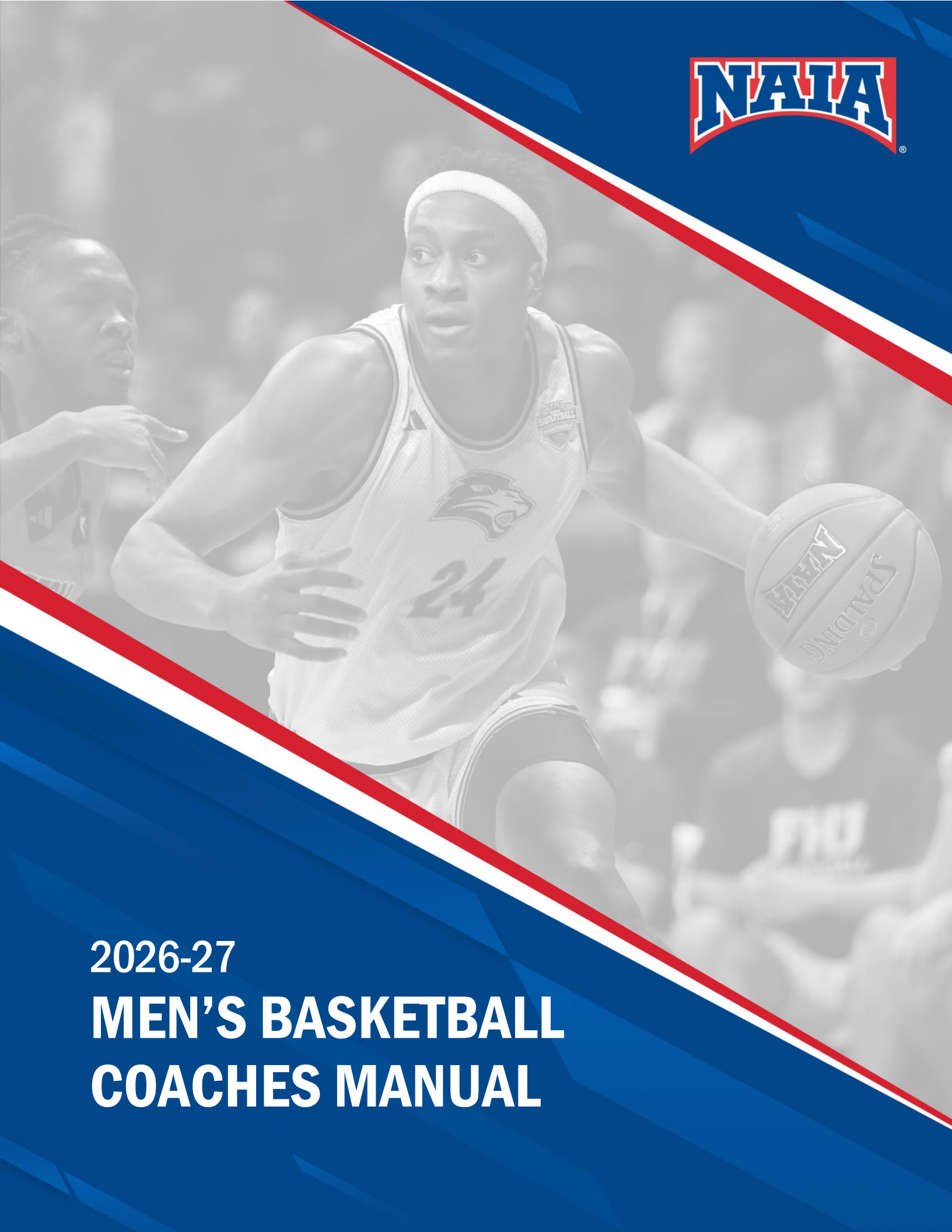




2026-27

MEN'S BASKETBALL COACHES MANUAL

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IMPORTANT DATES

2026-27 MEN'S BASKETBALL SPORT CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 14	START – First Allowable Date for Practices, Scrimmages, And Exhibitions
OCTOBER 21	START – National Poll Releases <i>Dates: Oct. 21, Nov. 11, Nov. 25, Dec. 16</i>
OCTOBER 22	START – First Allowable Date for Competitions
NOVEMBER 3	START – Player of the Week Releases <i>Dates: Nov. 3, Nov. 10, Nov. 17, Nov. 24, Dec. 1, Dec. 8, Jan. 5, Jan. 12, Jan. 19, Jan. 26, Feb. 2, Feb. 9, Feb. 16</i>
DECEMBER 1	DEADLINE – Facility Certification for First & Second Round
JANUARY 20	START – Area Rating Committee Ranking Releases <i>Dates: Jan. 20, Feb. 3, Feb. 17, Mar. 3</i>
JANUARY 20	START – National Selection Committee Poll Releases <i>Dates: Jan. 20, Feb. 3, Feb. 17</i>
JANUARY 31	DEADLINE – Nominations for NAIA Scholar-Athlete
FEBRUARY 1	DEADLINE – Submitting Bid Packet for First & Second Round
FEBRUARY 2	DEADLINE – Undeclare from Postseason
FEBRUARY 15	DEADLINE – Submit Individual Champions of Character Nomination
MARCH 1	RELEASE – 16 National Championship First & Second Round Host Sites
MARCH 2	DEADLINE – Completion of Conference/CAC/Group Qualifying Events
MARCH 4	RELEASE – National Championship Qualifiers & Bracket
MARCH 4	DEADLINE – Submitting All-Conference/CAC/Group Team ballots to National Office
MARCH 5	DEADLINE – Submit Postseason Rosters in NAIA Connect
MARCH 12-13	NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship – First & Second Rounds <i>16 host sites</i>
MARCH 15	DEADLINE – Submission of Sport Motions
MARCH 18-23	88th Annual NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship – Final Site <i>Municipal Auditorium – Kansas City, Missouri</i>
MARCH 29	RELEASE – All-America Teams & Other Postseason Awards
APRIL 1	NAIA-NABC Coaches Association Business Meeting – Detroit, MI
APRIL 1-5	National Association of Basketball Coaches Convention – Detroit, MI
JUNE 30	DEADLINE – Nominations for NAIA Scholar Teams Due
JULY 15	DEADLINE – Nominations for NAIA Hall of Fame Due

