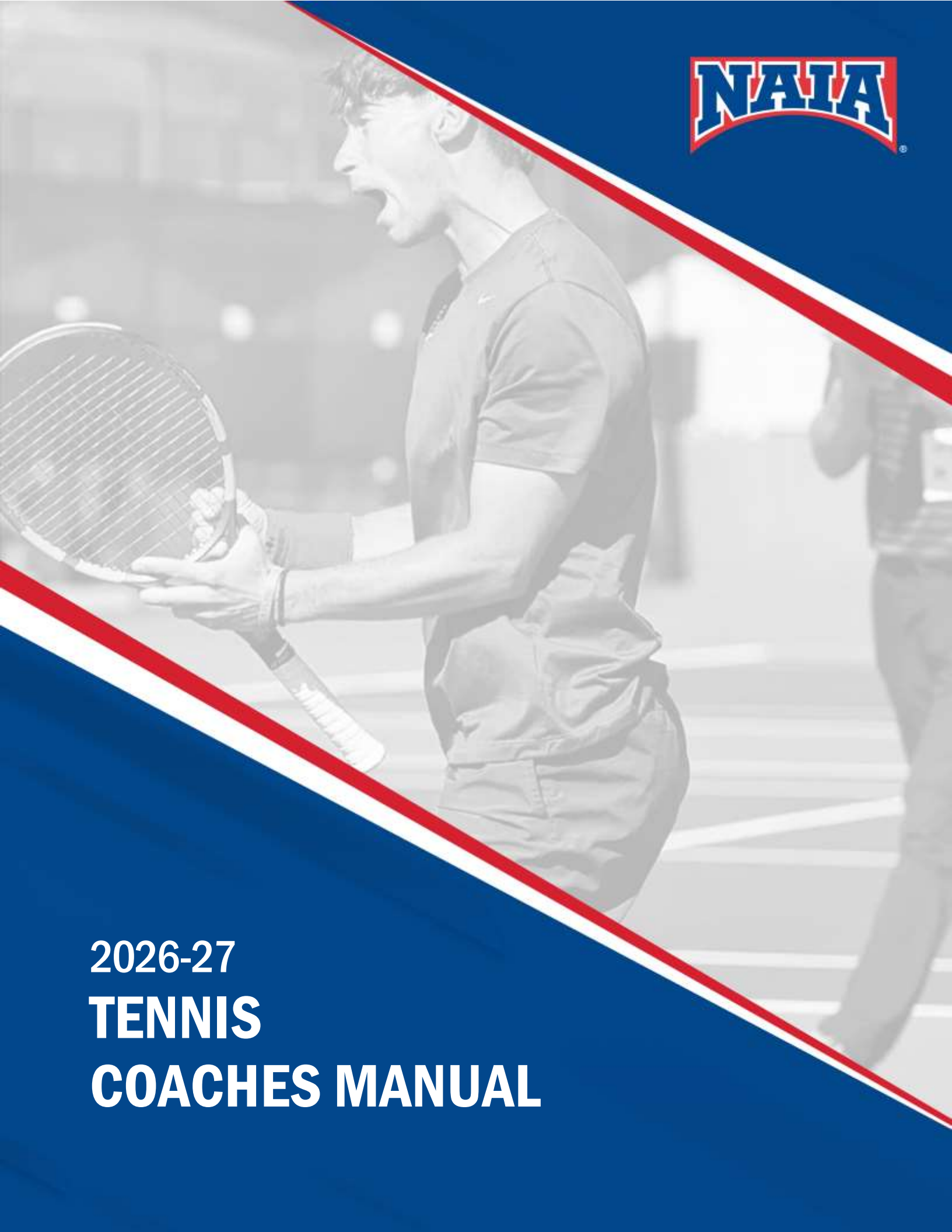




2026-27
TENNIS
COACHES MANUAL



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For National Championship Selection/Coaches Association/Event Administration contact:

Fred Aubuchon

faubuchon@naia.org

816.595.8339

For Polls Administration, Athletic Communications, & Media Inquiries contact:

Steve Wilson

swilson@naia.org

816-595-8198

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IMPORTANT DATES

2026-2027 TENNIS SPORT CALENDAR

AUGUST 19	START – National Coaches Polls <i>Dates: Aug. 19, Feb. 24, Mar. 10</i>
SEPTEMBER 1	START – Practices, Scrimmages, Exhibitions and Competitions
DECEMBER TBD	ITA Tennis Coaches Association Convention – Location TBD
MARCH 2	START – Player of the Week Releases <i>Dates: Mar 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, April 6, 13, 20</i>
MARCH 24	START – Area Rankings Releases <i>Dates: Mar 24, Apr 7, 21, May 3</i>
MARCH 24	START – National Selection Committee Polls Releases <i>Dates: Mar 24, Apr 7, 21, May 26 (Postseason Poll)</i>
MARCH 27	DEADLINE – Undeclare from Postseason
APRIL 19	DEADLINE – Sport Motion Submissions
APRIL 15	DEADLINE – Nominations for NAIA Scholar-Athlete
APRIL 15	DEADLINE – Submit Champions of Character Nominee
May 1	DEADLINE – Completion of conference/CAC/unaffiliated tournaments
May 4	RELEASE – National Championship Qualifiers on the NAIA National Selection Show on the NAIA Network
May 5	DEADLINE – Submit All-Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group forms to the NAIA national office
May 5	DEADLINE – Submitting Official Postseason Rosters in NAIA Connect
MAY 17	NAIA Tennis Coaches Association Annual Business Meeting – Mobile, AL
MAY 18-22	NAIA Men's and Women's Tennis National Championships <i>Mobile Tennis Center, Mobile, AL</i>
MAY 26	RELEASE – Post Season Men's and Women's Tennis Coaches Polls
MAY 27	RELEASE – NAIA Tennis All-America teams
JUNE 30	DEADLINE – Submit Scholar Team Award Nominations in NAIA Connect
JULY 15	DEADLINE – Nominations for Hall of Fame

