



2022-2023 **Softball Coaches Manual**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------|
| Important Dates | 3 |
| Playing Rules and Regulations | 4 |
| Conduct in Competition | 4 |
| Postseason Competition | 5-13 |
| NAIA Policy Handbook Information | 14 |
| Sunday Play Policy | 14 |
| Drug Testing | 14 |
| Coaches Association | 16 |
| NAIA-Softball Coaches Association Officers | 17 |
| Constitution and Bylaws | 18 |
| Ratings Manual | 21 |
| Reporting Results and Statistics | 29 |
| Awards | 30 |

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

Championship Sport Manager

Brian Lewis

blewis@naia.org

(816) 595-8196

For Ratings Administration

Director of Athletic Communications

Brad Cygan

bcygan@naia.org

(816) 595-8139

The NAIA Softball Coaches Manual is published annually by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. The name National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, initials NAIA, logo, and other NAIA symbols and insignia are registered in the United States patent and Trademarks Office. The name, initials, and marks are fully protected and are the exclusive property of the Association. Expressed, written approval by the NAIA President/CEO is required for the use of the NAIA initials, name or marks in connection with any items offered for commercial sale, awards, or promotion, including such use at NAIA events.

IMPORTANT DATES

2022-23 SOFTBALL SPORT CALENDAR

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| DECEMBER 7-10 | NFCA Convention – San Antonio, TX |
| DECEMBER 8 | NAIA-Softball Coaches Association Annual Business Meeting, San Antonio, TX |
| JANUARY 11 | Softball preseason rating of top 25 teams |
| JANUARY 15 | Deadline for Facility Certification |
| MARCH 8 | First Softball regular season rating – Available at www.naia.org <i>Subsequent Dates – March 22, April 5, April 19, May 3 (Final)</i> |
| APRIL 14 | DEADLINE to submit bids to host Softball National Championship Opening Rounds |
| APRIL 15 | DEADLINE – Submitting Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes and Scholar Team Award Nominations in NAIAHelp |
| MAY 1 | RELEASE of the 10 NAIA Softball National Championship Opening Round Host Sites |
| MAY 8 | DEADLINE for completion of conference/CAC/Unaffiliated group qualifying tournaments |
| MAY 9 | RELEASE – Qualifiers and Bracket for Softball National Championship Opening Round |
| MAY 10 | RECEIPT DEADLINE to submit completed softball all-conference/CAC/Unaffiliated group teams to NAIA National Office |
| MAY 15-17 | NAIA SOFTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP OPENING ROUND TOURNAMENTS |
| MAY 25-31 | 40th ANNUAL NAIA SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES – COLUMBUS, GA |
| JUNE 7 | RELEASE of All-America Teams |
| JUNE 21 | RELEASE of NAIA National Softball Coach of the Year |
| JULY 1 | DEADLINE – Submitting Hall of Fame Nominations to NAIA National Office |

FIVE-YEAR CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR

| | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Conference Tournament Deadline | May 8 | May 6 | May 5 | May 4 | May 10 |
| Opening Round | May 15-17 | May 13-15 | May 12-14 | May 11-13 | May 17-19 |
| World Series | May 25 – 31 | May 23 – 29 | May 22 – 28 | May 21 – 27 | May 27 – June 2 |

National Championship Website – [Click Here](#)

PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS

PLAYING RULES

The official rules used to govern all NAIA affiliated fast-pitch programs (including regular season, conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independent Institutions)/unaffiliated group tournaments and World Series) are the official rules of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) with the following modifications approved by the NAIA-SCA:

1. **Outfield Fence Distance-** Outfield fence distance shall be 190-225 feet with the recommendation of 200 feet down the lines and 225 in centerfield for all NAIA conference/CAC/unaffiliated group and world series competition.
2. There shall be no time limit or tiebreaker rule used during NAIA postseason play. It may be used during the regular season.
3. The NAIA will adhere to the NCAA approved bat list found at <http://www.ncaa.org/playingrules>
5. The Official Softball of the NAIA is the Rawlings NAIAFP which is the .47 core.

Official rulebooks can be downloaded or purchased through the NCAA website at www.ncaapublications.com.

GAME UMPIRES

The Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Commissioner shall assign umpires for Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group tournament games. Compensation is the responsibility of the host institution or Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group.

OFFICIAL BALL

The official ball for all NAIA conference/CAC/unaffiliated group and World Series competition is the Rawlings NAIAFB (.47 core). The NAIA will ship Rawlings softballs, with the appropriate NAIA logo for exclusive use in each conference/CAC/unaffiliated group tournament game. The NAIA strongly recommends the use of the Rawlings NAIAFB for all regular season play.

SEASON RECORDS

Win-loss records for all member institutions participating in softball shall include ONLY those games played against a varsity program from an accredited, upper-level, degree-granting institution, and SHALL NOT include games against junior colleges, clubs, foreign (Canada excluded) or military teams.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE/TOBACCO POLICY

The use of alcohol, tobacco or tobacco products is not permitted by participants, coaches, cheerleaders, trainers, game administrators, or officials in the playing areas during all NAIA sanctioned competition and practices for such competition. The institution's coaching staff, event games committee, administrator or host site coordinator (as applicable) shall enforce this policy through the following steps: On the first offense, the individual(s) and team shall receive an official warning; A second offense will cause expulsion from the practice, game, tournament or event. Member institutions are strongly encouraged to adopt this policy for all regular season practice and competition.

CONDUCT IN COMPETITION

EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

An ejection is an action enforced in conjunction with competition by a game umpire consistent with the playing rules in that sport. Ejections are not subject to appeal. Some sport rules allow protests through an official process outlined in each sport rule book.

Ejection reports must be completed by the NAIA game umpire ejecting a student-athlete or coach and the Athletic Director of the ejected student-athlete or coach. 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 VI, 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.

If a suspension is mandated by an NAIA bylaw it may be appealed starting with the Conference/CAC Commissioner. 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 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 competition venue the day of the contest or communicate with any team personnel or game umpires the day of the contest. The student-athlete/coach will be normally 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.

Softball sport rule: An ejected player may remain in the dugout but shall not remain on the playing field or communicate with opponents or umpires. Ejected nonplaying personnel must leave the playing field, dugout and other team areas and be out of sight and sound. Out of sight and sound means unable to view the remainder of the contest and the umpires cannot hear any additional comments. In either case, they shall not communicate (visually, electronically or verbally) further with the teams or umpires.

Note: Suspended student-athletes shall not be in uniform, shall not be allowed in any team area from the time umpires enter the field until after they leave the field, and shall not perform any team duty while serving a suspension. Suspended coaches and other non-playing personnel shall not communicate with any umpire or be in the playing facility once pregame activities have started until the umpires leave the field of play at the conclusion of the game(s).

Exception: Players suspended under Rule 13.3 may be restricted to the dugout if the suspension is to be served while the team is on the road and no other suitable supervisory options are available.

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).

POSTSEASON COMPETITION

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

OFFICIAL PARTY

Postseasons rosters will continue to be filled out via the SIDHelp admin website at www.naiasports.org/admin. You must have an account in order to fill out a postseason roster as the forms are no longer available through coaches' manuals. If you don't have an account, please sign up and create your own. Your access will be granted (usually) within 24 hours.

Once you log-in, please follow these instructions:

1. Start at www.naiasports.org/admin.
2. There will be a section titled "Forms and Rosters". Click on the link "Official Postseason Rosters".
3. Complete both roster forms.
4. Complete the "Quick Facts" section.

The maximum number of eligible players in uniform is 20.

You are required to carry a copy of your roster to the site of the conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly Association of Independent Institutions/unaffiliated group and national tournaments, and presented to the tournament supervisor prior to that institution's participation in the tournament.

The official party for each team participating in postseason play is 27 with up to 20 players in uniform, five additional dugout personnel and up to two athletic trainers. A maximum of 27 credentials may be issued per team.

If you have trouble with the on-line nomination form, please contact the NAIA Department of Athletics Communications, Brad Cygan (bcygan@naia.org). Any other general questions related to the official postseason rosters, please contact the Sport Manager.