FIVE-YEAR CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR

	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Conference Tournament Deadline	March 2	February 29	March 6	March 5	March 4
National Championship – 1 st & 2 nd Round	March 12-13	March 10-11	March 16-17	March 15-16	March 14-15
National Championship - Final Site	March 18-23	March 16-21	March 22-27	March 21-26	March 20-25

National Championship Website – [CLICK HERE](#)

PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS

PLAYING RULES

Rules governing NAIA regular-season and postseason play are the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Men's Basketball Rules unless otherwise noted in the Men's Basketball Coaches Manual. These rules will be applied to all contests (preseason, regular-season and postseason) when both institutions are members of the NAIA.

All postseason games must be played on an official court measuring 94' x 50', with rectangular glass backboards. It shall be the responsibility of the appropriate Conference Committee to consider such items as lighting, spectator comfort, player accommodations, a minimum of four feet of space between the boundary line of the court and bleachers and/or chairs and normal liability precautions when approving host sites. A careful inspection of game facilities for spectator and participants' safety shall be conducted prior to each game.

To view or download the [NCAA Men's Basketball rule book click here](#). Rules defined as experimental by the official NCAA Rules and Regulations Handbook are prohibited from use in National Championship play.

MEDIA TIMEOUT POLICIES

Media timeout policies used for the NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship are in place for all regular season and conference tournament games against NAIA competition.

Media timeout policies can be found [HERE](#).

GAME OFFICIALS

Game officials for regular season play may be selected by the conference Men's Basketball Committee or Conference Executive Committee. Game fees and expense allowances for game officials shall be established by the Conference Executive Committee.

Officials must adhere to the NAIA's policies relating to gambling activities and drug and alcohol use. Furthermore, officials must conduct themselves in a manner befitting intercollegiate athletics. Failure to do so may result in termination of the officiating assignment. Officials are expected to be professional in appearance and uniformly dressed.

The NAIA Director of Officiating Initiatives and NAIA Men's Basketball National Assignor will work with conference assignors to make assignments for the sixteen First & Second Round sites. Each First & Second Round site will have ten eligible officials selected to work the First & Second Round games. On Friday, three officials will work the first game and three different officials will work the second game. On Saturday, three different officials who did not work on Friday at the site will work the game. Additionally, a bench official will be assigned for all First & Second Round games in case of injury or sickness and to monitor certain game situations.

Assignors will be selected by the NAIA National Office. In most cases this will be the NAIA Conference Assignor. The Assignor will select officials. If needed, assistance from the NAIA National Office and the NAIA Men's Basketball National Assignor will work with conference assignors to make assignments for the First & Second Round sites.

The officiating crew arrives at the game site on the day of or the day before the game and will be housed at the headquarter hotel (if necessary). Normally, the officiating team departs the site following the game and may only require housing for one night. If the referees are within driving distance, they may not require any housing.

The host institution is responsible for game fees, transportation, meals and lodging for each official, as approved by the NAIA Department of Championships.

- A. Officials must receive checks prior to the start of the game or be paid electronically within one week of the contest.
- B. Game fees, per diem and mileage will be paid to each official.
- C. Officials shall receive (1) complimentary ticket each to First & Second Round game.

OFFICIAL BALL

The Official Ball of NAIA Men's Basketball is the Spalding TF-1000 Legacy.

Spalding will provide basketballs for National Championship competition. The NAIA strongly recommends the use of the Spalding TF-1000 Legacy basketball for regular-season and Conference/CAC/Group tournament play.

SEASON RECORDS

Win-loss records for all member institutions participating in Men's Basketball 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](#).

CHEERLEADERS AND SPIRIT GROUPS

Pyramids higher than 2½ persons in height are prohibited at NAIA conference, independent, and/or national championship events. Pyramid height is measured by body lengths. A shoulder stand is defined as "2 persons in height," additionally, a chair or shoulder sit is defined as "1½ persons high".

No external force shall be used by cheerleaders to propel the body at NAIA conference, independent, and/or national championship events (Examples: trampoline, springboard, clasped hands, etc.)

One cheerleading squad (in uniform) from a participating institution, not to exceed 14 persons (1 sponsor, 1 mascot, and a maximum of 12 cheerleaders) shall be admitted free of charge to all NAIA conference, independent, and/or national championships.

Cheerleaders will adhere to the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors (AACCA) recommendations and safety guidelines for collegiate cheerleading. To obtain a copy of the policy call 1-800-533-6583.

