NAIA Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association
Annual Business Meeting Agenda

Thursday, November 16 2026 – 2:00pm (CT)
Location: St. Pete Beach, Florida
Room: Royal Tern

I.	Call to Order	Kelly Buikus
II.	Approval of the 2025 WLAX Business Meeting Minutes	Kelly Buikus
III.	Reports	
	a. National Office Report	Abby Schultz
	b. IWLCA Updates	Katy Sherman
	c. 2026 Championship Report	Abby Schultz
IV.	New Business	Kelly Buikus
	a. Sport Motions	
V.	Executive Committee Elections	Kelly Buikus
VI.	Open Discussion	Kelly Buikus
VII.	Breakouts	Kelly Buikus
	a. Recruiting	
	b. Fundraising	
	c. Promotion of NAIA competition	
VIII.	Adjournment	Kelly Buikus

Coach's Guide: Legislation, Policies & Sport Rules

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

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

How to make a change:

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

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

How to make a change:

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

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

How to make a change:

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

NAIA Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association
Annual Business Meeting Agenda

Thursday, November 20 2025 – 9:00a (CT)
Location: St. Pete Beach, Florida
Room: Banyan/Cirtus Glaze/Jazmine

I. Call to Order — Kelly Buikus
Attendees: Katelyn Sherman, Ave Maria; Clare Hanson, Benedictine; Mallory Bahr, Columbia (Mo.); Caitlin Erickson, Culver Stockton; Maddy Reed, Culver Stockton; Bianaca Rojas, Georgetown; Alexis DiGioranno, Indiana Tech; Lauren Chizmar, Keiser; Alexia Martinez, Keiser; Max Ruhl, Missouri Baptist; Morgan McGhee, Reinhardt; Tyler Yelken, SCAD Savannah; Emily Cabrena, SCAD Savannah; Addie Records, UHSP; Kelly Buikus, Cumberlands (Ky.); Abby Schultz, NAIA

II. Approval of the 2024 WLAX Business Meeting Minutes — Kelly Buikus
First/Second: Hanson/Sherman
Vote: 11-0-0

III. Reports

a. National Office Report — Abby Schultz
Discussion: Sport motions come out of coaches associations which move on to the National Administrative Council (NAC). Abby Schultz is taking over as the Senior Championship Manager and Dustin Wilke, The Sun Conference Commissioner, is the NAC liaison for Women's Lacrosse. The NAC meets four times a year and WLAX motions are heard at the January meeting.

The 2025-26 Championship will be in Decatur, Alabama. This will be a three year contract in Decatur. Decatur has hosted NAIA Championships in the past & is looking forward to bringing in both Men's & Women's Lacrosse.

Two new institutions were approved for active membership beginning fall 2026 (currently neither sponsor WLAX):

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

The NAIA has enhanced its membership recruitment and retention efforts, with a particular focus on NCAA Division II and III institutions. As part of these initiatives, the "Why NAIA" website was refreshed to better highlight the value and advantages of NAIA membership. This strategy has been

effective; last year, the NAIA received 12 membership applications—the highest number in the past decade.

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

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

The NAC is conducting a comprehensive review of all National Selection Committee processes to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment across sports.
As part of this effort, the NAC has:

•Realigned Areas Rating Committees (ARCs) to establish comparable structures across most sports
• Standardized key operational practices, including:
- Each National Selection Committee meeting four times per season
- ARC ratings released on a unified four-cycle schedule
- Final ARC ratings published on the same day the National Selection Committee meets
These updates aim to enhance transparency, uniformity, and clarity in the national selection process.