FIVE-YEAR CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR

	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Conference Tournament Deadline	May 1	April 29	April 28	April 27	April 26
National Championship	May 18 – May 22	May 16 – May 20	May 15 – May 19	May 14 – May 18	May 13 – May 17

National Championship Website – [Click Here](#)



PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS

PLAYING RULES

Playing rules governing all NAIA regular season and postseason play are the [Intercollegiate Tennis Association Rules](#). Approved Rule Changes for the 2026-2027 season can be found [here](#). NAIA Tennis Rule Modifications can be found [here](#).

IN-SEASON MATCH PLAY GUIDELINES

The following procedures are recommended by the NAIA-Tennis Coaches Association for in-season competition between NAIA institutions:

Dual Matches

ITA rules will be followed, and all NAIA match play will follow "The Code".

1. **Three doubles followed by six singles (3-6 Format).** The format is three 6-game set doubles matches with a 7-point tiebreak at 6-all. Doubles will be followed by six best-of-three set singles matches.
2. **Seven team points.** The team that wins two of the three doubles matches receives one point. Each singles match is worth one point. Four or more points are required to win the team match.
 - a. After the doubles point has been decided, any remaining doubles matches shall be abandoned.
 - b. Once the outcome of the team match has been decided, a shortened format shall be played unless both coaches agree otherwise, or conference rules supersede. Matches still in the second set shall play a 10-point tiebreak for the third set. Any match already in the third set shall be played to completion. A match that has not started shall consist of two sets with a 10-point tiebreak played at one set all.
3. **Scoring.** No-ad scoring will be used for both doubles and singles matches.
4. **Warm-up.** There is no warm-up in doubles or singles unless a match is played on fewer than six courts. In a match played on fewer than six courts, the second wave of singles matches shall get a 10-minute warm-up between opponents with used tennis balls.
5. **Time between doubles and singles.** Singles players must be ready to play within five minutes of completion of the doubles point. Any line-up changes must be submitted to the opposing coach — through the exchange of the ITA Coaches scorebook or line-up page — within two minutes of completion of the doubles point (or within two minutes of completion of the last singles match, if singles were played first). If the coaches do not exchange their substitutions within two minutes after the doubles point, the line-ups remain as exchanged at the start of the match. With the exception of a previously scheduled special event (such as an awards presentation) occurring between doubles and singles, there are no exceptions for extending either the time for lineup changes or the time to start singles play.
6. **Other authorized formats.** There are limited scenarios where the format may be adjusted:
 - a. **Inclement Weather** – In the case of inclement weather, the format MAY be adjusted as follows, as long as both coaches agree: Singles (six matches) may be played first with doubles to follow if the team match score is tied at 3-3. The match scoring — one point each for singles, one point for two doubles matches — remains the same.
 - b. **Playing to clinch** – If both coaches agree, a team match may be stopped once a team reaches four points.
 - c. **Play-Play format** – If both coaches agree, all nine matches (three doubles and six singles) shall be played to completion. The match scoring — one point for doubles — remains the same, even if a team wins all three doubles matches.

Competing institutions should employ written contracts for dual matches. These contracts should be initiated by the home team and should include all specified agreements or arrangements.

LINE-UPS

Singles and doubles line-ups should be exchanged simultaneously, unless other arrangements are made prior to the start of the match.

The line-ups should be fair, with the strongest player at number 1 and so forth on down the line.

If a player is injured, ill or unable to compete in the doubles, another player may be substituted for the player. Once the new player has been inserted, per substitution rules, the teams must be reordered to reflect strength and order of ability.

LINE JUDGES, FOOT-FAULT JUDGES OR UMPIRE

It is the responsibility of the home coach to have qualified volunteers, if such a request is made. Play may be suspended a maximum of five minutes while an official is sought.

Behavior

Perhaps the most important aspect of intercollegiate competition is the behavior exhibited by the coaches and players. The coach and players will exhibit the highest standards of sportsmanship and fair play at all times. It is the responsibility of the coach to set standards for his/her team and take appropriate disciplinary action against a team member(s) when these standards are violated.

Each conference should set standards to follow and enforce them in a manner deemed appropriate. As mentioned previously, all dual matches shall follow "The Code".

OFFICIAL BALL

The official ball for all postseason competition is the Wilson U.S. Open Extra Duty. The NAIA strongly recommends the use of the Wilson U.S. Open Extra Duty ball for all regular season and affiliated conference play.