1. A copy of this roster MUST be hand-carried to the site of the conference/independent and national tournaments and presented to the supervisor (conference/independent volleyball chair for conference/independent tournament, and NAIA Site Supervisor/Tournament Committee for the world series) 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 20 players is 30 minutes prior to the first game of any conference/CAC/affiliated group tournament, or at the coaches meeting of the World Series. Once the tournament begins, no player may play that is not on the official roster.

ROSTER CHANGES

A player may be replaced on the official roster between the Affiliated Conference/CAC/affiliated Group tournament and the NAIA Softball Championship Opening Round, as well as between the NAIA Softball Championship Opening Round and the NAIA Softball World Series by any eligible player whose name is included on the NAIA Official Eligibility Form for the current season. Again, 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.

UNIFORMS

Teams must have both light and dark colored uniforms available. Home teams generally wear light colored uniforms and visitors wear dark colored uniforms.

EXPENSES

Each participating teams 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 Opening Rounds, must attend all event functions including, but not limited to – Parade of Champions, coaches meetings, Opening Round celebrations and Champions of 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 (Opening Round or World Series). This person shall accept the responsibility for the conduct of his 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 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 scoreboard via the Presto Stats Web-Sync feature within 24 hours of the game/session.

POSTSEASON PLAY

QUALIFYING POLICIES

The following policies are in effect to formulate conference/independent/unaffiliated tournament plans.

1. Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independents)/unaffiliated group tournament plans MUST be approved by the Conference/CAC/unaffiliated group Executive Committee and be submitted to the NAIA Department of Championships by February 1.
2. The NAIA Department of Championships shall establish conference/CAC/unaffiliated group tournament plans in accordance with policies established by the National Administrative Council (NAC) for those conferences/CAC/unaffiliated groups that do not meeting the above deadlines.
3. Only those institutions having declared their "intent to participate" in the championship event for softball are eligible to participate in the conference/CAC/unaffiliated group tournaments.
4. All member institutions in good standing must have the opportunity to qualify for postseason play. Conference/CAC/unaffiliated group tournament policies may not create undue hardship on a member institution financially, philosophically, or with regard to any other requirements.
5. The following guidelines are to be used in the development of tournament plans:
 - a. Consideration may be given to any one or a combination of the following criteria in selecting teams for conference/independent/regional championship events:
 - i) an approved rating system
 - ii) regular season overall win-loss record
 - iii) overall win-loss record against NAIA teams within the conference
 - iv) any system approved by the Conference/CAC/unaffiliated group executive committee and/or the NAIA Department of Championships
6. Institutions must play a minimum of 16 contests against upper-level, degree-granting institutions in the United States and/or Canada to be eligible for NAIA postseason competition.
7. Affiliated conference/CAC/unaffiliated groups which determine a champion without conducting a championship event MUST certify that the representative complies with all tournament policies.
8. When a conference/CAC/unaffiliated championship event is conducted and a team champion is determined and subsequently withdraws and/or is declared ineligible for the next round of the World Series, it is the prerogative of the conference/CAC/unaffiliated executive committee to identify its representative.
9. Exceptions to the above policies require a written request and rationale from the conference/CAC/unaffiliated executive committee to the NAIA Department of Championships 30 days prior to the deadline for tournament plans. The NAIA Department of Championships shall submit the appeals and rationale along with their recommendation to the National Administrative Council.
10. The NAIA National Administrative Council shall review these policies annually with the NAIA Department of Championships and revise policies when applicable.

AFFILIATED CONFERENCE/CAC/UNAFFILIATED GROUP TOURNAMENTS

The Affiliated Conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly Association of Independents/Unaffiliated Group softball tournaments are planned and administered by the Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Softball Committee under the leadership of their respective softball chair and subject to approval of all standards and conditions as may be prescribed by the Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Executive Committee/Commissioner.

All games must be held at an approved site and are to be played on an "OFFICIAL" softball field as defined by current NCAA rules (or NAIA-SCA approved exceptions).

Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group tournament plans for all spring sports must be submitted to the National Office no later than **February 1** of each year.

DATES AND SITES

Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group tournament games must be held at an approved home site of one of the participating institutions, unless a request for a neutral site has been made by the Affiliated Conference/CAC/Unaffiliated Group Commissioner(s) and approved by the NAIA Championships Department.

Conference/Group tournaments MUST be completed no later than May 7, 2023

TEAM QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION

In order to qualify for a postseason tournament, a team must play a minimum of 16 games between January 1 and the start of the postseason tournament.

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

All national qualifying tournaments are under the direct control and supervision of the leadership of the individual conference/CAC/unaffiliated groups. It is recommended that the conference/CAC/unaffiliated commissioner/president or a representative of the conference/CAC/unaffiliated executive committee be present at all tournament games as the tournament supervisor.

If available, the respective softball chair will serve as administrator for the conference/CAC/unaffiliated group softball tournaments in cooperation with the host site athletics director. When not available, the host athletics director, or a designated person, may serve in this capacity.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP OPENING ROUND

The NAIA Softball World Series Opening Round tournaments are planned by the NAIA in conjunction with the Opening Round Host Coordinator and the designated NAIA Site Supervisor. A complete Opening Round Host Manual is available for viewing at www.naia.org/host.

DATES AND SITES

Dates and deadlines for Opening Round play can be found in the Important Dates section of this manual. The deadline for prospective NAIA Softball Championship Opening Round Tournament hosts to submit an official bid is **April 14**. Announcement of the ten National Championship Opening Round hosts will be on **April 26**.

If a designated Opening Round host institution fails to qualify either automatically or as an at-large selection via the national selection committee, then it will be given a host berth and designated as an at-large qualifier.

Listed below are other host guidelines:

- In order to be eligible for a guarantee to host an opening-round tournament, a rights fee of \$6,000 will be paid to the NAIA. Rights fees will be used to pay for travel costs for the neutral-site supervisor and assist with reimbursement to traveling teams in opening-round and final site tournaments.
- Opening round hosts will purchase and present a trophy to the opening round winning team. The National Office will be responsible for ordering such awards for the Opening Round host.
- There is a designated host site for each NAIA Softball World Series Opening Round Tournament. A host school qualifying for the tournament will play at home; provided the host school's field meets the facility hosting standards.
- Bids to host an NAIA Softball World Series Opening Round Tournament will be open to any NAIA institution, conference/CAC/unaffiliated group and CVB/Sports Commission.
- Certified umpires will be assigned by the host conference/CAC/unaffiliated group based on criteria set by the NAC for opening-round tournaments. Payment of officials and game operations costs will be host responsibilities.
- Pairings for Opening Round tournaments will be based upon the following prioritized criteria:
 1. Geographical location of teams
 2. Financial considerations
 3. Final rating/seeding

Every attempt will be made to not pair conference/CAC/unaffiliated group teams for opening round tournaments; however, based upon pairings and selection criteria above, this may be unavoidable.

ADMINISTRATION

The 10 NAIA Softball World Series Opening Round Tournaments are under the direct supervision of the designated NAIA Site Supervisor; who in turn works with the Host Site Coordinator in the overall administration of the event.

All opening round tournaments must be double-elimination to determine which team will advance to the final site. If necessary, the following Inclement Weather Policy will be used at all Opening Round tournaments:

1. If two days are available, the tournament will be played with a 4-2 (3) format.
2. If one day is available, the tournament will revert to a single-elimination tournament (games #1, #2, #3 in bracket).

If the tournament is not completed, the following policy will be used at all opening round tournaments:

1. If less than two games are completed, the #1 seed will be declared the champion.
2. If after games #1 and #2 are completed, the champion will be the highest-seeded undefeated team
3. If game #7 is needed but cannot be played, the champion will be the winner of game #6.

EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO COMPLETE THE OPENING ROUND TOURNAMENT ON THE FIELD. The NAIA Site Supervisor (in consultation with the tournament committee) is the final authority on implementation and administration of the inclement weather policy.