CONDUCT IN COMPETITION

EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

An ejection is an action enforced in conjunction with competition by a game official consistent with the playing rules in that sport. 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 the sport rule book.

Suspensions may be appealed starting with the Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (Formerly 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 NAIA 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).



The NAIA game official ejecting a student-athlete or coach and the athletic director of the ejected student-athlete or coach must complete ejection reports. The form must be submitted to the NAIA within 48 hours after the completion of the contest.

Ejection Report Form

In the NAIA, any ejection in any sport carries a mandatory suspension of at least one game (see NAIA Bylaws Article 6, Section B, Item 7). In addition, the specific sport itself may also carry a suspension, as determined by rules of competition for that sport. If both an NAIA and sport rule suspension apply, the two suspensions run concurrently.

Basketball Sport Rule – In addition to being disqualified, an individual who is ejected shall leave the playing court and floor area and report to her team's locker room until the game is over.

NAIA NAC Policy Article IV – Conduct in Competition – A player or coach serving a game suspension shall be restricted to the designated spectator areas and prohibited from any communication or contact, direct or indirect, with the team, coaches, bench personnel and/or game officials from the start of the contest to its completion, including any overtime periods. While the suspended coach or player is allowed on the court and in the bench area during pregame activities, the suspended player may not be dressed in their game uniform, and they may not take part in any warm-up activities.

**A one-game suspension is required by sports rule (not appealable through NAIA process); An additional one-game suspension is only required by NAIA bylaw and therefore is appealable through NAIA process.*

POSTSEASON COMPETITION RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

ROSTERS / OFFICIAL PARTY

The official party for each team participating in postseason play is 17 players allowed in uniform and up to 6 support staff. Each team will receive a maximum number of 23 credentials, 17 student-athlete credentials and 6 official party credentials.

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

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

If you have trouble with the online roster form, please contact [Brandt McCall](#), NAIA Manager of Athletics Communications. For any other general questions related to the Official Postseason Rosters, please contact [Rick Daum](#), NAIA Senior Championship Manager.

The list of up to 17 eligible players (Official Postseason Roster and entry form on NAIA Connect) must be submitted at the time of the institution's selection into NAIA postseason play. 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 games shall be forfeited by the offending team.

Only student-athletes that appear on the eligibility certificate for Men's Basketball will be available to be selected for the postseason roster.

A copy of this roster form must be hand-carried to the site of the Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions)/Group qualifying tournament site and National Championship (First & Second Rounds and Final Site) and be presented to the Championship Site Supervisor prior to that institution's participation in the tournament.

The deadline for certifying the Official Roster of 17 players is 30 minutes prior to the first game of any conference tournament, or at the coaches meeting of the National Championship First & Second Round or Final Site.

Once the National Championship (First & Second Round or Final Site) begins, no player may play who is not on the Official Postseason Roster.

CREDENTIAL INFORMATION

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

Please [apply here](#) for medical personnel credential.
(Applications required for Final Site play only.)

Sports Information / Media Personnel - All SIDs/Media personnel will need to apply for a credential for the final site. Applications will close 72 hours before the event starts. Media Credentials can be picked up at the box office only with photo ID. Media credentials will NOT be included in the team packets at coaches pick up. Please ensure that SID's and media fill out the appropriate form.

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

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

ROSTER CHANGES

Any eligible player whose name is included on the NAIA Official Eligibility Form for Men's Basketball for the current season may replace a player on the official roster between the Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) Group tournaments and the National Championship. Any change made to the roster must be reported to the NAIA. An updated roster notification should be emailed to the NAIA (rdaum@naia.org and bmccall@naia.org). The coach will need to hand-carry a copy of the eligibility form to each tournament if a roster change is necessary.

For Unaffiliated Group qualifying tournament plans that call for preliminary competition between conference teams, roster changes cannot be made once this preliminary competition begins. Unaffiliated group tournaments will follow the same roster change policies used for Affiliated Conference/CAC tournaments.

For the National Championship, roster changes are permissible between the First & Second Round and the start of the Final Site competition. Replacements are permitted from among eligible athletes only.

UNIFORMS

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

The following modifications applies for both NAIA men's and women's basketball players and teams, specific to the color requirements as outlined in Rule 1, Section 23, Article 1 Undershirts (top) and Article 2 Undergarments (bottom) of the NCAA Men's and Women's Basketball Rules Book (Appendix A):

If an undershirt or undergarment is worn beneath a player's uniform, the same color must be worn by all teammates. If both an undershirt and undergarment are worn, they must be of the same color. The color shall be white, black, or a school color of the jersey or shorts.

Sponsor Logos

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

- Limit of one sponsor logo or patch on a uniform.
- The logos may not exceed a standard size of 2.25 inches square.
- Sponsors of alcohol, tobacco, or any other legalized drugs (for example, Oregon marijuana) are not permitted.
- Sponsors whose sole or primary business function is sports gambling (e.g., FanDuel, DraftKings, etc.) are not permitted.
- Sponsor logos must be in the same location on each set of uniforms (e.g., if the home whites patch is on the neckline, all home whites must be the same; away jerseys could be in a different permissible location).



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, including First & Second Rounds must attend all event functions including, but not limited to - Student-Athlete Experience, coaches meetings, and Teaming Up for Character initiatives. Failure to comply will result in a penalty of a \$1,500 fine to the institution.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITY

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

INSURANCE

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

REPORTING SCORES

Scores from all games of the Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC)/Group Tournaments must be reported to the NAIA Stats site via Presto Stats within 24 hours of the completed contest(s).