SEASON RECORDS

Win-loss records for all member institutions participating in Tennis shall include only those games played against accredited, upper-level, four-year, degree-granting institutions, and shall not include games against junior college, club, foreign (Canada and Mexico excluded), or military teams.

Competition against institutions holding associate membership in the NAIA or members of the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) shall be considered as satisfying this requirement. To verify countable vs. non-countable opponents, [click here](#).

CONDUCT IN COMPETITION

EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

An ejection is an action enforced in conjunction with competition by an official consistent with the playing rules in that sport. A suspension is required by NAIA bylaws (Article 6, Section B, Item 7) as an additional consequence related to ejections in conjunction with competition.

Ejections are not subject to appeal. Some sport rules allow protests through an official process outlined in each sport rule book.

Suspensions may be appealed starting with the Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions). An institution must submit an appeal to their conference within 72 hours of the completion of contest. The conference will submit a recommendation to the national office 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 to risk management procedures regarding their venue.

Ejection reports must be completed by the NAIA game official ejecting a student-athlete or coach. The form must be submitted to the NAIA within 48 hours after the completion of the contest. [Ejection Report Form](#)

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A PROTEST

ITA PROTESTS

Any coach who wishes to submit a match protest to the ITA office must do so using the ITA Team Match [Protest online form](#) found on the ITA website (under the "Coaches" tab>rules). Per ITA regulations, the protesting coach must also inform the opposing coach in writing of their intent to protest. Both schools must be active ITA members and a coach must file an online protest within 48 hours of the start of the match.

Once the ITA office receives a protest it will ask the opposing coach to submit in writing their side of the situation. When appropriate, the designated referee will also be asked to provide a written explanation. If you have a question about ITA rules and whether you can/should protest a match, you should contact the Chair of the ITA Rules Committee.

Note: If a match is between two schools from the same conference, any protest must be sent directly to and handled by the conference office, and the ITA is not permitted to get involved. The ITA is also not permitted to be involved in any conference or other national governing bodies' postseason tournament (i.e. NAIA Championships). No exceptions.

WHO REVIEWS AN ITA PROTEST

Once a protest has been filed, it will be sent to a) an ITA Regional Ranking Committee if it involves teams from the same region, or b) the ITA National Ranking Committee if it involves teams from different regions. A protest may also be sent separately to the ITA Ethics and Infractions Committee, if the case warrants it. A complete listing of regional and national ranking committees is located on the ITA web site, www.wearecollegetennis.com (under each division's rankings listing).

POSTSEASON COMPETITION

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

CREDENTIAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL PARTY

The official party for each team participating in postseason play is 17 with 14 players allowed in uniform, up to three (3) support staff. Athletic Trainers, Sports Information Directors, and Athletic Directors are not considered part of the Official Party.

Official Postseason Roster forms will be filled out via [NAIA Connect](#). If you do not have a login account, please contact naiacnectsupport@naia.org. Once you login, please follow these [instructions](#).

Important Note: The official lineup for both Singles and Doubles should be reflected in the postseason roster submission, and all athletes should be listed in lineup order with the strongest singles and doubles being listed first and so on.

If you have trouble with the on-line roster form, please contact [Steve Wilson](#) of the NAIA Athletics Communications Department. Any other general questions related to the official postseason rosters, please contact Sport Manager [Fred Aubuchon](#).

1. A copy of the roster **MUST** be hand-carried to the site of the conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping and national tournaments and presented to the onsite supervisor prior to that institution's participation in the tournament. A team must submit its official roster in order to be eligible to participate in the tournament.
2. The deadline for certifying the official roster of 14 players is 30 minutes prior to the first match of any conference/CAC/unaffiliated tournament, or at the coaches check-in of the national championship. Once the tournament begins, no player may play that is not on the official roster.

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, or at the on-site Athletic Trainers meeting, only with a photo ID. Please apply here for medical personnel credential: [LINK](#)

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 directly from the on-site Media Coordinator during coaches check-in or at the box office only with photo ID. Only those that have applied for Media Credentials may pick up their credentials.



Please apply here for Media credential: [LINK](#)

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/will call.

All other administrators will receive free admission with their NAIA membership card when presented at the box office.

UNIFORMS

Sponsor Logos

Approved NAIA uniform rules modifications to allow sponsor logos/patches during competition.

- Limit of one sponsor logo or patch on a uniform.
- The logos may not exceed a standard square of 2.25 inches.
- Sponsors of alcohol, tobacco, or any 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 (ex: if the home whites patch is on neckline, all home whites must be same, away jerseys could be in a different permissible location).

Placement – A sponsor patch meeting the restrictions of Rule 1-25.2 located in one of two places on the front of the jersey (1) the apex of the neckline; (2) shoulder panel on either the right or left side, and in only one place on the back of the jersey, the apex/center of the neckline as close to the neckline as is possible.

EXPENSES

Each participating team 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 must attend all functions including formal and arranged gatherings, Coaches' Meetings, Student-Athlete Experience Events, and Teaming Up for Character Events. Failure to comply will result in a penalty of a \$1,500 fine to the institution.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITY

The coach or other designated person from each participating team must be in attendance and responsible for his/her team at all times while at the site of the championship. This person shall accept the responsibility for the conduct of his/her student-athletes at the championship site, during the championship and at all activities connected with the team's championship 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.