The designated NAIA Site Supervisor must be present throughout the opening round tournament and serve as the NAIA representative and tournament chair. The site supervisor coordinates all activities at the tournament site and works with the host site coordinator in implementing national policies in the conduct of the tournament.

The NAIA National Office will provide World Series certificates of participation and an individual Champion of Character Award to the opening round teams.

TEAM QUALIFICATION, SELECTION AND SEEDING

The NAIA Softball World Series is a 40-team tournament featuring 10 opening rounds sites with four (4) teams at each site. Each opening round site will conduct a 4-team double elimination tournament.

The 10 opening round winners advance to the final site for a 10-team double elimination tournament. Opening round team qualification, at-large selection and seeding information is listed below:

- 32 automatic berths for affiliated conferences/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly Association of Independent Institutions/unaffiliated groups
- 8 at-large selection
- Conferences and CAC will receive one berth per six and two berths per ten teams.
- The 40 qualifying teams will be seeded by the NAIA Softball National Selection Committee and assigned to an opening round site as follows:
 1. Geographical location of teams
 2. Financial considerations
 3. Competitive balance
- Every effort will be made to keep seeds #1 through #10 in separate opening round sites.
- The championship field will NOT be reseeded between the conclusion of the opening round and final site.

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

- a. A written appeal citing the specific NAIA policies and/or procedures that have been misapplied must be submitted to the NAIA National Office - Department of Championships within 24 hours (or noon (central time) 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.
- b. Once an appeal has been submitted a response will be provided within 24 hours from receipt of appeal.
- c. Appeals must be submitted 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 national oversight committee will review ratings to prevent any ratings process violations or unethical use of the ratings process.

TEAM TRAVEL/REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES

The National Administrative Council and the Council of Presidents have approved a flat fee reimbursement rate for traveling teams in Opening Round competition. For those institutions that require air travel to an Opening Round, institutions must at least secure a quote through Short's Travel to be eligible for any Opening Round travel reimbursements. Please contact Short's Travel (844-619-7044) 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 Softball National Championship Opening Round.



NAIA WORLD SERIES

DATES AND SITES

The NAIA World Series will be played at South Commons Softball Complex in Columbus, Georgia, from **May 25 – May 31, 2023**.

ADMINISTRATION

The National Championship is planned and implemented by the NAIA Championships Department under the guidelines and standards established by the NAIA-Softball Coaches Association (NAIA-SCA) and approved by the NAIA National Administrative Council (NAC).

Administration of the National Championship is under the direct supervision of a four-member Games Committee, which is composed of the officers of the NAIA-SCA.

Any member(s) of the Games Committee must relinquish their position on the committee if they have a team competing in the Softball World Series. The NAIA Softball Sport Manager will appoint an alternate(s) in these situations with approval from the NAIA-SCA Executive Committee.

The NAIA arranges for a fully staffed athletic training tent at the National Championship, which is administered by certified host athletic trainers and additional medical personnel.

QUALIFICATION, SEEDING OF TEAMS AND TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The NAIA Softball World Series (final site) is a 10-team, double elimination format featuring the Opening Round winners.

The 40-team national tournament is seeded by the NAIA Softball National Selection Committee. The final site bracket will not be reseeded after the opening rounds.

GAME TIMES

The host organization, the NAIA Championships Department and the Games Committee jointly determine game times for all games. An institution will not play more than one game a day unless weather becomes a factor in completing the championship on the scheduled completion date. There will be a minimum of three hours between published game times.

TEAM TRAVEL/REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES

The National Administrative Council and the Council of Presidents have approved a flat fee reimbursement rate for traveling teams in Opening Round competition. For those institutions that require air travel to the World Series, institutions must at least secure a quote through Short's Travel to be eligible for any Opening Round travel reimbursements. Please contact Short's Travel (844-619-7044) 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 Softball National Championship Opening Round.

TEAM HOUSING

All participating teams **MUST** stay at the designated hotels. Failure to do so would make a team **INELIGIBLE** for **participation and reimbursement**. Reimbursement for lodging begins on the Thursday prior to the start of play and includes the evening of the team's elimination from the World Series.

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 – Parade of Champions, 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 World Series, it will be up to the discretion of the NAIA Sport Manager and the Games Committee to make changes to the World Series bracket to accommodate such delays.

It is the responsibility of the host Media Director/Athletic Trainer at NAIA Championship events to determine when an event should be suspended and when it is safe to return to play as the result of severe weather. The AT is to notify the NAIA Championship Manager who, in collaboration with the appropriate personnel (i.e. Games Committee) will implement the predetermined action plan for both player and spectator safety.

RELATED INFORMATION

Meeting - There will be a pre-tournament meeting of all coaches prior to the start of the tournament. This meeting shall serve as an informational forum, team check in and will include a briefing by a representative of the game officials. Coaches are required to attend this meeting.

Banquet - There will be a meal function on the evening prior to the beginning of play to recognize the participating teams and NAIA Hall of Fame inductees. All teams are required to be in attendance at this function. Each participating team shall be given 23 complimentary banquet tickets. Additional tickets are available for purchase, but must be paid for in advance.

Home Team Determination – The home team will occupy the third base dugout and wear a uniform color of their choosing. The visiting team will occupy the first base dugout and must wear a contrasting uniform top. The committee will resolve any conflict in the selection of uniforms. As a reminder, when teams play back-to-back games, they must be prepared to change uniforms, if necessary. The NAIA softball committee must approve determination of uniform colors. Noncompliance with this policy may result in misconduct as outlined in the Softball Pre-Championship Manual.

1. The games committee shall designate as home team for the first and second game for any team the institution that has been the highest ranked team from the most current NAIA poll (regionals and finals are considered separately). Subsequently the committee will designate which institution is home from the following criteria.
2. If both teams have played and the two teams have been home team either an equal or an unequal number of times but visiting team an equal number of times, the team that has been the home least often shall have the choice of being the home team.
3. If both teams have played and the two teams have been home team either an equal or an unequal number of times but visiting team an unequal number of times, the team that has been the visitor most often shall have the choice of being the home team.
4. If two teams have been both home team and visiting team an equal number of times, the higher ranked team shall have the choice of being the home team. Unless paragraph 5 applies.
5. If the two teams previously met, the visitor in the initial game shall be the home team in the second game. Unless paragraph 6 applies.
6. If games between the same teams are back to back, the home team in the previous game shall be the visitor in the game regardless of the number of times either team have been home or visitors.
7. If the preceding formula does not prevail, the higher seeded team shall have the choice of being home team or visitors.

Opening Ceremonies – If applicable, all teams are required to participate in this function. Teams failing to participate are subject to forfeiture of any travel reimbursement.

Awards Ceremonies - Immediately following the championship game, awards will be presented to the top four teams, All-Tournament Team, Most Valuable Player, and Player/Pitcher of the Year. Teams receiving awards are required to attend.

Honorary Coaches - An "Honorary Coach" program has been organized for the national tournament. Local businesses and civic groups are obtained to serve as local hosts for each of the teams. Honorary coaches sit with

their teams at the banquet, sit on the benches during games, march in the parade of champions and are generally available to assist teams and make them feel welcome while at the championship.

Notice for Fans - All ticket holders voluntarily assume all risks of property loss and personal injury arising during its use. Management may revoke the license and eject or refuse entry to the holder by refunding the stated purchase price. The holder agrees that City of Gulf Shores and its agents, the NAIA and its agents, and the participants are not liable for injuries resulting from attendance at this event. The holder agrees that alcoholic beverages, in any form, shall not be allowed to be sold, dispersed or brought into the public area of this event.

Radio/Web Blogging and Television - The broadcast of any tournament game is governed by the broadcast policies as printed in the NAIA Policy Handbook. This includes audio broadcasts and video broadcasts through conventional outlets and new media avenues.

Softball World Series Rights Fees (rights fees to be paid PRIOR to the start of the game):

| | RADIO | TELEVISION | WEB BLOGGING** |
|----------------|---|---|----------------|
| Commercial | \$150/game (non-exclusive) + \$75 per* | \$500/day (live) \$250/day (delayed) | \$75 |
| Non-Commercial | \$100/game (non-exclusive) + \$25 per * | \$250/day (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 an opponent.