AFFILIATED CONFERENCE/CAC/GROUP TOURNAMENTS

The Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC)/Group tournaments are planned and administered by the Conference/CAC/Group Executive Committees under the leadership of their basketball chair and subject to approval of all standards and conditions as prescribed by the Conference/CAC/Group Executive Committee or Commissioner.

Conference/CAC/Group postseason tournament plans must be submitted to the National Office no later than **November 1, 2026**. Plans must include a weather contingency plan. The tournament deadline **will not** be extended for weather delays.

DATES AND SITES

The dates and sites of the Conference/CAC qualifying tournaments shall be determined by their executive committees. The deadline for completion of all 2026-27 NAIA Men's Basketball Conference/CAC/Group qualifying tournaments is **Tuesday, March 2, 2027**.

TEAM QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION

Consideration may be given to any one or combination of the following criteria in selecting teams for the postseason tournaments:

1. An approved rating system
2. Regular-season overall win-loss record
3. Overall win-loss record against NAIA teams within the conference, and/or
4. Any system approved by the NAIA Championships Department.

ADMINISTRATION

If available, the Conference/CAC/Group basketball chairs will serve as administrators for their respective 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. All national qualifying tournament games must determine a winner. Games tied after regulation must utilize the tiebreaker procedures outlined in the [NCAA rulebook](#).

FINANCES

The host site for all Conference/CAC/Group qualifying tournament games is responsible for the following:

1. Compensation of game officials.
2. Ordering Conference/CAC/Group awards, if applicable (see General Information, Section IV, I of this handbook for information on official approved NAIA awards).
3. Administrative expenses, including security, ticket personnel, and public address announcer, scorer, timer, etc.
4. Expenses of game administrator, if applicable.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP – FIRST & SECOND ROUND

DATES AND SITES

The deadline for prospective NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round tournament hosts to submit an official bid is **February 1, 2027**. Announcement of the 16 National Championship First & Second Round host sites will be on **March 1, 2027**.

FACILITY CERTIFICATION

In order to be eligible to serve as a First & Second Round host, all potential hosts, including NAIA institutions, or Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) partnering with an NAIA institution, must complete the [Facility Certification](#) process. The Facility Certification process ensures that all First & Second Round host facilities meet certain minimum venue standards. The deadline to submit a Facility Certification application for Men's Basketball is **December 1, 2026**.

Completion of the Facility Certification process does not automatically qualify the submitter to host a First & Second Round. The Facility Certification, in addition to submitting an Official First & Second Round Bid Form is required to be considered in host selection process. The deadline for prospective NAIA Men's Basketball First & Second Round hosts to submit an [official bid](#) is **February 1, 2027**.

A list of all Approved First & Second Round Certified Facilities can be found [here](#).

ADMINISTRATION

The NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship First and Second Round must be conducted under the direct control and supervision of the NAIA and the NAIA's designated Site Supervisor. The host site will work with the NAIA National Office Championship Sport Manager and Site Supervisor in organizing and conducting the National Championship First and Second Round. The NAIA Site Supervisor is responsible for the management of First and Second Round games and the general welfare of participating teams and coaches. NAIA Site Supervisors conduct a pre-tournament coaches' meeting, work with the supervisor of officials and coordinate pre-and post-tournament ceremonies.

QUALIFICATION OF TEAMS

The 64 teams that will compete in the 2027 NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship First & Second Rounds will be determined using the 2026-2027 NAIA Men's Basketball Qualification Plan approved by the NAC, found in [NAIA Connect](#).

Each Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) with six teams competing shall automatically qualify one representative to the First & Second Rounds. Conferences with 10 or more teams shall automatically qualify two representatives to the First & Second Rounds.

Conferences/Groups with less than 6 teams are considered "Unaffiliated" and grouped geographically by the National Administrative Council (NAC). Each grouping of six or more teams may qualify for an automatic berth through a national qualifying tournament. Unaffiliated groups that drop below five teams can qualify for the national championship only as at-large teams.

In addition to the automatic berths granted to each Conference/CAC there are no limits to the number of at-large berths a Conference/CAC may receive.

SELECTION & SEEDING

The 64 teams in the National Championship will be a combination of Conference/CAC/Group automatic qualifiers and at-large qualifiers determined by the Men's Basketball National Selection Committee. The 64-team field will be seeded by the Men's Basketball National Selection Committee.

FORMAT



The NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship is a 64-team single-elimination tournament, consisting of 16 First & Second Round sites. The NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round brackets are four-team, single-elimination format. Teams will be seeded #1-#64 by the Men's Basketball National Selection Committee and assigned to an First & Second Round site using the following criteria:

1. Geographical location of teams
2. Financial considerations
3. Competitive balance

CHAMPIONSHIP SELECTION APPEALS PROCESS

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

Criteria for filing an appeal:

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

NOTE – The NAC Sport Liaison will be on-site at the selection to listen to the discussion of tournament selection. The NAC Liaison will report any concerns to the NAIA National Office immediately following the conclusion of the selection.

TEAM TRAVEL/REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES

The National Administrative Council and the Council of Presidents have approved a flat fee reimbursement rate for traveling teams in First & Second Round competition. For those institutions that require air travel to a First & Second Round, institutions are no longer required to secure a quote through Short's Travel to be eligible for any First & Second Round travel reimbursements. Please contact Short's Travel (816-323-6405) to book your travel arrangements.