REPORTING SCORES

Scores from all games of the Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group tournaments must be reported to the [NAIA Stats site \(via Presto Stats\)](#) within 24 hours of the game/session.

CONFERENCE/UNAFFILIATED GROUP TOURNAMENTS

Each NAIA Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated grouping (with six or more teams) is entitled to qualify its team champion for the NAIA National Championships through a postseason qualifying tournament. Be sure to report all results to the NAIA National Office immediately.

All teams must participate, if selected, in the postseason qualifying event established by each conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping to qualify for national championships.

NOTE: All postseason qualifying events must be "team tournament" format. Tournaments must utilize the seven-point scoring system and 3-6 format; doubles matches first, then singles. "Flighted" tournaments are not allowed.



DATES AND SITES

The dates and sites of the conference/CAC/unaffiliated tennis national qualifying tournaments shall be determined by the conference/CAC/unaffiliated tennis committees. The conference/CAC/unaffiliated tennis tournaments, if held, MUST be completed no later than May 1, 2027.

ADMINISTRATION

If available, the conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping tennis chair will serve as administrator for the conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping national qualifying tournament in cooperation with the host site athletics director. When not available, the host athletics director, or a designated person, may serve in this capacity.

At the time of final team selection, immediately provide the NAIA (Championships and Athletics Communications Departments) with the participating teams, seeding and pairings, and match sites and times.

FINANCES

The host site for all conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping national qualifying tournaments shall establish and enforce financial policies within the NAIA National Office policies when conducting these events.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

LINEUPS/ROSTERS, SUBSTITUTIONS, AND REPLACEMENT PROCESSES

The official party for each team participating in postseason play is 17 with 14 players allowed in uniform, up to three (3) support staff. Athletic Trainers, Sports Information Directors, and Athletic Directors are not considered part of the Official Party.

The official roster for the NAIA National Championship should reflect the conference tournament roster and should also reflect the strength of each team per ITA rules. The NAIA will follow ITA Rules on lineups and roster changes, see Appendix A for additional details.

Official Postseason Roster forms will be filled out via [NAIA Connect](#). If you do not have a login account, please contact naiaconnectsupport@naia.org. Once you login, please follow these [instructions](#).

DATES AND SITES

The Men's and Women's Tennis National Championship matches will take place May 18-22, 2027. The championships will be played at the Mobile Tennis Center in Mobile, Alabama.

ADMINISTRATION

The NAIA Tennis Championship is under the direct control and supervision of the NAIA and the Tennis Tournament Committee. The event manager and the tournament committees are responsible for carrying out the policies approved by the National Administrative Council such as seeding of participating teams, the management of the national tournament matches and the general welfare of the participating teams and coaches. Other responsibilities include conducting a tournament coaches meeting, working with officials, and coordinating post-tournament ceremonies.

TEAM QUALIFICATIONS, SELECTION AND SEEDING

The NAIA Men's and Women's Tennis National Championship is a 24-team event for each Men's and Women's. Qualification plans are approved by the NAC and can be found in NAIA Connect. At-large qualifiers and seeding will be determined by the NAIA Tennis National Selection Committees.

Each NAIA Conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping may automatically qualify one team (six singles and three doubles entries) for each conference with at least six (6) teams, and two automatic qualifiers for any Conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping with at least 12 teams.

New for 2026-2027 – For conferences with 12 or more teams, the second automatic bid team must be ranked in the top 25 of both UTR and ITA rankings to receive the automatic bid.

NOTE: Each team must have a minimum of four singles and two doubles to participate. If a postseason qualifier or at-large qualifier does not have a team of at least four singles and two doubles, that team's place in the tournament shall be made available to the next team 'in' as determined by the National Selection Committee.



FORMAT

The format of the NAIA Men's and Women's Tennis National Championship is a 24-team, seeded, single-elimination bracket (for each sport).

- Day One – seeds 9-24 play first round dual matches.
- Day Two – seeds 1-8 play second round dual matches against the winners from the first round.
- Day Three – Quarterfinal dual matches.
- Day Four – Semifinal dual matches.
- Day Five – Championship dual matches.

BRACKET

All 24 teams are rated 1 through 24. Seeds 1-8 receive a bye in the first round. Every effort will be made to separate conference teams from playing each other in the 1st and 2nd rounds. Depending on the number of teams from a given conference, this may be unavoidable. Sample bracket – see Appendix B.

The brackets are planned for release on Tuesday, May 4 by 3:00pm (CST) on the NAIA [National Selection Show](#).

CHAMPIONSHIP SELECTION PROCESS APPEALS

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

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 on school letterhead - Department of Championships within 24 hours (or noon, CST of the next business day if the end of the 24-hour period falls on a non-business day) 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 the appeal.
3. Appeals must be submitted on school letter head and signed by the Athletics Director and President of the institution.

NOTE: The National Administrative Council sport liaison will be on the selection conference call to listen to the discussion of tournament selection. The liaison will report any concerns to the National office immediately following the conclusion of the conference call. The oversight committee will review ratings to prevent any ratings process violations or unethical use of the ratings process.