(Third party carriers other than school and originating radio station of streaming audio on Web sites assessed the additional station feed charge.)

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

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.

In order to be eligible for reimbursement, all schools are expected to at least receive a quote from Short's Travel.

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.

MASTER'S TRANSPORTATION

Master's Transportation is the official provider of all shuttles/buses for your sale, lease and rental needs. Please contact Matthew Winston at **(816) 651-7121** or Matthew@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 POLICY PLAY

As a matter of policy, NAIA Opening 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, 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](#)

COACHES ASSOCIATION

A. NAIA-SOFTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION (NAIA-SCA)

The NAIA-SCA is an association composed of softball coaches whose institutions are members in good standing. This body can affect policy relative to the NAIA softball championship series through 1) coaches membership approval as well as approval by the National Administrative Council (NAC).

The annual business meeting of the NAIA-SCA shall be held in conjunction with the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) Convention. All NAIA coaches are encouraged to attend. Agenda items may be submitted by any NAIA coach and should be sent to the association's current president three weeks prior to the annual business meeting. All agenda items must be given in writing as a motion to be eligible for a second, before discussion can occur at the business meeting.

Motions receiving a first and a second will appear on a mail ballot sent to all NAIA softball coaches.

B. PAST PRESIDENTS

| | | | |
|---------|--|---------|--|
| 1981-83 | Marry Nutter, Pittsburg State (Kan.) | 2005-06 | Tracy Gastineau, Wm Woods (Mo.) |
| 1983-84 | Hank Dicke, Kearney State (Neb.) | 2001-02 | Wendy Spratt, Columbia (Mo.) |
| 1984-85 | Bonnie Kock, Mesa (Colo.) | 2002-03 | Mike Renney, Simon Fraser (B.C.) |
| 1985-86 | Laurel Sue Smith, Salem (W.Va.) | 2003-04 | Mary-Ellen Hall, Houston Baptist (Texas) |
| 1986-87 | Linda Draft, Wisconsin-Parkside | 2006-07 | Wendy Spratt, Columbia (Mo.) |
| 1987-88 | Judy Sherman, Pacific (Ore.) | 2007-08 | Myra Minuskin, St. Xavier (Ill.) |
| 1988-90 | Jim Zeleznak, St. Mary's (Texas) | 2008-09 | Keith Kramme, Midland (Neb.) |
| 1990-91 | Doug Palmer, West Florida | 2009-10 | Terri Knecht, SCAD Savannah (Ga.) |
| 1994-95 | Jeanne Raudensky, Ohio Dominican | 2010-11 | Hal Wynn, Faulkner (Ala.) |
| 1991-92 | Ralph Weekly, Pacific Lutheran (Wash.) | 2012-13 | Lou Yacinich, Grand View (Iowa) |
| 1992-93 | Lynn Adams, Greenville (Ill.) | 2013-14 | Pat Reardon, Central Methodist (Mo.) |
| 1993-94 | Judy Sherman, Pacific (Ore.) | 2014-16 | Laura Klutsarits, Siena Heights (Mich.) |
| 1995-96 | Phil McSpadden, Oklahoma City | 2016-17 | Steve Babinski, Indiana Wesleyan |
| 1996-98 | Mary Ann Jennings, Mobile (Ala.) | 2017-18 | Mike Christner, William Penn (Iowa) |
| 1998-99 | Lisa Sweany, Tir-State (Ind.) | 2018-19 | Tony Segovia, McPherson (Kan.) |
| 1999-00 | Dave Hulsart, Northwestern (Iowa) | 2019-20 | Kathleen Ihlenburg, Georgia Gwinnett |
| 2000-01 | Wendy Spratt, Columbia (Mo.) | 2020-21 | Laura Klutsarits, Siena Heights (Mich.) |
| 2004-05 | Deb Thompson, Spring Arbor (Mich.) | 2021-22 | Kat Ihlenburg, Georgia Gwinnett |

C. NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION

The National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) offers a variety of services and professional opportunities for coaches at all levels. Please visit the NFCA Website for specific membership information.

D. NAIA-SCA 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.



2022-23 NAIA-SCA Officers

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---|
| President: | Steve Babinski | steve.babinski@indwes.edu Indiana Wesleyan University |
| First Vice President: | Paul Hunt | phunt@benedictine.edu Benedictine College |
| Second Vice President: | Laura Klutsarits | lkutsar@sienaheights.edu Siena Heights University |
| Secretary: | Michala Cimino | michala.cimino@bellevue.edu Bellevue University |
| Past President: | Kat Ihlenburg | kihlenburg@ggc.edu Georgia Gwinnett College |
| National Office Liaison: | Brian Lewis | blewis@naia.org NAIA National Office 816-595-8196 |

NAIA-SCA Constitution

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Softball Coaches Association (NAIA-SCA).

PURPOSE

1. To foster and encourage the playing of fastpitch softball in accordance with the highest traditions of intercollegiate competition.
2. To establish and maintain rules of play and high standards of amateurism and good sportsmanship.
3. To encourage through softball the development of health, character, and responsible citizenship.
4. To develop within coaches a sense of responsibility to develop, promote, maintain, and conduct the game of softball.
5. To initiate, conduct, and supervise programs on the conference, regional and national level.

MEMBERSHIP

1. Active membership of this Association shall be comprised of fastpitch softball coaches who are actively engaged in coaching softball at an NAIA educational institution.
2. There shall be two classes of membership:
 - Active
 - Honorary
3. Active membership shall consist of coaches who are actively engaged in coaching a softball team of a member institution of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.
4. Honorary membership shall be conferred upon any individual who, because of his/her contributions to the game of softball, shall be nominated by the Executive Committee and elected by a majority vote of the Association's active membership. The honorary member shall have all of the privileges of an active member.
5. All members shall have the privilege of speaking from the floor at meetings. In voting matters, each institution shall have one vote.
6. The activities of this Association shall be in accordance with the philosophy, aims, and objectives of the NAIA, under the jurisdiction of the NAIA National Administrative Council.

OFFICERS

1. The officers of the Association shall consist of:
 - President
 - First Vice President
 - Second Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Ad Hoc - Past President
2. The officers of the Association shall be nominated at the business meeting of the Association and elected by mail ballot.
3. Each officer shall be elected for a maximum four year term beginning with the position of Secretary and then rotating upward one year until Presidency is served.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICERS

1. The President shall preside at the annual meeting of the Association and at all other meetings as deemed necessary. He/she shall appoint committee chairpersons and committee members, whose appointments are not otherwise provided by the Constitution. The individual serving in the role of President for the NAIA-SCA during the current academic year will also be a member of the Council for Student-Athletes (CSA). This role on the CSA is a two-year responsibility, regardless of their term lengths as an officer of the NAIA-SCA.
2. The First Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties and shall exercise all the power of the President in his/her absence. He/she shall serve as ratings coordinator for the top 25 weekly ratings throughout the season. He/she shall work with the umpire-in-chief and the sport manager from the National Office to develop a list of umpires eligible for national championships. He/she shall also perform such duties as the President may designate.
3. The Second Vice President shall assist the President and the First Vice President in the performance of their duties and shall exercise all the powers of the First Vice President in his/her absence. He/she shall serve as coordinator of the top 25 pre-season poll. He/she shall also perform such duties as the President may designate.
4. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping accurate records, and keeping the minutes. He/she shall also serve as the All-America Scholar-Athlete Coordinator. He/she shall perform such other duties from time to time as designated by the President.

COMMITTEES

1. The Association shall have a Hall of Fame Committee. The chairperson will be the past president.
2. A NFCA liaison will be elected by the NFCA members of the NAIA-SCA to serve a three-year term.
3. Vacancies for any cause on any committee shall be filled by an appointment from the chairperson for the remainder of the term.
4. All members of the Association are eligible to serve on any committee as deemed necessary by the President.
5. A four-member tournament committee shall be composed of the following:
 - a. officers of the Association
 - b. appointed coaches not participating in the tournament
6. If an officer's team qualifies for the national tournament, an active member of the Association will be appointed by the officers to replace them.
7. The highest ranking officer shall serve as the chairperson of the Tournament Committee.