Traveling teams will be responsible for a minimum amount of their transportation and housing expenses determined by the Council of Presidents (COP) prior to being eligible for expense reimbursement for participation in NAIA Soccer National Championship First & Second Round.

There are two categories for potential 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
 - 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 23 members of the official party.
 - A quote for alternative proposed travel arrangements.

The traveling team's institution is responsible for transportation expenses incurred from campus to the NAIA designated airport for departure and return.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prior to the release of the National Championship qualifiers and bracket, an information packet will be posted online on the [NAIA Men's Basketball Coaches Corner](#) for all potential First & Second Round qualifiers which will include specific instructions regarding transportation, housing, practices, and all responsibilities upon qualification. Please handle all necessary responsibilities as early as possible.



Contacting the National Office – Immediately upon qualifying for the National Championship, all Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Commissioners are to contact the NAIA National Office to identify their representative(s) to the National Championship by emailing [Rick Daum](#).

Meetings – At all First & Second Round sites, the NAIA Site Supervisors will conduct pre-game meetings with head coaches and officials. This meeting shall serve as a forum to answer pre-game questions by all parties involved. Head coaches are required to attend. The Tournament Committee will hold a similar mandatory meeting for those who advance to the Final Site.

Team Statistics – Team statistics must be submitted NAIA Stats Site for inclusion in the media press book. To ensure this is accurate, all stats must be up to date in Presto Stats.

Radio, Television and Internet - The broadcast of any postseason game is governed by broadcast policies as printed in the NAIA Policy Handbook. This includes audio broadcasts and video broadcasts through conventional outlets and new media avenues. Rights to all broadcasts of the First & Second Rounds of the championship have been released to the host school or entity. If you have any questions, contact Men's Basketball Communications Manager, [Brandt McCall](#).

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP – FINAL SITE

DATES AND SITES

The NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship will be played at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, Missouri, on the dates of March 18-23, 2027.

ADMINISTRATION

The NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship is under the direct control and supervision of the NAIA and the NAIA Men's Basketball Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee is responsible for carrying out the policies approved by the NAIA National Administrative Council (NAC) and Men's Basketball Selection Committee, such as seeding of participating teams, the management of National Championship games and the general welfare of the participating teams and coaches.

Other responsibilities include conducting a pre-tournament coaches' meeting, evaluating game officials, and coordinating both pre- and post-tournament ceremonies. Should a member of the Tournament Committee have a team qualify for the National Championship, the NAIA Men's Basketball Championship Sport Manager will appoint a replacement on the Tournament Committee.

All National Champions should be determined in competition, with National Championships played to conclusion. Playability should be determined by the on-site Tournament Committee in consultation with the National Office, making every effort to conclude on schedule. The Tournament Committee should make every possible effort to finish in the timeliest fashion possible.

QUALIFICATION

The 16 NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship First & Second Round champions will advance to the National Championship Final Site.

SEEDING

The Men's Basketball Selection Committee will place all 64 qualifying teams for the NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship in rank order by seed (#1-#64) prior to being placed in the First & Second Round sites. As First & Second Round winners are determined they will follow their First & Second Round bracket lines into the Final Site Bracket.

FORMAT

The NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship Final Site is a 16-team, single-elimination tournament consisting of the 16 National Championship First & Second Round champions.

The eight First Round games at the Final Site will be played on Thursday (four games) and Friday (four games), while the four Quarterfinal games will be played on Saturday. Sunday will serve as a day off for the four teams advancing to the Semifinals. The Semifinal games will be played on Monday and the National Championship final will be played on Tuesday.

GAME TIMES



The NAIA Championships Department and the Tournament Committee jointly determine times for all games. Game times are tentative and are subject to change by the Tournament Committee and the Championship Sport Manager.

At the Final Site, teams traveling from the East and Central time zones should not play the last game of the day when having to change more than one time zone. Teams traveling from Mountain and Pacific time zones should not be scheduled in the early morning session when changing more than one time zone. Once the Final Site bracket is determined, game times shall be assigned.

TEAM HOUSING

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

PARTICIPATION IN FUNCTIONS AT NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

All participating teams and individuals competing in a National Championship must attend all functions including, but not limited to – Teaming Up for Character, coaches meetings and Student-Athlete Experience event. Failure to comply will result in a penalty of a \$1,500 fine to the institution.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

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

The Athletic Trainer is to notify the NAIA Championship Sport Manager who, in collaboration with the appropriate personnel (i.e. Tournament Committee) will implement the predetermined action plan for both player and spectator safety.

OFFICIALS

The NAIA contracts 12 game officials to work the Men's Basketball National Championship. Nominees are submitted by each Conference Assignor and officials will submit an application of interest to officiate at the Final Site. Officials are evaluated and selected for the Final Site by the NAIA National Assignor of Officials using an approved set of criteria.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prior to the National Championship, a Final Site Coaches Packet will be sent to all advancing coaches which will include specific instructions regarding transportation, housing, practices, and all responsibilities upon advancing to the Final Site. Please handle all necessary responsibilities as early as possible.

Team Statistics – Team statistics must be submitted to the National Office for inclusion in the media press book. Any team failing to submit statistics will be subject to a \$500 fine.