GAME TIMES

Each round of the 2027 tournament shall begin with the Women starting at 9:00am and the Men starting at 1:00pm. The championship matches will be held on Saturday.

TEAM HOUSING

All participating teams **MUST** stay at the designated hotel(s). Failure to do so would make a team **INELIGIBLE** for **participation and any potential reimbursement**.

PARTICIPATION IN FUNCTIONS AT NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

All participating teams and individuals competing in a national championship must attend all functions including formal and arranged gatherings, Coaches' Meetings, Student-Athlete Experience Events, and Teaming Up for Character Events. Failure to comply will result in a penalty of a \$1,500 fine to the institution.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

All national champions should be determined in competition, with all national championship contests played to conclusion. Playability should be determined by the onsite games committee in consultation with the national office. Every effort should be made by the onsite Decision-Making Authorities to conclude the National Championship on schedule.

1. The Decision-Making Authorities for determining delays will be the following:
 - a. NAIA Championship Sport Manager
 - b. On-site Tournament Committee
 - c. Host Director
 - d. Head Referee
 - e. Head Athletic Trainer
 - i. Primary authority regarding lightning or other weather conditions.

2. No matches will begin after 11:00pm on any day.
3. Teams will not play more than twice in one day.
4. Teams will not play more than once in one day during the Semifinals and Finals.
5. Every effort will be made to complete the Championship on time and by the end of the day on Saturday of the scheduled championship.
 - a. If it is necessary to extend beyond Saturday, teams will be asked to compete on Sunday.
 - b. If a competing team has a 'no play on Sunday' policy in their Declaration of Intent (submitted to the NAIA), then the competition will be moved to Monday.
6. Men's and Women's matches will not be forced to play at the same time.
 - a. Adjusted start times may be used to begin play immediately following preceding matches if other courts are available for warm-up.
7. Standard warm-up times to begin match play includes 60 minutes on a court. This can be shortened to 30 minutes.

MATCH OFFICIALS

Line judges will roam courts Tuesday and Wednesday. All matches will be chaired starting with the Quarterfinal matches through the Championship match.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. **Entry Fee** – Every team must pay an entry fee of \$200 per qualifying team. Entry Fees should be paid at the Coaches Check-in and not mailed in advance. Payment options are Credit Card, Check (made out to NAIA Tennis), or Cash.
2. **Banquet** – There will be a pre-tournament banquet on the Monday prior to the beginning of play to recognize the participating teams, NAIA Hall of Fame inductees, and Individual Champions of Character Recipients. All teams are required to attend this function and stay until completion.
3. **Coaches Meeting and NAIA-TCA Business Meeting** – There will be a Qualifier Virtual Meeting a few days following the official release of all qualifying teams. The Qualifier Meeting will cover everything related to the Championship.

On Monday, 3:00pm CST, prior to the start of the National Championships, all coaches are required to attend the Tennis Coaches Association Annual Business Meeting to discuss current issues and proposals. The meeting will begin with updates regarding the National Championships, along with presentations from National Sponsors and NAIA or Championship affiliates.

5. **Housing** - The National Administrative Council mandated that all participating teams **MUST** stay at the designated headquarters hotel or assigned property. Failure to do so would make the team **INELIGIBLE** for the national event.
6. **Tournament Officials** - Tournament officials are secured from an area association of tennis officials and are USTA certified tennis officials. There will be a Head Referee and a Deputy Referee onsite during the Championship. The tournament committee will serve as a resource and assist in any arbitration as needed for the Head and Deputy Referees.
7. **Radio and Television** - The broadcast of any tournament match is governed by broadcast policies as established by the NAIA Department of Athletics Communications. For information relative to these policies, please contact – NAIA Director of Athletics Communications, [Steve Wilson](#).



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 Maria Duran at 816-979-3493 or mduran@masterstransportation.com for more information.



NAIA POLICY HANDBOOK INFORMATION

The NAIA POLICY HANDBOOK can be found [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 PLAY POLICY

As a matter of policy, NAIA national qualifying 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 – www.naia.org/wellness

DRUG TESTING CONSENT FORM

Each academic year all eligible NAIA student-athletes must sign a [Drug Testing Consent Form](#) in which he or she 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](#)

REPORTING RESULTS AND STATISTICS

REPORTING RESULTS/SUBMITTING SCORES

Mandated by the NAC, all contest results must be reported to the [NAIA Stats site \(via Presto Stats\)](#) within 24 hours of completion and final statistics within 72 hours in order to be eligible for team and/or individual weekly ratings and honors. 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 to be included in the national statistical website or leaderboards.

Coaches will complete the team score which will include a box score for each individual athlete competing.

Institutions failing to report statistics or 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.

All teams are required to input and verify their match scores with ITA, www.itatennis.com.

Nomination details and forms for the following national awards can be found [HERE](#).

AWARDS

NATIONAL PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Conference Player of the Week – Nominations for Conference Player of the Week must be submitted to the NAIA Department of Athletics Communications by Monday, 5:00pm (CST) from the conference Sports Information Director or their designated representative. Conference Players of the Week recipients are considered for National Player of the Week honors.