MEETINGS

1. There shall be one annual meeting of this Association held in conjunction with the National Fastpitch Coaches Association convention.
3. A tournament coaches meeting will be held prior to the start of the national tournament to review all policies and procedures associated with tournament play.
2. The President may call any other special meeting deemed necessary by a majority vote of the Association's active membership.

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by mail ballot by a majority of votes cast of the members. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the President prior to or during the annual business meeting held in conjunction with the National Fastpitch Coaches Association convention.

EXECUTIVE REGULATION

1. Order of Business Procedures at all meetings of the Association shall be governed by "Robert's Rules of Order."
2. Agenda for Meeting. If any member of this Association wishes a proposal/topic placed on the agenda for the annual meeting, he/she must submit, in writing prior to or during the annual business meeting.
3. Regulations Governing Conduct of the NAIA Championship. The Association recognized that the NAIA National Softball Championship is under the jurisdiction of the NAIA and shall be supervised by the Executive Committee of the NAIA. Also, it recognizes that the championship is subject to all regulations governing conduct and eligibility of participants as set forth by the NAIA.

RATINGS MANUAL

GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. **Overall philosophy:** Sport ratings serve as the overall NAIA publicity of their sports programs. The ratings process is a complex one and every step is vital to the integrity and accuracy of all ratings. The NAIA National Office appreciates the knowledge and time commitment put forth by all members of the ratings committee, conference oversight committee, and national oversight committee and conference commissioners. The entire ratings process is constructed by membership, specifically the National Administrative Council (NAC). If a rater is interested in the process and wishes to make changes, each sport Coaches' Association has the authority to propose changes at their annual sport coaches' business meeting.
- B. **Frequency of Ratings:** The NAIA releases a preseason rating on October 31, 2022. NAIA Softball ratings are conducted on a bi-weekly basis beginning on March 8, 2023.
- C. **Dates of Ratings:** October 31 (preseason), March 8, March 22, April 5, April 19, and May 3 (final).
- D. **Total Number of Raters:** The rating committee is comprised of 19 raters. Each rater is expected to submit both the conference/group and national ballots. Each affiliated conference/unaffiliated group and the Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly Association of Independent Institutions) have one rater.
- E. **Ongoing Bi-Weekly Ratings Deadlines | Weekly Rating Schedule:**

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Wednesday night / Thursday morning | 12:01 a.m. (CDT) | SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin) system opens up for the new ratings period |
| By Monday | Noon (CDT) | Submit conference/group ratings using SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin). |
| Monday | 12:01 p.m. (CDT) | National voting open in SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin). |
| Tuesday | 10 a.m. (CDT) | National ballots due in SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin). |
| Tuesday | 10 a.m. to noon (CDT) | National Oversight reviews grid and processes rationale requests within SIDHelp |
| Tuesday | 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (CDT) | Raters available for rationale requests - raters should have email access during this time. If raters are unable to access e-mail, they must notify the national office prior to submitting conference/CAC/unaffiliated group ratings. |
| Wednesday | 10 a.m. (CDT) | Release of national rating on-line at www.NAIA.org . |

- F. A modified bi-weekly conference and national rating will be conducted beginning with the preseason poll.
- G. The ratings are compiled from the balloting of the 19-member rating committee.
- H. Three conference calls will be conducted during the season to exchange information. Dates and times of these calls and more information will be sent by the NAIA National Office.
- I. Roll call will be taken at the start and ending of the call. Raters are required to be present during the entirety of each conference call. Failure to be present during roll call will result in a strike.
- J. There is a mandatory preseason (educational) conference call and webinar. Each rater must have computer access during this call. The national office will facilitate this training session and review SIDHelp during this call and computer access is mandatory. Instructions and the date will be sent to all raters at least one week prior to the call.
- K. If the conference/group rater cannot participate on a scheduled ratings conference call (either during the season or the preseason webinar) they must do one of the following:
 - a. Provide a written conference/group report to the NAIA National Office prior to the conference call or
 - b. Find a replacement from their conference/group oversight committee to represent the group on the call.

- i. If neither of those 2 items occurs, then no teams in that specific conference/group are eligible for ratings that week and the rater is penalized for not participating on the conference call.
- L. The ratings national grid (a spreadsheet that shows the top 30 rating and votes from each national rater) will be sent to all national raters after the rating is posted on-line and released to the media. The information included in this grid is **confidential** and raters must not share this grid with anyone.
- M. If the grid is shared via any electronic means by the rater, that rater is removed from their position for the rest of the year.
- N. Coaches are permitted to send information to their respective conference/group rater only. If, as a rater, you are receiving correspondence from coaches outside your conference/group, please contact the NAIA National Office.
- O. If information is inaccurate on any conference/group/national rating, here is the process for any school administrator to take:
 - a. For incorrect information on the conference/group rating (such as win-loss record; scores), contact the respective rater.
 - b. For incorrect information on the national rating, contact both the respective rater and the NAIA National Office.
 - c. For concerns regarding the conference/group rating, contact the respective rater and the conference/group commissioner.
 - d. For concerns regarding the national rating, contact your rater, a National Oversight Committee member and the NAIA National Office.
- P. Any questions regarding information in this manual should be directed to the NAIA National Office.

B. RATINGS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- A. Both the conference/group and national ballots need to be submitted in SIDHelp (<http://www.naiasports.org/admin/>) by their appropriate deadlines.
- B. Each rater submits their conference/group rating, which is then used by all national raters to compile a Top 30 national ballot.
- C. Raters can rate any team on their conference/group ballot and any number of teams that merit top-30 national rating consideration. Teams not listed in a conference/group ballot are ineligible for that rating. Here is recommended ratings criteria, created by the NAC:
 - a. If a sport-specific ratings committee does not have established group and national ratings criteria that has been approved by the NAC, then the NAC recommends that each sport ratings group uses the following (non-weighted) criteria when compiling both conference/group and national ratings:
 - i. Overall win-loss record
 - ii. Head-to-head results (with most recent result taking precedence)
 - iii. Win-loss record vs. common opponents
 - iv. Win-loss record vs. nationally-rated teams
 - v. Strength of schedule (based on the NAC-approved strength of schedule component per sport)
- D. Raters are allowed one tie of only two teams at any position in their conference/group rating.
- E. Raters are not allowed any ties to their conference/group rating in the final rating. You must use the tie-breaking criteria, found in Section H, for the final rating and breaking ties.
- F. When a rater submits a tie in any conference/group rating, the rater is required to submit rationale pertaining to those ties. That rationale is a programming requirement in SIDHelp.
- G. Conference/group ratings and national ratings received after the deadline will not be included in the officially published Top 25 rating.
- H. In order for any team to be eligible for ratings, all contest results must be reported by that institution to the NAIA Scoreboard (www.naiasports.org/admin/) within 24 hours of completion. Institutions failing to report results **for two consecutive weeks, or four total weeks** during the season will not be eligible for ratings for the remainder of the season.
- I. Campaigning for ratings votes for one's own team shall be considered inappropriate and unethical. Campaigning shall be construed as using fax, mail, e-mail or telephone to contact a coach or group of coaches to solicit support for one's team or players. Organized public relations campaigns dedicated to that same end shall also be deemed unethical.
- J. For the postseason poll, each rater is expected to consider the entire season for each team and not just take into account postseason play.
- K. Follow this step-by-step process on a bi-weekly basis (see deadlines in Section A):