Film Exchange – All postseason tournament play (or if no tournament, then the last game played shall be filmed for the purpose of the film exchange. This policy is to be monitored by the NAIA. The film exchange is mandatory. Any violation of the film exchange policy will result in a \$500 fine.

Check In – Upon arrival, teams must check in prior to the coaches meeting the day prior to the beginning of the tournament. NAIA personnel will be at the headquarter hotel to greet all teams, provide informational materials, and answer questions.

Meetings – The Tournament Committee will hold a mandatory meeting for all head coaches advancing to the Final Site. This meeting will serve as an informational forum and will include a briefing by the Supervisor of Officials.

Student-Athlete Experience - There will be a Student-Athlete Experience at the final site. All teams are required to be in attendance and appropriate dress is required.

Radio, Television and Internet - The broadcast of any postseason game/match is governed by broadcast policies as printed in the NAIA Policy Handbook. This includes audio broadcasts and video broadcasts through conventional outlets and new media avenues. The NAIA Reserves the rights to all championship final site broadcasts and streams. All re-broadcasts or reproduction of an NAIA Championship without the expressed approval of the NAIA is prohibited. Below are the rights fees for NAIA Men's Basketball:



	RADIO/VIDEO STREAMING	TELEVISION	WEB BLOGGING**
Commercial	\$200/game + \$75 per* \$250/game/station (delayed)	\$500/game/station (live) \$250/game/station (delayed)	\$75
Non-Commercial	\$150/game + \$50 per*	\$250/match/station (live or delayed)	\$50

**Extra charge associated with any additional radio stations that pick up your school's feed. This does not include if a team posts/advertises the internet broadcast of the opponent.*

***Web blogging is any form of live updates by typing on a computer in a public forum where anyone with internet has access to.*

All rights fees must be paid prior to start of each game at the National Championship. At the National Championship Final Site, all checks need to be made out to the NAIA and given to on-site Media Coordinator. For information relative to these policies, contact [Brandt McCall](#) of the NAIA Athletics Communications Department.

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.

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

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 at [HERE](#). Please refer directly to the NAIA Policy Handbook for the following:

Competition

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

Eligibility

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

Recruiting & Financial Aid

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

SUNDAY PLAY POLICY

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

DRUG TESTING

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

For more information regarding championship drug testing including the [Drug Testing Info Sheet](#) 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](#)



COACHES ASSOCIATION

NAIA MEN'S BASKETBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION

The NAIA National Association of Basketball Coaches (NAIA-NABC) is an organization of collegiate basketball coaches whose institutions are in good standing with the NAIA. The NAIA-NABC meets annually at the NABC Convention.

The NAIA-NABC elects officers who serve a one-year term and provide leadership for the Association. The NAIA-NABC studies and makes recommendations on all issues affecting the organization and administration of the NAIA men's basketball program. Important standing committees of the NAIA-NABC include tournament committees, which are directly responsible for the administration of the national tournaments. The NAIA and the NAC strongly encourage NAIA men's basketball coaches to join the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC). For more information on joining the NABC, click [here](#).

NAIA-NABC 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 (NAC). Motions and discussion will be presented at the Annual Business meeting at the NABC Convention. Voting will also take place in person at the annual business meeting.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & SPORT MOTIONS

The annual business meeting for the NAIA-NABC will take place on April 1 in conjunction with the NABC Convention, which is held on April 1-5 in Detroit, MI. All NAIA Men's Basketball head coaches will receive advance communication from the NAIA Sport Manager regarding the submission of sport motions and business meeting details. Refer to the NAIA-NABC Constitution and Bylaws for the organization of the annual business meeting.

Coaches are able to submit sport motions to the NAIA-NABC President and Sport Manager prior to the annual business meeting. All sport motions from the coaches' body affecting the NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship will be distributed to all head coaches 1 week prior to the annual business meeting.

NAIA-NABC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Each officer (excluding the NAC liaison) will serve in their position for one year before progressing.

POSITION/TITLE	NAME, SCHOOL & CONTACT INFO
President	Justin Parnell , Oregon Tech (Ore.), justin.parnell@oit.edu
First Vice President	Delton Deal , Nelson University (Tx.), ddeal@nelson.edu
Second Vice President	Chase Teichmann , Georgia Gwinnett, cteichmann@ggc.edu
Secretary	Scott Moore , Grace (Ind.), mooresd@grace.edu
Past President	Kyle Blankenship , LSU Shreveport (La.), kyle.blankenship@lsus.edu

Liaisons

USA Basketball	Jeff Britt, Bethel (Tenn.)
NABC	Ryan Moody, Benedictine (Kan.)
NAC	Drew Watson, Southeastern (Fla.)
NAIA	Rick Daum

NAIA-NABC CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section I – The name of the association shall be the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics National Association of Basketball Coaches (NAIA-NABC).

ARTICLE II – ORGANIZATION

Section I – The membership of this association is comprised of men's basketball coaches whose institutions are current members of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. The NAIA-NABC is charged with the responsibility of carrying out programs beneficial to the game of basketball and to the NAIA member coaches of this sport. The activities of this section shall be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NAIA and under the guidance of the National Administrative Council (NAC).

Section II – The NAIA-NABC shall submit to the NAIA NAC statements governing the NAIA-NABC plans and practices for approval and in every way cooperate with the NAC in furthering the stated aims and objectives of this parent organization.