National Player of the Week – National Players of the Week are selected from Conference Players of the Week for each affiliated conference and unaffiliated grouping. In the event an unaffiliated grouping does not have a player of the week, any NAIA institution within that grouping may submit a nominee. Honorees are announced on Tuesdays.

NAIA Tennis Players of the Week will be selected by a national voting committee made up of a SID representative from each conference/CAC/unaffiliated group. Nominations must be made by the conference/CAC/unaffiliated Sports Information Director, or their designated representative. The national office will NOT accept nominations from anyone but the conference Sports Information Director or their designated representative in affiliated conferences. Conferences may nominate only two athletes weekly (one male and one female) for national consideration.

ALL-AMERICA

The All-America Committee will be comprised of the onsite Tournament Committee, Chair of the Awards Committee, and Executive Committee Past President.

The All-America nomination form must be submitted by **May 5, 2027**, to be considered for All-America honors. The All-America selection committee is responsible for administering the selection procedures at the NAIA Tennis National Championship. The NAIA All-American team will consist of a 16-player first team, a 16-player second team and 16-player third team. Any conference player of the year that is not selected to first, second, or third team will be automatically added to the third team.

Participation in the National Tournament is not required to receive the award unless the team qualifies for participation and the athlete chooses not to participate. Exceptions to this requirement will be taken under advisement by the committee.

Each Conference/CAC/unaffiliated grouping will submit up to a 10-player student athlete list for both genders. The All-America Committee will evaluate a body of work that includes Universal Tennis Rating, Conference Ranking, and ITA National and/or Regional Ranking.

The 10-player list would include the following information:

1. Player's Name
2. Position played in the majority of their singles matches
3. Position played in the majority of their doubles matches
4. Overall record of win/loss in singles & win/loss record in doubles
5. Year in School



6. School Name
7. Conference Name
8. Hometown, State, and Country

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 (September 30).
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 **April 15** 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.

NAIA Scholar-Athlete nominations will be filled out via the NAIA Connect admin website at <https://www.naiacconnect.org/s/login/>. **NAIA Connect is the only way to nominate student-athletes as a NAIA Scholar-Athlete.**

If you do not have an account, please sign up and create your own. Access will be granted (usually) within 24 hours. Nominations will be processed entirely electronically. To complete a nomination, the student-athlete must have approved and signed a release of their cumulative grade point average for nominating purposes. If you or your sports information office does not have a signed release form from the nominated student-athlete on file, a blank document (PDF) will be available for download.

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 or honors database, forms must be submitted by **April 15, 2027**.

To download a template to create an award certificate for your student-athletes that have earned this honor, [CLICK HERE](#).

RED BANNER SCHOLAR AWARD

New for 2026-2027 – 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 AWARD

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

The deadline for Scholar Team nominations is June 30. For the NAIA Scholar Team Award go to [NAIA Connect](#).

COACH OF THE YEAR

New for 2026-2027 – The NAIA Men's and Women's Tennis National Coaches of the Year will be determined by the All-America Committee. All coaches who qualify for the national championships will automatically be on the ballot, and write-ins will be accepted.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

The NAIA maintains a standardized awards program for the national championships.

Team awards are awarded to the top four teams for both men and women and will be presented at the conclusion of each semifinal and national championship.

MARVIN P. RICHMOND AWARD

The Marvin P. Richmond Award is presented to the outstanding performer in the women's national championship. The award is named after the former president of the USTA and longtime supporter of NAIA tennis, Marvin P. Richmond.

WARD-BALLINGER MEMORIAL AWARD

The Ward-Ballinger Memorial Award is presented to the outstanding performer in the men's national championship. The award is named after Carroll Ward and Bob Ballinger, Jr., former presidents of the Rockhill Tennis Club and active patrons of tennis in the Kansas City area. Both men were instrumental in the promotion of the NAIA championship in the early 1960s.

ORDERING AWARDS

Appropriate conference tournament awards are to be ordered by the conference chair and are the financial responsibility of the conference or the conference tournament 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

COACHES ASSOCIATION

NAIA Tennis Coaches Association

TENNIS 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.

STANDING COMMITTEE

In 1952, a NAIA Advisory Committee was established to oversee all matters pertaining to tennis and the national championships. This committee evolved into the NAIA-Tennis Coaches Association (NAIA-TCA), established in 1959-60.

The NAIA-TCA is actively involved in the promotion of tennis within the Association and has always been directly involved in the organization and administration of the NAIA national championships. The NAIA-TCA was instrumental in moving the national championships to Kansas City in 1960 and remained as one organization with the advent of women's programming in the Association in 1980-81.

One of the primary functions of the NAIA-TCA is the annual business meeting which is held in conjunction with the national championships each May. All NAIA tennis coaches are members of the NAIA-TCA by virtue of the institution's membership in the NAIA. All head coaches have a voice and a vote in the annual business meeting.