The Path Forward Task Force (PFTF), created after the April 2025 NAIA Convention, has spent six months evaluating rapidly evolving areas of college athletics. One resulting recommendation is the consideration of five seasons of competition, recognizing the need to balance higher education principles with competitive positioning relative to other associations. The PFTF shared its recommendations with the Council of Presidents in October 2025, after which the Council chose to proceed with a legislative proposal. Efforts are underway to share information with the membership to help institutions form informed perspectives. A membership survey will be distributed in early December, and feedback will inform the final legislative proposal. As the sponsoring body, the Council of Presidents will have authority over its final drafting.

b. IWLCA Updates — Katy Sherman

Discussion: IWLCA film exchange is one that you opt into, not mandatory. Make sure that Hudl camera has HD card in it and you are filming at a high enough resolution that teams can see reliable film. Recommendation may be coming forth from IWLCA on how to standardize Senior Days. NAIA doesn't have to follow but there could be a blueprint coming forward to assist with standardizing and planning of senior days.

IWLCA has a lot of committees, get involved. Reminder the more NAIA coaches that we can have serving on committees, the more our voice is heard amongst the association.

Katy's term as IWLCA – NAIA Rep is done in June and she is not going to rerun. The position will be open after this year, consider applying if you are interested.

c. Executive Committee Reports — Executive Committee

Discussion:
Over the past year, change has taken place that has been put forward from the executive committee. For instance, adding 15-20 minutes to practices at the Championship has helped for a better experience. Not having to play back-to-back will be huge moving forward with the merge of Men's & Women's Lacrosse into the same week.

All-American committee went well this past year. Twelve different teams were represented on All-Americans. Make sure that you nominate your athletes for all awards – NAIA awards & IWLCA awards. IWLCA does Player of the Week and includes NAIA in those Players of the Week, be sure to nominate them. Considering having the secretary of the executive committee create a GroupMe of WLAX coaches to be able to place these awards links, information, etc. NAIA WLAX Coaches Corner also has NAIA specific information as a landing page for all NAIA information.

d. 2025 Championship Report — Katy Sherman

Discussion: Concerns from last year with hotels & breakfast are being addressed with a new site location. NAIA branding is going to continue to increase. The support between Men's & Women's Lacrosse in the same week will hopefully continue to grow the sport. Live stream moving to a free platform is going to continue to only help grow the sport. Social media was really good last year. Continuing to make the experience at a Championship next level.

Desire to do All-American awards prior to the National Championship and announce them at the banquet. Men's Lacrosse would have to follow suit. This would include All-American, Coach of the Year, & Player of the Year.

Motion: To announce All-American awards at the Student Athlete Experience Banquet prior to the start of the NAIA National Championship.
Vote: 11-0-0

Desire to add in Semifinal awards to the awards handed out at the Championship. NAIA will look into that.

IV. New Business — Kelly Buikus

a. Sport Motions
Discussion: None submitted.

V. Executive Committee Elections — Kelly Buikus

Nominations:
1st VP – Katy Sherman (Ave Maria), Max Ruhl (Missouri Baptist)

3rd VP – Caitlin Erickson (Culver Stockton)

Will send out a form to solicit for more nominations.

VI. Open Discussion — Kelly Buikus

Discussion:
Benedictine coaches presented information pertaining to the upcoming college enrollment crisis (birth rate) effecting all higher education in the United States. Data pulled together by Benedictine coaches on NAIA roster sizes & NAIA WLAX schools for 12 month undistributed enrollment (2015-2023). Reach out to Clare if you would like to learn more about her research.

VII. Adjournment — Kelly Buikus

Motion to adjourn: Kelly Buikus/Max Ruhl
Vote: 11-0-0

**Sponsors throughout meeting*

Women's Lacrosse Sport Motion #1

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:
Adopt the 6v6 format with the over-and-back rule while maintaining the 90/60 possession clock resets for Spring 2027.