1. **Conference/Group Oversight submission:** Prior to conference/group rating submission deadline, the rater is required to share their conference/group rating with their Conference Oversight Committee for review. This must occur prior to official submission of conference/group rating in SIDHelp.
2. **Conference/Group rating submission:** Submission of the conference/group rating is done in SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin).
 - a. Raters are allowed to make an unlimited amount of changes to the conference/group rating in SIDHelp prior to the submission deadline. You can save your work in SIDHelp and come back to make changes prior to the deadline.
 - b. Conference/group ballots received after the deadline will not be included in rating.
 - c. The following information must be included for every team on the conference/group rating:
 - i. Team's overall win/loss/tie record
 - ii. Result of each contest for the rating period – win/loss and the score
 - iii. Site and opponent
 - iv. National rank of opponent (including non-NAIA opponents)
 - v. Opponent affiliation, if not an NAIA member institution (NCAA DI, DII, DIII, NCCAA, Other)
 - vi. Team's national rating in the previous week's national poll.
3. **Top 30 national rating submission:** Submission of the Top 30 national rating is done in SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin).
 - a. Raters must vote in rank order specified by each conference/group rater (i.e. the #2-rated team in a conference/group rating cannot be ranked higher than the #1 team in that same conference/group on any national ballot).
 - b. No ties are allowed on national ballots.
 - c. In the event of a tie on the conference/group rating, the national rater has a choice to rate that tied team on the national ballot in the order they deem appropriate, provided the tied teams follow the overall conference/group order. Here is an example: Team A and Team B are tied at #2 from a conference rating. The national rater can choose to rate Team B ahead or behind Team A on their national rating, provided Teams A and B are listed after the #1 team from that conference.
 - d. Raters have one chance to save and submit their national rating in SIDHelp. They are not allowed to save their work half-way through submission to come back to it. It is encouraged to write out your Top 30 on paper and then submit in SIDHelp.
 - e. National ratings received after the deadline will not be included in rating.
 - f. Prior to tabulating each weekly Top 30 rating by the national office, the highest and lowest ratings (a non-rating is a low rating) for each team (including those receiving votes) will be removed and the rating will be recalculated with a bonus rating point added to each team for every ballot (including discounted ballots) that appear on the weekly tabulation. Non-submitted ballots and/or removed ballots are NOT factored into the above tabulations (i.e. a non-submitted ballot cannot serve as a low rating).
 - g. Teams who receive only one point in the national ballot will not be listed in the "Receiving Votes" category of the press release distributed to the public and posted on NAIA.org.
 - h. A rating will not be conducted if 50% of the raters do not submit a national ballot. Ratings that fail to reach the 50% participation standard cannot be delayed or postponed.
4. **National Rating Request for Rationale process:** Raters are expected to be available via email and cell phone during the communicated request for rationale timeline (see deadlines in Section A).
 - a. This step of the process will be done either via email or in SIDHelp and is sport specific.
 - b. The National Office will facilitate this step of the process, which includes the National Oversight Committee.
 - c. If a member of National Oversight requests rationale from a rater, that rater is required to provide detailed written explanation for those team(s) in which rationale is requested.
 - d. Any appeals and the final decision to remove a rater are handled by the National Oversight Committee.
 - e. See "National Oversight Committee" section for the entire National Oversight Committee process.
5. Removal of a rater is authorized when any combination of the following four (4) incidents occur three (3) times during a ratings calendar year:
 - a. Failure to submit a conference/group OR national ballot.
 - b. Failure to respond to a National Oversight rationale request.

- c. Failure to represent conference/group on a rating conference call – preseason webinar or regular-season calls. Roll call will be taken at the start and ending of the call. Raters are required to be present during the entirety of each conference call. Failure to be present during roll call will result in a strike.
 - d. Removal of a conference/group or national rating ballot.
6. Standard protocol to follow when a rater/group is penalized and ultimately loses rating privileges:
 - a. First Offense: Warning letter (e-mail correspondence) sent to rater after first offense/incident (See section above). Respective Conference/group commissioner and national oversight committee copied on all correspondence.
 - b. Second Offense: Warning letter to rater after second offense/incident and the rater is informed that they will lose their national rating privileges following a third offense/incident. The NAIA National Office contacts conference/group commissioner for procedures in submitting conference/group ratings if the affected group loses their rating privileges.
 - c. Third Offense: Rater is removed and conference/group loses national rating privileges after third documented offense. Respective conference/group commissioners and national oversight committee copied on all correspondence.

If a conference/group has its rater removed, that conference/group loses its rater voting privileges for the remainder of the current ratings season. However, the conference/group must still submit a conference/group rating so that teams in the conference/group can receive ratings votes from all other national raters.

C. SELECTION OF RATERS

- A. All raters are selected by their respective conference/group Commissioner. Each Commissioner is required to send both rater and conference/group oversight committee contact information to the NAIA national office via NAIAHelp by Aug. 1 of each year. Each Commissioner establishes appropriate selection criteria and guidelines for their rater.
- B. For the selection of a rater from an Unaffiliated Group, it is the responsibility of all Commissioners within that Group to agree on one rater representing that Group.
- C. It is strongly recommended for the rater to be a current NAIA head coach in that sport.

D. RATER EXPECTATIONS

- A. The NAIA expects every rater to have an unbiased and objective opinion as to conference/group status. Each rater is expected to rate the top-30 teams in the nation, regardless of affiliation (conference/CAC/unaffiliated group).
- B. The NAIA expects every rater to submit requested information by the designated deadlines. Any ratings submitted after the deadline or submission of incomplete ratings will not be counted.
- C. Raters are expected to submit both their conference/group and national ballots, according to the deadlines.
- D. Share your conference/group rating with your Conference Oversight Committee prior to official submission in SIDHelp. Each commissioner assigns the Conference Oversight Committee.
- E. Raters will monitor teams in their weekly conference/group rating to make sure those teams are posting results and updating their win/loss records within 24 hours after each scheduled contest. If the rater finds that a team is NOT reporting scores/updating their record, they must contact the institution (Head Coach and Athletic Director) via email and copy the Conference/Group Commissioner(s) and the NAIA National Office.
- F. Encourage communication amongst coaches within their conference/group. However, it is unacceptable and unethical for coaches to campaign for their school to another conference/group rater.
- G. If a rater is unable to fulfill this commitment, the NAIA National Office must be notified immediately.
- H. Raters are recommended to:
 1. Attend the National Championship
 2. Have consistent exposure to teams in several conferences
 3. Have a willingness to serve
 4. Have the support of the conference/independent sport chair

E. CONTESTS RESULTS & REPORTING PERIOD

- A. The ratings period follows the timeline of Monday through Sunday contests. In cases of bi-weekly ratings, all results from Monday through Sunday of the following week will be considered for that rating period. (i.e. A rating occurs on Tuesday, Nov. 18, contest results will be considered from Monday, Nov. 3 through Sunday, Nov. 16.)

- B. In cases such as a long break (more than 1 week) between the preseason rating and the regular-season #1 rating, all contests during that time frame will be considered. (e.g. in women's volleyball, the preseason rating is August 14 and the regular-season #1 rating is September 11. In that case, all contests through Sunday, Sept. 8 will be used for the first regular-season rating).
- C. In order for any team to be eligible for ratings, all contest results must be reported by that institution to the NAIA Scoreboard (via.naiasports.org/admin/) within 24 hours of completion. Institutions failing to report results for two consecutive weeks, or four total weeks during the season will not be eligible for ratings for the remainder of the season. This policy is a mandate by the NAC and listed in the NAIA official & policy handbook.
- D. Raters and coaches should coordinate with your school administration (such as sports information personnel) to report results using only one of the following methods. Reporting at more than one level can cause previously submitted results to be overwritten.
 - a. School websites that use SIDHelp: Reporting here automatically reports to the conference scoreboard (if the conference uses SID Help) and national scoreboard.
 - b. Conference Websites that use SIDHelp: reporting here automatically reports to the national scoreboard.
 - c. National SID Help website (www.naiasports.com/admin/): report here only if neither the school nor the conference uses SID Help.

F. NATIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

- A. The NAIA National office will work with sport coaching officers to recruit and appoint National Oversight Committee members. The National Oversight Committee will consist of three (3) members:
 - a. A member of the National Administrative Council (NAC)
 - b. Two coaches from appropriate sport with the following criteria:
 - i. One coach must have prior rating experience and can be an active or former coach still involved in the NAIA.
 - ii. One coach must be a current officer in coaches' association
- B. The NAC liaison is an active member of each National Oversight Committee.
- C. National Oversight Committee will review each national rating grid prior to the official announcement of the rating. This typically is a 2-4 hour process during each ratings period.
- D. Here is recommended criteria for the National Oversight Committee to consider when reviewing rationale:
 - a. Look for inconsistencies on an on-going weekly basis from a specific rater
 - b. Is there a concern about a rater(s) consistently ranking their conference/group higher/lower than the average?
 - c. Does the rater consistently consider the ranking criteria recommended by the NAC and apply that philosophy to their rating?
 - d. Is there a clerical error by the rater where he/she unintentionally placed that team, or didn't rate that team, in error?
 - e. Is there value to request rationale, even when it is considered that the grid throws out the highest and lowest (non-ranking) ballot? It's important to make this differentiation and not get "nit-picky" about an outlier team because that vote is already thrown out in the tabulation of the grid.
- E. Here is the process the National Oversight Committee takes to request rationale on a national rating:
 - a. Upon completion of national ballot submission by all raters, the NAIA National Office will begin the process by alerting National Oversight Committee via email the grid is ready to be viewed within the SIDHelp system.
 - b. At this point, there are two processes, dependent upon the sport. The process will be determined during the preseason webinar. For those sports where we use the traditional email method, use the following steps. If you don't use the "email" method, but instead the automated SIDHelp process, move to section (c).
 - i. Each member of the National Oversight Committee e-mails their vote (approval/denial). If they do not approve of the grid, the Oversight member is required to do the following in an email to the National Office: name of rater, conference, teams and reasons for needing rationale.
 - ii. If written rationale is requested for the rater, then the rater(s) in question is required to email the entire Oversight Committee, and copy NAIA National Office, with their rationale in explicit detail.
 - iii. The Oversight Committee will then either accept that rationale by majority decision (2-of-3 members need to accept), and if that occurs, the process is complete. If 2-of-3 members reject that rationale, then the rater is asked to provide further clarification.
 - iv. The process continues until one of the following occurs: the Committee is satisfied with the rationale, or the ballot is removed (only after 2nd occurrence of rejected rationale) due to the rater not willing to change their rationale/ballot.
 - c. For those sports where we use the automated SIDHelp process, use the following steps:
 - i. Each National Oversight Committee member will log into the SIDHelp system (naiasports.org/admin) and review the master grid within SIDHelp by doing the following: select the link "Export Ratings

Worksheet" under "National Ratings" section. The master grid will download to an Excel file. Open the Excel file to view the master grid.

1. Note: National Oversight Committee members must create a SIDHelp account and request certain access. Do this at least 48 hours prior to the first ratings period.
- ii. After viewing the grid, select the link "dashboard" on top left corner which serves as the "home" button.
- iii. Then, click "submit National Oversight rationale request" under "National Ratings" section. A screen will appear with a dropdown menu of the sport. Choose your sport and click "go" and a list of raters will appear.
- iv. If you wish to request rationale for a specific rater's ballot, click the "submit new rationale request" button located to the immediate right side of their name. This will open a dialog box where you can write the specific items that you need additional information on from the rater. Once you are done typing in that dialog box, click "send message."
- v. Once your rationale request is submitted, an automatic email will be sent to the email address linked to the rater's SIDHelp account. Additionally, the other oversight members linked to that specific sport will receive an automated email letting them know that rationale has been requested by you. Oversight members can tell when rationale has been requested of a specific rater, because the "View Rationale Thread" link is available.
- vi. Now, the rater will log into the SIDHelp system and provide their rationale. Once the rater submits rationale, an automatic email will be sent to all members of National Oversight. Next, you need to view the rationale that is submitted by the raters in SIDHelp and click on "submit National Oversight rationale request" under the "National Ratings" section. On the screen with the list of names, you will notice to the right side of the specific rater's name, that there is a new link "view rationale thread".
- vii. Click "view rationale thread" and view the explanation from the rater under the gray box.
- viii. At this point, National Oversight must act and execute 1 of the following options:
 1. A committee member can vote to approve or deny the rationale. You do this by scrolling down to the middle of the page and the section "Submit Rationale Decision." A majority vote (2-out-of-3) by the oversight committee to accept will close the rationale dialog. If majority votes to deny, then the rater is responsible to either a) provide further rationale for National Oversight or b) change his/her ballot.
 2. A committee member can post a message to ask additional details on the rationale submitted by the rater.
 3. A committee member can open the raters ballot for edits (in the case of a clerical error by the rater). For this, one of the committee members should click the "Make Editable" link on the left side of the rater's name. This opens up the ballot for a rater to make changes to. No further action is needed by National Oversight as an automatic email is sent to the rater that their ballot is open for editing.
- F. Steps c. (iii) through c. (viii) above will be repeated until the rationale process is complete.
- G. If a rater does not provide written rationale prior to the deadline, the penalty system is as follows:
 - i. 1st instance – written warning (ballot is still included in that week's rating)
 - ii. 2nd instance – rater(s) ballot is removed for that week
- H. In each of the two instances above, the NAIA National Office copies all parties (rater, national oversight, conference/group Commissioners).
 - i. NOTE: National Oversight Committee members have the ability to remove the national ballot in ONLY the final regular-season rating, if rationale is not provided by rater, the rationale is not accepted by majority of national oversight and/or the ballot is deemed to jeopardize the integrity of the rating. This ballot removal may occur during the first instance of the penalty system (ie, ballot removal doesn't have to wait until the second instance during final regular-season rating). Removal of ballot must be approved by at least two National Oversight Committee members.
- I. No email vote or email communication from a National Oversight Committee member for two (2) total ratings constitutes NAIA National Office contact. National Oversight Committee members are held to the same guidelines as conference/group/national raters in terms of completing their weekly responsibilities.

G. RATINGS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- A. Conference/Group Oversight Committee is responsible for monitoring conference/group weekly rating.
- B. Rater-to-Rater grievances are facilitated through the NAIA National Office with National Oversight Committee serving as a resource.
- C. Appeals are processed through NAC Ratings & Postseason Selection Committee.

- D. Here is the process to take for a rater to submit a grievance:
 - a. email the NAIA National Office your grievance within the constructed timeline
 - b. the NAIA National Office will work with National Oversight to process the grievance

H. FINAL RATING/SEEDING RATING INFORMATION

- A. The final rating occurs after the completion of the specific sport qualifying conference/group tournaments.
- B. Results of every contest (including affiliated conference/group qualifying tournaments) up to submission of final Conference/group rating are included for the final rating
- C. The final rating is used to determine the national championship tournament at-large qualifying teams in all sports (with the exception of baseball, softball, men's and women's tennis, and men's and women's soccer which uses a modified RPI rating or selection committee).
- D. The NAC has mandated all sports to follow the established final rating calendar.
- E. Tie-breaking criteria is required to be used for all final ratings and stops at any time the tie(s) is broken. This criteria should be used by all conference/group raters to determine the order to list tied teams in any weekly Conference/group rating. NOTE – Listing of tied teams is NOT alphabetical...the tie-breaking criteria MUST be used to determine order of tied teams in the conference/group rating. The following criteria will be used to break ties in the final rating for all sports:
 - a. Head-to-head result between tied teams. If still tied (one win/one loss) go to second criteria
 - b. Win/Loss percentage vs. common opponents
 - c. Accumulated ratings points in the previous four ratings grids (not including current weekly grid).
 - d. Calculate differential between highest/lowest rating after displacement (removing high/low ratings) for both teams. Team with smaller differential is rated above team with larger differential.
 - e. Vote of National Oversight Committee.
- F. In addition to serving as the selection mechanism for at-large team qualification, the final rating (with the exception of baseball, softball, men's and women's tennis, and men's and women's soccer which uses a selection committee)) will also serve as the mechanism to seed the national championship tournament field. National championship qualifying teams that are not rated in the final rating will be seeded at the discretion of the Seeding & Bracketing Committee in each sport. Based upon additional seeding/bracketing criteria in each sport, the seeding rating may not always mirror the final rating.