Statement of Purpose

To develop among the member coaches a greater sense of responsibility and professionalism in the development and growth of NAIA tennis. To develop within tennis playing student-athletes the highest standards of fair play, sportsmanship, respect for authority, and the deepest understanding of the life-long benefits derived from participating in the sport of tennis. To develop among the member tennis coaches a greater understanding of the rules and policies governing the NAIA and the role of the NAIA-Tennis Coaches Association within the organizational structure of the NAIA. To teach and encourage the playing of intercollegiate tennis in accordance with the goals and philosophies of the NAIA. To encourage active participation among member coaches in developing standards of play among NAIA institutions, and to develop active committees to study, evaluate, and explore different areas of importance to the NAIA-Tennis Coaches Association.

NAIA-TCA Standing Committees

NAIA Tennis Coaches Association Officers

POSITION/TITLE	NAME, SCHOOL & CONTACT INFO
President	Drew Dickens , Southeastern University (Fla.), 863-667-5071, aldickens@seu.edu
Vice President	Abigail Lemberger Hughes , William Woods University (Mo.), 314-550-1894, abigail.lemberger@williamwoods.edu
Secretary	Ignacio Poncio , Huntington University (Mo.), 260-388-9155, iponcio@huntington.edu
Past President	Marc Lux , William Carey University (Miss.) 601-318-6631, mlux@wmcarey.edu
NAC Liaison	Larry DeSimpelare , Crossroads Commish, 216-952.5689, crossroadscommish@gmail.com

COMMITTEES

ELIGIBILITY AND AMATEURISM COMMITTEE

Chair: Drew Dickens, Southeastern University

Members: Daniel Finn, Keiser University; Meenakshi Sundaram, Dillard University.

It is the purpose of this committee to explore, define, and clarify all aspects of eligibility and amateurism as it relates to tennis playing student-athletes at member institutions.

AWARDS AND HALL OF FAME

Chair: Abigail Lemberger Hughes, William Woods University

Members: Gabe Johnson, Bethel College, Kan.

It is the purpose of this committee to review the current tennis awards programs; report on these awards at the annual meeting for the benefit of the membership; propose any changes in awards for discussion and vote during the annual membership meeting; recommend outstanding individuals for inclusion into the NAIA Hall of Fame.

The chair of this committee is the vice president of the Tennis Coaches Association and will select two other members to serve on the committee for a period of one year.

ADVISORY AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

Chair: Marc Lux, William Carey University

Members: Kai Fong, Lewis-Clark State College; Alan Green, Xavier University of New Orleans; Eric Mahone, Holy Cross College

This committee is composed of three immediate past presidents and is established to assist current officers by providing counsel, conducting research, and overseeing special projects. This committee will share any information it gathers with the current officers, the NAIA Tennis Coaches Association and the National Coordinating Committee of the NAIA.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section 1 The name of the Association shall be the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Tennis Coaches Association (NAIA-TCA).



ARTICLE II – ORGANIZATION

Section 1 – The membership of this Association shall be comprised of tennis coaches who currently coach tennis at an NAIA member institution. NAIA-TCA is an allied, sectional activity area of the NAIA parent organization and is charged with the responsibility of initiating programs beneficial to the game of tennis and to the NAIA member coaches of this sport. The activities of this section shall be in accordance with the aims and objectives of NAIA and under the guidance of the NAIA Council of Athletics Administration.

Section 2 – The NAIA-TCA shall submit to the NAIA Council of Athletics Administrators for approval, all recommendations, plans and practices.

ARTICLE III – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1 – To initiate, conduct and supervise programs utilizing the guidance of the NAIA Tennis Executive Committee which will promote interest in tennis programs on national, regional and affiliated conference/sectional levels

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – There shall be three classes of membership; 1 – Active; 2 – Allied; 3 – Honorary.

Section 2 – Active membership shall consist of tennis coaches who are actively engaged in coaching tennis in an NAIA educational institution.

Section 3 – Allied membership shall consist of coaches who are engaged in coaching tennis in secondary schools and other persons who are interested in the advancement of the game of tennis.

Section 4 – Honorary membership may be conferred upon any individual who, because of his/her valuable contribution to the sport of tennis, shall be nominated by the membership committee and elected by two-thirds vote of the Association.

Section 5 – All members shall have the privilege of the floor at meetings of the Association, but the privilege of voting shall be exercised by active members only.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 – The officers of this Association, president, vice president, secretary and past president shall be elected from the active membership of the Association. Such elected officers shall be from institutions which are in good standing in the NAIA. Nominations are to be received following the annual business meeting and shall be included with the minutes of the NAIA-TCA Annual Business Meeting. Results of the election will be distributed in the coaches' handbook, preceded by written notification.

Section 2 – Term of office shall be one year. The progression shall be from secretary to vice president to president to past president. Each office is to be held from August 1 to July 31.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1 – One annual business meeting of the Association shall be held each year at the site of the NAIA National Championship.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1 – This constitution may be amended if presented to the membership by mail no later than three weeks prior to the annual business meeting by:

- a. affirmative two-thirds vote of the members present at the annual business meeting of the Association; or
- b. affirmative two-thirds vote of the ballots received by written response at the opening of the annual business meeting of the Association; or
- c. affirmative two-thirds vote of the ballots cast by mail by the membership.