RATIONALE:
The number of active NAIA programs is dropping every year, while more and more current teams have smaller rosters. After seeing what this 6v6 format could do this fall for teams with smaller rosters, this could provide a more competitive experience and less strain on those programs. Implementing this in spring 2027 would put us ahead of the NCAA and potentially make us more sustainable for programs to keep sponsoring our sport and entice sponsorship with new teams (less players to field = easier to start a program)

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:
This was an experimental format implemented this fall with strong indications that this will go into effect with the NCAA divisions in the near future.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:
None

START DATE:
2026-27 Season

Women's Lacrosse Sport Motion #2

Coaches Vote:

MOTION:

Minimum Non-Conference Competition Requirement for At-Large National Tournament Eligibility

Beginning with the next applicable competition season, all NAIA women's lacrosse programs must complete a minimum of three (3) non-conference games against NAIA opponents during the regular season to be eligible for consideration for an at-large bid to the NAIA Women's Lacrosse National Tournament.

Programs that do not meet this minimum requirement shall be ineligible for at-large selection, regardless of their overall record, conference standing or national ranking.

This requirement shall apply exclusively to at-large selections and shall not affect a program's ability to qualify through an automatic conference birth.

RATIONALE:

The purpose of this motion is to promote competitive equity, encourage meaningful non-conference competition and ensure that all NAIA women's lacrosse programs have a reasonable opportunity to schedule opponents outside their respective conferences.

With the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference (WHAC) and Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) transitioning to home and home conference schedules, the number of available non-conference dates has been significantly reduced. This scheduling structure has created challenges for programs in the Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC) and Sun Conference (Sun), which rely heavily on interconference competition to complete their regular-season schedules.

Requiring a minimum of three non-conference games for at-large eligibility would encourage programs across all conferences to maintain a reasonable level of competition outside their conference schedules.

Non-conference competition provides valuable opportunities to evaluate teams against opponents from different conferences, creating a more comprehensive basis for national rankings and at-large selections.

This motion is not intended to penalize conferences for their scheduling formats, but rather to establish a consistent national standard that supports balance, scheduling cooperation and the overall growth of NAIA women's lacrosse.

Additionally, the implementation of home and home conference schedules creates the potential for statistical disparities across NAIA women's lacrosse programs. Teams competing against the same conference opponents twice during the regular season may experience inflated individual and team statistics, particularly when facing less competitive opponents multiple times. This scheduling imbalance can influence final regular season statistical rankings, national recognition, postseason awards and the evaluation of teams for at-large national tournament selection. Programs competing in conferences with more diverse schedules may not have the same statistical opportunities, creating inconsistency when comparing teams and individual performances nationally. Establishing a minimum non-conference competition requirement would help promote a more balanced competitive landscape and provide additional opportunities to evaluate programs against opponents outside their respective conferences.

HISTORY BEHIND MOTION:

Historically, NAIA women's lacrosse programs have relied on non-conference competition to build competitive schedules, establish national rankings and provide meaningful comparisons between teams from different conferences.

Recent changes to conference scheduling formats, particularly the adoption of home and home conference schedules within the WHAC and Heart conferences have reduced the number of opportunities for interconference matchups.

As a result, programs within the AAC and Sun Conference have experienced increasing difficulty securing non-conference opponents, creating scheduling imbalances across the national landscape.

These changes have also raised concerns regarding the ability to accurately evaluate teams for national tournament at-large consideration when some programs compete predominantly within their own conference.

This motion seeks to address these emerging scheduling challenges by establishing a minimum expectation for non-conference autonomy over regular-season scheduling formats.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The proposed motion may create modest additional travel and operational expenses for programs that must schedule additional non-conference competition to meet the three game minimum.

Potential expenses could include transportation, lodging, meals, officiating and game day operations, depending on the location and structure of scheduled contests.

However, the requirement is intentionally limited to three games to minimize financial burdens while maintaining meaningful interconference competition. Programs may also utilize neutral-site events and geographically convenient opponents to reduce travel expenses.

For programs already competing in three or more non-conference games annually, there would be no anticipated additional financial impact.

Overall, the potential financial implications are expected to be manageable, particularly when weighed against the benefits of improved scheduling opportunities, competitive equity and a more comprehensive national championship selection process.

START DATE:
2028-29 Academic Year