

NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING THE BRACKET

There are three phases in the process:

- I. *Select* the 33 at-large teams;
- II. *Seed* the teams; and
- III. *Place* the teams into the championship bracket.

General Principles for Selection, Seeding and Bracketing

The basketball committee will abide by the following principles:

- At no point in the process shall a member vote for a team the individual represents as an institutional or conference administrator.
- A member shall not be present during discussions regarding the selection or seeding of a team the individual represents.
- A member shall not answer questions about the team the individual represents, except for factual questions (e.g., dates of injuries, status of injured players). A conference administrator is permitted to answer general questions (i.e., relative strengths of teams within a conference) about teams in the conference the individual represents. An athletics administrator is permitted to discuss other teams in the individual's conference only when asked.
- All votes will be by secret ballot.
- The process for selecting the at-large teams, seeding the teams and placing the teams in the tournament bracket shall be conducted in the prescribed chronological order (e.g., selection, seeding and bracketing).
- Principles must be followed by the committee during selection, seeding and bracketing of the championship field. Selection, seeding and bracketing principles are not considered in priority order. All principles must be adhered to throughout each of the three processes. The committee will make every effort to apply "additional considerations", provided they do not cause a violation of the principles.

Among the resources available to the committee are complete box scores, game summaries and notes, computer rankings, head-to-head results, chronological results, Division I results, non-conference results, home and away results, results in the last ten games, rankings, polls and the coaches' regional advisory committee rankings.

The NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Principles and Procedures for Establishing the Bracket document is included in the comprehensive review of the Division I Women's Basketball Championship, conducted annually by the Division I Women's Basketball Committee. This document was revised and approved by the Division I Women's Basketball Committee, June 2007.

I. Principles for Selecting At-Large Teams

The committee shall select the 33 best teams to fill the at-large berths, regardless of conference affiliation.

There is no limit on the number of teams the committee may select from one conference.

Procedures for Selecting At-Large Teams

- At the beginning of the March meeting, each committee member will submit a list of 64 institutions in random order that the individual believes should be considered for selection, including those teams that have already earned automatic qualification.
- Any team receiving nine (9) or more votes on the initial ballot will move into the tournament field as an at-large selection (at-large board).
- The committee will form an "at-large nomination board" consisting of an alphabetical listing of all teams that:
 - Received more than one vote in the initial ballot but, did not receive enough votes to move onto the at-large board.
 - Did not receive more than one vote on the initial ballot, but was subsequently recommended by more than one member prior to closing initial nominations.
 - Won or shared the regular-season conference championship or conference divisional championship.
- The process for creating the initial "at-large nomination board" will then be closed.
- A team may be added to the nomination board at any time provided it receives at least three votes. A team may be removed from the nomination board if it receives a vote of seven eligible voters. Verbal nominations are permitted.

Remaining Ballots

- The committee will evaluate those teams on the at-large nomination board.
- Each committee member will "list" eight teams, not in rank order, to be added to the at-large field.
- Each committee member will "rank" the top eight vote-getters from the previous "list" process, using a cross country scoring system (e.g., first or best is valued at one point).
- The four teams receiving the fewest points shall be moved into the tournament field as an at-large selection. The other four teams will be held for the next ballot.
- The "list" eight, "rank" eight, "move" four process will be repeated until all at-large berths have been filled.
- If a team fails to move onto the at-large board for two consecutive at-large ballots, it shall be returned to the at-large nomination board.
- A team may be removed from the at-large field and returned to the at-large nomination board by a vote of seven eligible voters.

Additional Considerations

- At any time during the process, the chair may suggest that the committee begin reviewing teams that should be eliminated from consideration. A team may be removed from consideration by a vote of seven eligible voters.
- The number of teams eligible to receive votes may be increased or decreased by the chair if circumstances warrant. Further, the chair has the option to revise the number of teams to be moved onto the at-large board from four to two.
- At any time during the process, the chair may call for a cross-country vote of all remaining teams on the at-large nomination board.

- At any time during the process of selecting the at-large teams, the committee may elect to begin seeding the teams.

II. Principles for Seeding of Teams

The committee will create an s-curve (i.e., rank of the teams 1 through 64) which is used as a reference to ensure balance. Once the s-curve is finalized, it remains unchanged throughout the committee's deliberations in placing the teams into the championship bracket.

The bracket-placement principles may preclude a team from being placed in its "true" seed, in accordance with the s-curve.

Procedures for Seeding Teams

- Each committee member will "list" eight teams, not in rank order, that are "in" the tournament as automatic qualifiers or at-large teams to be placed in the s-curve.
- Each committee member will "rank" the top eight vote-getters from the previous "list" process, using a cross country scoring system (e.g., first or best is valued at one point).
- The four teams receiving the fewest points shall be moved into the s-curve, in rank order. The other four teams will be held for the next ballot.
- The "list" eight, "rank" eight, "move" four in rank order process will be repeated until all teams have been seeded in the s-curve.
- After a team has been voted into the s-curve, it may be moved in the s-curve by a vote of seven eligible voters.