ARTICLE III – AIMS AND OBJECTIONS

Section I – The NAIA-NABC shall supervise and conduct programs utilizing the guidance of the NAIA National Administrative Council which will foster and promote interest and enthusiasm in basketball programs which produce national and Conference/CAC recognition for teams, players, and coaches.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section I – Active membership in NAIA-NABC will be open to any men's basketball coach whose institution is a current member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

ARTICLE V – VOTING POWER

Section I – Current membership of NAIA-NABC entitles the member to (1) vote per school in all democratic action held in open assembly of the association.

Section II – 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. If a quorum (at least 50%) is not met at the business meeting, voting will be sent out using an online process following the business meeting in order to reach a quorum. If at least 50% of eligible voters are not in attendance at the business meeting motions will still be presented and discussed and if desired, a "straw poll" can be taken by those present to determine if a motion will be opened for a vote to the full coaches association.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section I – Officers shall be elected from the active membership of the Association at the Annual Meeting as follows: President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary and Past-President. Such elected officers shall be from institutions which are in good standing in the NAIA.

Section II – Terms of office for all President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and Secretary shall be for one year.

Section III – The progression in office shall be from Secretary to Second Vice President to First Vice President to President. Each office is to be held for one year from one annual meeting to the next annual meeting. In the event of a vacancy, the normal progression from Secretary to President shall be accelerated to fill the vacant office and the President of NAIA-NABC is empowered to appoint members for the membership at large to fill the remaining vacant position. Such appointee will not succeed in the normal progression of office unless duly elected by the membership at the next annual election.

Section IV – The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President and shall consist of the First Vice-President (chairman) and two additional members selected by the President. This committee shall submit nominations for NAIA-NABC offices and committees. In addition to nominations from the Nominating Committee, nominations for office may be accepted from the floor. Election for the offices of 2nd Vice-President or Secretary shall be determined by the highest number of votes. The election shall be under the direction of the chairman of the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE VII – DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

Section I – The duties of the President are to afford leadership and guidance to the NAIA-NABC through all possible channels and to direct his efforts specifically to conduction the Annual Meetings and clinics. The President is the executive officer of all appointed and standing committees of the association.

Section II – The duties of the 1st Vice-President are assuming the leadership at all meetings unattended by the President.

Section III – The 2nd Vice-President is designated as the membership chairman and he works directly with the conference/CAC chairmen who are designated as conference/CAC membership chairmen. The 2nd Vice-President assumes the leadership designated to the President or 1st Vice-President in the event neither is available to assume their proper roles.

Section IV – The Secretary-Treasurer shall make an annual report to the NAIA-NABC Executive Committee, supervise the association correspondence, maintain the roster, notify members of meetings and other such duties as are incident to the office.

ARTICLE VIII – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section I – The Executive Committee of NAIA-NABC is composed of six members; the officers of the association, the association's immediate past-president and the appointed NAIA National Administrative Council (NAC) liaison (ex-officio).

Section II – The President of the NAIA-NABC is empowered to appoint committees which will assist in programs designed to produce national and conference/CAC recognition for teams, players and coaches. The President is also encouraged to appoint competent NAIA-NABC members who will assist in any and all ways to foster the aims and objectives of NAIA as they relate to the game of basketball, the participants, the coaches, the spectators and the institutions represented by these groups.

ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS

Section I – The Annual Business Meeting of the association shall be held in conjunction with the National Association of Basketball Coaches Annual Convention at the time and place set by the officers of NAIA.

Section II – Voting on all issues shall be by voice or hand in executive sessions or in the open meetings of the Association.

Section III – Usual order of business at the open business meetings:

1. Reading of Minutes
2. Reports of Officers
3. Committee Reports
4. Old Business
5. New Business
6. Adjournment

ARTICLE X – CONSTITUTION CHANGES

Section I – Proposed amendments to the Constitution of the NAIA-NABC must be presented in writing to the President of the NAIA-NABC at least one month prior to the annual business meeting. The President must see that the proposal is presented to the membership at the next annual business meeting. The amendment must have a two-thirds vote of approval by current members of the NAIA-NABC. All changes of the constitution must have approval of the NAIA National Administrative Council (NAC).

REPORTING RESULTS AND STATISTICS

REPORTING RESULTS/STATISTICS & 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 for to be included in the national statistical website or leaderboards.

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.

STATISTICS

[Click here](#) to view national statistics throughout the year. 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. Statistical minimums for all leaderboards are set by the NAIA National Office in consultation with the NAIA Sports Information Directors Association.

The host institution is responsible for recording both teams' official statistics. The home team must notify the opposing team at least 72 hours prior to contest if official stats will not be provided. 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. To view the full NAC policy on NAIA Statistics, please click [HERE](#).

It is vital that sport records maintain a certain level of integrity and accuracy. The NAIA urges the official statistician for every sport to become familiar and have a working knowledge of the statistical manual. For Men's Basketball, please refer to www.ncaa.org and go to the Men's Basketball page and the statisticians' manual link.

AWARDS

CONFERENCE/CAC/GROUP & NATIONAL PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Conference/CAC/Group Player of the Week

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

National Offensive & Defensive Players of the Week

All NAIA member institutions are permitted to nominate candidates for National Player of the Week for all sports in which they declare for NAIA postseason. Nominations from the Conference/CAC/Group sports information director or their designated representative must be received by the NAIA Department of Athletics Communications by 5:00pm (CST) each Monday. The nomination process is handled through the [NAIA Awards Platform](#). Release of National Offensive & Defensive Player of the Week will be made weekly on Tuesdays during the season. National Players of the Week are selected from the pool of Conference/CAC/Group Players of the Week. A full calendar of National Player of the Week release dates are located [HERE](#).