Appendix A

NAIA National Championships Rosters, Official Lineups, Protests, Coaches Check-in, and Substitutions

Rosters and Lineups

1. Only players listed on the official roster may compete in the National Championship.
2. Postseason rosters will be filled out via the NAIAConnect administration website.
3. All postseason rosters should reflect the team's official lineup for Qualifiers and the National Championship.
 - a. The lineup shall always be based on the order of strength (see ITA Rules).
 - b. The lineup shall consider where a player competed throughout the season and their results.
 - c. The lineup should consider where a player competed in their final three matches of the season and their results (including Conference Tournament if applicable).
 - d. The lineup shall consider Injuries.
4. Postseason rosters will be downloaded by the NAIA Championship Sport Manager prior to the National Championship and sent out to all coaches that are participating in the National Championship Tournament.
5. Coaches will have the opportunity to correct any errors in their lineups (singles or doubles) and resubmit their lineup.
 - a. Lineups will follow the ITA Rulebook regarding order-of-ability.

Lineup Information and Protest Timeline prior to the start of the National Championship

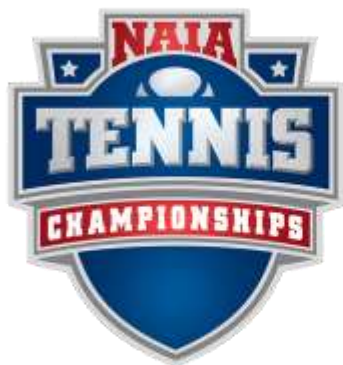
1. 14 days prior to Championship – Announcement of Teams.
2. 13 days prior to Championship – Deadline to submit final postseason roster and official lineup.
3. 11 days prior to Championship – Lineup will be sent to Head Coach for Verification.
4. 8 days prior to Championship (Monday).
 - a. Lineups will be sent out to all Head Coaches for review.
 - b. **Protest window open.**
 - c. Protests are only excepted using the official protest form (Appendix B)
5. 6 days prior to Championship (Wednesday).
 - a. **Protest window closes, Wednesday, 5:00pm CST.**
 - b. Protests are due with rationale and documentation.
 - c. Protests are then sent to the Championship Committee for review and action.
 - d. Coaches of teams that are being protested will be informed immediately.
6. 5 days prior to Championship (Thursday, noon).
 - a. Responses are due from Coaches.
 - b. Championship Committee will review information.
7. 4 days prior to Championship (Friday).
 - a. Championship Committee will inform all involved of the decision and any necessary action.
 - i. NAIA Sport Manager.
 - ii. Coach that submitted protest.
 - iii. Coach of team protested.
 - b. No additional protests will be heard by the committee.
 - c. Master lineups sent out to all coaches, no more protests permitted.

National Championship Coaches Check-in

1. Coaches will check-in on Sunday or Monday prior to the Start of the National Championships (times to be communicated with Championship Packet).
2. Coaches will verify (update) their Official Roster.
3. Coaches will verify the Master Lineup.
 - a. Scratches are permitted.
 - b. Lineups may not be changed, unless there are scratches.
 - c. Protests are not permitted.
 - d. Scorebooks are **not necessary** at check-in.

National Championship Lineup Verification and Substitution/Replacement Process

1. Each round Master Lineups will be placed on the respective official scoresheet.
2. Coaches are required to check their lineup and scoresheet at the Tournament Desk (Headquarters) at least 30 minutes prior to the start of play for each round.
3. The Tournament Desk and appropriate referee must be notified of any changes to a lineup before the start of play for the affected match.
 - a. If the tournament desk and referee have not been informed of a lineup change (and a player or players play out of position in the submitted line up), the affected match(es) are defaulted.
 - b. If a scratch occurs after check-in, the Head Coach must inform their respective referee and the referee will radio the information to the Tournament Desk for verification.
4. Substitution's or Changes Specific to Doubles Matches
 - a. Only players listed on the official roster may compete in the National Championship .
 - b. Doubles teams will be listed in a manner that reflects order of strength (see ITA Rules).
 - c. If one doubles player is scratched, then any player listed on the official roster may be used to fill the open space. The Coach is permitted to adjust the order of the teams to follow the rule regarding order of strength.
 - d. A 4th Doubles team will no longer be necessary as any player listed on the official roster may be moved up to a competing doubles team.
 - e. If an entire doubles team is scratched, then two players from the official roster will move into the 3rd Doubles position, and the other doubles teams will either remain or move up as appropriate.
5. Substitution's or Changes Specific to Singles Matches.
 - a. If a player is removed/scratches in the singles lineup, substitutions may be made for singles play but the lineup must remain consistent with ITA rules and follow the order of strength submitted on the lineup.
 - b. A singles player that is removed is replaced by the player listed directly below them in the line-up and this continues to the 7th position (and beyond if multiple removals).
 - c. If multiple players are removed, the process remains the same.
 - i. Example, if players #2 and #4 are removed, then
 1. Player #3 becomes #2
 2. Player #5 becomes #3
 3. Player #6 becomes #4
 4. Player #7 becomes #5
 5. Player #8 becomes #6



PROTEST FORM

Team under protest: _____

Issue being protested (Be specific):

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Relevant Information:

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Protesting Coach and Institution: _____

Coaches Signature: _____

Tournament Committee Decision:

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Protesting Coach Contacted: _____

Protested Coach Contacted: _____