Additional Considerations

- The committee is not obligated to seed Line Nos. 1-16 in the s-curve in chronological order.

III. Principles for Placing Teams into the Championship Bracket

The committee will attempt to achieve relative balance in the bracket and provide comparable competition, while abiding by the remaining principles. Balance does not mean equal. After all teams have been placed in the bracket, the committee will formally adopt the bracket.

- The committee will assign all four teams in each "group" (seeds 1, 16, 8, 9), (seeds 4, 13, 5, 12), (seeds 2, 15, 7, 10), (seeds 3, 14, 6, 11) to the same first-/second-round site. There will be two "groups" at each first-/second-round site. The first-/second-round sites that feed into a regional site may be in different geographic areas from the regional. Also, the two "groups" at a first-/second-round site may feed into different regional sites.
- All four teams on each seed line (No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, etc.) should be as equal as possible.
- The committee will assign each team to the most geographically compatible regional and first-/second-round site, by order of the s-curve. When multiple teams are a similar distance from a site, the team seeded higher in the s-curve will be assigned to the closest geographical proximity site.
- If a team's institution is serving as a first- and second-round host, the team will be assigned to the institution's site. For the regional competition, a team may not be assigned to play in any arena in which it has played more than three regular-season games, not including conference post-season tournaments nor may a host institution's team be permitted to play at the site where the institution is hosting. However, the team may play on the same days when the institution is hosting.
- No more than one team from a conference may be seeded in the same grouping of four (Line Nos. 1-4 and 13-16 in a region). In Line Nos.

5-12, two teams from the same conference may be placed in the same group of four provided they would not meet until the regional final game. The only possible exception would occur if a conference has five or more teams seeded in line Nos. 1-4. The other principles herein would apply in the exception case.

- There shall not be more than two teams from a conference in one region and conference teams shall not meet each other prior to the regional final unless a ninth team is selected from a conference.
- Two teams from the same conference within the same region shall not be seeded together in either of the following groups: Line Nos. 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 16; or Line Nos. 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14 and 15.

Procedures for Placing Teams into the Championship Bracket

- Place the teams seeded 1-4 in each of the four regions pairing the No. 1 seed's region against the No. 4 seed's region and the No. 2 seed's region against the No. 3 seed's region. Place the Nos. 2, 3, 4 seeds in each region.
- After each group of four teams is determined, check for conflicts with the principles for placing the teams into the bracket and determine the relative strengths of the regions by adding the "true" seed number in each region (e.g., original s-curve order). Generally, no more than five points should separate the lowest and highest total in Line Nos. 1-4.
- After the committee has placed teams in each region, the committee will assign those teams to first-/second-round sites. The committee will assign each team to the most geographically compatible regional and first-/second-round site, by order of the s-curve. When multiple teams are a similar distance from a site, the team seeded higher in the s-curve will be assigned to the closest geographical proximity site.

- Place Nos. 13, 14, 15 and 16 seeds in each region.
- In bracket line Nos. 5 through 12, the committee will assign all four teams a bracket line number (i.e., five through twelve) rather than using the seed number. All teams on a given line will have the same numerical value.
- The committee will evaluate each region to ensure that no region includes all of the highest or lowest seeds from the s-curve on each line within a region's group of four.
- Place seeds No. 5, 6, 7 and 8 in each region.
- Place seeds No. 9, 10, 11 and 12 in the region.
- After all teams have been placed in the bracket and the bracket assignments have been checked to ensure that the principles have been met, the committee will formally adopt the bracket.

Additional Considerations

- A team may be moved one bracket line from its true seed line (e.g., from a No. 13 seed to a No. 12 seed) when it is placed in the bracket, if necessary to meet the bracket-placement principles.
- If the committee is unable to balance the bracket after exhausting all possible options, it has the flexibility to permit two teams from the same conference to meet each other after the first round, if the conference has more than five participants.
- If possible, rematches of regular-season games should be avoided in the first- and second-rounds.
- If possible, rematches of previous years' tournament games should be avoided in the first- and second-rounds.
- The committee shall attempt to avoid moving a team or a conference out of its natural region or

geographic area an inordinate number of times and will examine the previous three tournament brackets to determine the number of times a team or conference has been assigned out of its natural region.

S-CURVE

LINE NO.

1.	2.	3.	4.	1
8.	7.	6.	5.	2
9.	10.	11.	12.	3
16.	15.	14.	13.	4
17.	18.	19.	20.	5
24.	23.	22.	21.	6
25.	26.	27.	28.	7
32.	31.	30.	29.	8
33.	34.	35.	36.	9
40.	39.	38.	37.	10
41.	42.	43.	44.	11
48.	47.	46.	45.	12
49.	50.	51.	52.	13
56.	55.	54.	53.	14
57.	58.	59.	60.	15
64.	63.	62.	61.	16