I. CONFERENCE COMMISSIONER EXPECTATIONS

- A. You must have an account in SIDHelp (www.naiasports.org/admin) since that is the only location for you to view the details and comments of all conference/group ratings (see instructions below on how to access SIDHelp) of all conferences.
- B. Designate a three-person conference/group oversight committee to monitor their weekly ratings. The commissioners must provide names and contact information for their respective conference/group oversight committee members to the national office and submit in NAIAHelp prior to Aug. 1 each year. If a conference/group does not have a designated oversight committee in place, they will not be able to submit conference/group and national top-30 ratings.
- C. Submit your sport rater representative (current head coach) for all sports your conference sponsors. This assignment is done by you in NAIAHelp prior to Aug. 1 each year.
- D. For the selection of a rater from an Unaffiliated Group, it is the responsibility of all Commissioners within that Group to agree on one rater representing that Group.
- E. Remind all of your sport raters about their mandatory attendance at the preseason instructional webinar and the in-season conference calls. Failure to attend these by your rater (or assign a fill-in for that webinar) will result in a strike.
- F. Each Commissioner will get an email (generated automatically from SIDHelp) that is sent two-hours PRIOR to any sport conference/group rating deadline. This action is a friendly reminder to the Commissioner that your conference/group rating has not been submitted and there is two hours remaining to submit.
- G. Each Commissioner has the opportunity to submit a conference/group rating on behalf of your rater. This submission must be done in SIDHelp prior to the scheduled deadlines.
- H. It is your choice to access and view any conference/group ratings. Here are instructions on how to access all conference/group ratings:
 - a. Between 12:01 p.m. CST and 2 p.m. CST every Monday that a rating is conducted – Log in to SIDHelp admin (www.naiasports.org/admin) – many of you may need to click there and create a username and password to get started. Once you sign-up, give the national office 24 hours to provide appropriate access.

- b. Click on "View conference ratings" under "Conference ratings" headline
- c. Keep "all conferences" on your first dropdown menu.
- d. On dropdown menus, choose your sport, date (should default to current week)
- e. Suggestion is to NOT check the boxes on right side so that you can view all comments from raters and the results

J. GLOSSARY

- A. Frequently Used Terms
 - a. Conference Oversight Committee = a committee, created by each Conference Commissioner, to review, analyze and approve each conference/group rating prior to official submission in SIDHelp.
 - b. Final Rating = the rating that occurs after all qualifying conference/group tournaments. This rating determines the at-large championship qualifiers and championship seeding for a variety of sports (excluding Baseball, Men's Soccer, Women's Soccer, Men's Tennis and Women's Tennis as these sports use a National Selection Committee).
 - c. NAC = National Administrative Council. A membership group comprised of athletic administrators representing all of the conferences. This Council has the authority to oversee all policies and procedures related to ratings.
 - d. National grid = a spreadsheet that shows the national rating and votes from each national rater. This is not to be shared with anyone.
 - e. National Oversight Committee = a committee, comprised of a NAC member, a former rater and current head coach/officer, with a mission to review, analyze and approve each national rating prior to official announcement.
 - f. SIDHelp = database where all conference/group and national ratings are submitted. The website is www.naiasports.org/admin.

REPORTING RESULTS AND STATISTICS

REPORTING RESULTS/SUBMITTING SCORES

Mandated by the NAC, all contest results must be reported to the NAIA scoreboard within 24 hours of completion 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 the national statistical reports or ratings for the remainder of the season.

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

First-time Users –

1. To register to use the NAIA Scoreboard, go to www.naiasports.org/admin
2. Click on the "Don't Have a Password? Register Now link"
3. Enter your school email address (only school email addresses are accepted) with a chosen password
4. The NAIA National Office receives an email notification of your registration request
5. Your registration will be approved within one business day

If you have an active account with SIDHelp, you do not have to re-register – Your username/password will already be in the system.

Reporting team scores on the NAIA website provides greater team exposure to media, coaches, potential student-athletes and fans.

STATISTICS

An in-season, weekly national statistical report is produced utilizing games Presto Stats for the sport of Softball. To be eligible for the statistical report, a student-athlete must play in 75-percent of team's played. Only statistics from games against varsity teams from upper-level, degree-granting institutions should be submitted. Categories will be determined on a sport-by-sport basis and by the NAIA Athletics Communications & Media Department.

It is strongly recommended that the host institution be responsible for both team's official statistics. The home team must notify 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.

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 Softball, please refer to www.ncaa.org, go to the Softball page and the Statistician's Manual link.

AWARDS

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

NATIONAL PLAYER/NATIONAL PITCHER OF THE WEEK

The NAIA Department of Sports Information will select a NAIA National Softball Pitcher/Player of the Week. The conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly Association of Independent Institutions/unaffiliated grouping information director or his/her designated representative must make nominations. The national office will not accept nominations from anyone but the conference/CAC/ unaffiliated grouping information director or his/her designated representative. Conference/CAC/unaffiliated groupings may nominate only one athlete weekly for national consideration.

Nominations must include the player's name, institution, class, position and hometown. Information in support of the nomination should include statistics such as at bats, hits, runs, RBI's, doubles, triples, home runs and batting average for non-pitchers; and innings, hits, earned runs, strikeouts, walks, won-loss record and saves for pitchers. Opponents and scores from the previous week's games (Monday-Sunday) must also be noted. Additional information could include any significant notes (i.e. records set, game-winning hits, etc.).

ALL-AMERICA

The NAIA-SCA Executive Committee is responsible for administering the selection procedures for the All-America Softball team at the site of, and prior to, the start of the NAIA Softball World Series.

The NAIA-SCA selects a first and second All-America team, each consisting of 20 members per team (three pitchers, two catchers, five infielders, four outfielders, one designated player, one utility player and four at-large positions. If no DP and/or Utility player is nominated, the selection committee will select an additional one to two at-large players.). An honorable mention team of 20 is selected without regard to position. The committee will also select a player and pitcher of the year.

The criteria for selection as an All-American are as follows:

1. Each player under consideration must have been named to the all-conference/Continental Athletic Conference (CAC) (formerly the Association of Independents)/unaffiliated group team.
2. Pitchers must throw at least 60 innings.
3. Utility players must have played at least two defensive positions (excluding DP) and she must have played at least 25 percent of her total games at each position.
4. Designated players must have played a minimum of 50% of total games.
5. Each player nominated must have played in 20 or more games through the conference/CAC/unaffiliated qualifying tournament.

The NAIA Department of Sports Information will release the NAIA Softball All-America teams on **June 7, 2023**.

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.

DAKTRONICS-NAIA SCHOLAR-ATHLETE

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 (April 15).
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 SIDHelp.

6. All the above information is to be received by **April 15, 2023** 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.

Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete nominations will continue to be filled out via the SIDHelp admin website at www.naiasports.org/admin. **You must have an account in order to fill out nomination forms as the forms are no longer available through coaches' manuals. SIDHelp is the only way to nominate student-athletes as a Daktronics-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. In order 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, honors database or receive a certificate, forms **MUST BE SUBMITTED BY April 15, 2023.** LATE nominations will not be accepted.

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 **April 15, 2023.** Download the **NAIA Scholar Team Award Form** [here](#).

PLAYER/PITCHER OF THE YEAR

A National Player of the Year and a National Pitcher of the Year are selected annually. Selection is made by the All-America Selection Committee from players nominated to the All-America teams.

The NAIA Department of Sports Information will release the Players of the Year on June 8.

COACH OF THE YEAR

The National Coach of the Year will be selected through an election process following the World Series involving all NAIA Softball Coaches. All conference/CAC/unaffiliated group coaches of the year as well as the World Series quarterfinalists will be included on the ballot.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

The NAIA maintains a standardized awards program for the World Series. World Series team awards are provided to the top four teams. Individual awards will be given to the official party of 23 persons of the top four teams. Members of the tournament committee and participating coaches select a 16-member all-tournament team (regardless of position) and the tournament's most valuable player.

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. Traffic way, Springfield, MO 65802

Contact – Brad Stout – brads@collegiateawards.com