ALL-AMERICA

The Selection Committee for the NAIA Men's Basketball All-America team is made up of a committee of 10 members, elected annually, in which four members are the NAIA-NABC Executive Committee officers, five members are representing the five Area Ratings Committees (ARCs) and an additional one to five at-large members, which are approved by the Men's Basketball coaches. The All-America Selection Committee is responsible for selecting the NAIA Men's Basketball All-America teams, National Player of the Year and National Coach of the Year.

In order to be eligible for an ARC position on the committee, potential members would have to serve as a conference voter. At the beginning of each season, all coaches within each ARC will elect the conference voter that will represent their ARC.

To be eligible for All-America selection, a player must have been named to a team coordinated and submitted by each Affiliated Conference/CAC. The NAIA Championships Department will provide statistical information for candidates to the All-American Selection Committee. The All-America team will consist of a first, a second and a third team (12 on each).

Coaches and/or SID's that would like to create a certificate honoring their student-athletes that have earned All-America status can [CLICK HERE](#) to download the most recent year's template.

Note – Any affiliated conference with 10 or more institutions shall be allowed to nominate 15 players (instead of 10) for NAIA All-American consideration.

All-America Criteria (Guide used in Selection Process)

1. The NAIA All-America Men's Basketball team is composed of 12 players on the first team, 12 players on the second team, 12 players on the third team. The third team will include conference players of the year not selected for the first, second, or third team. The third team may exceed 12 players based on the number of conference players of the year that were not included in the first, second or third teams.
2. The All-America Selection Committee meets during the week of the National Championship Final Site to select the teams.
3. All-Conference/CAC/Group forms are emailed in early February to all Affiliated Conference/CAC/Group Commissioners. All-Conference/CAC Nominations must be received on or before Thursday, March 4, 2027.
4. It is recommended that a player be voted Conference Player of the Year to be eligible for National Player of the Year.
5. Each ARC will be emailed the All-Conference nominations for the conferences in their ARCs in early March.
6. Each ARC must meet via conference call to determine a top-15 from their ARC, of which will be eligible for recognition.
7. The nomination form submitted by each conference/CAC/group will guide the ARC members.

8. The ARC will be guided by the voting order of each conference/CAC group. The ARC will evaluate each nominated player by reviewing the order on the conference/CAC. Nomination ballots, the strength of their team, strength of schedule and their individual performances.
9. The top-15 nominations from each ARC must be received by the National Office on or before Wednesday, March 17, 2027.
10. The top-15 nominations will be shared with the NABC, who will release an NABC-NAIA All-Area team in advance of the NAIA's All-American release.
11. The nomination form submitted by the Area Ratings Committee will guide the All-America Selection Committee.
12. The All-America Selection Committee will be guided by the voting order of each ARC. The Selection Committee will evaluate each nominated player by reviewing the order on the ARC nomination ballots, the strength of their team, strength of schedule and their individual performances.
13. The current year's performance by a student-athlete will be used as the primary means of consideration for All-America team selections.
14. All-America teams will be announced four business days following the conclusion of the National Championship. The National Player of the Year and National Coach of the Year will be announced on the same date as the All-America teams.

CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AWARD

Each participating team shall nominate one student-athlete that has shown a documented display of exemplary character and sportsmanship during competition, on campus and in the community that exemplify the core values of Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Sportsmanship and Servant Leadership. [Nominations are due](#) to the National Office by February 15, 2027.

NAIA SCHOLAR-ATHLETE

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

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

NOTE – There are no statistical/playing requirements needed to receive this award. NAIA Scholar-Athlete nominations will be filled out via NAIA Connect.

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 **January 31, 2027**. Late nominations will not be accepted.

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

Eligibility Requirements

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

1. Be listed on the official active championship roster (team sports) or be an official qualifier and active participant (individual sports) at the NAIA National Championship Final Site.
2. Be recognized as an NAIA Scholar-Athlete for the applicable academic year.

3. Meet all established NAIA Scholar-Athlete eligibility requirements and be submitted through the official NAIA Scholar-Athlete nomination process by the applicable sport deadline.

Selection Process

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

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

SCHOLAR TEAM 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, 2027. Scholar Team nominations may only be submitted via NAIA Connect. Honorees will be announced annually on NAIA National Awards Day

NAIA NATIONAL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

The All-America Selection Committee will select the NAIA Men's Basketball Player of the Year. The recipient must be a member of the All-America First Team.

NAIA NATIONAL COACH OF THE YEAR

The NAIA National Coach of the Year selection is made by the All-American Selection Committee. Candidates for National Coach of the Year include Conference Coaches of the Year and all other coaches of teams that qualify for the National Championship.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

The NAIA maintains a standardized awards program for its national championship, with awards provided to the official parties of the top four teams. A 10-member All-Tournament Team, including the Tournament MVP. The Tournament Most Valuable Player is included as part of the 10-member All Tournament Team. A Hustle Award is also presented during the awards ceremony.

ORDERING AWARDS

Appropriate Conference/CAC/Group 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, Springfield, MO 65802
Brad Stout – brads@collegiateawards.com