



For Immediate Release

Media Contacts:

Christopher Perry
Communications Manager
405-488-4048
cperry@achahockey.org

Craig Barnett
Executive Director
814-449-9868
cbarnett@achahockey.org

ACHA ANNOUNCES SEASON MODIFICATIONS FOR EACH DIVISION

TROY, Mich. (November 6, 2020) – The American Collegiate Hockey Association, the governing body for non-NCAA college hockey in the United States, announces that due to the ongoing pandemic, each of the five divisions within the ACHA will be implementing certain modifications for the 2020-2021 season. These modifications are the result of most ACHA members not being able to compete during Fall 2020 but anticipating playing games in Spring 2021 with permission from their respective institutions.

The ACHA has already extended the 2020-2021 regular season when it pushed back the dates for the National Tournament by three weeks from March until April 15-20, 2021.

Here is a breakdown per Division to the Season Modifications developed by our Divisional Commissioners with committee and membership input:

Men's Division 1

Men's Division 1 (M1) will invite 20 teams to the National Tournament as usual. However, no autobids will be handed out in the 2020-2021 season. Rather, for full representation of M1 membership, one team from every M1 conference will be guaranteed a bid to Nationals (as determined by their conference) as well as one independent M1 team, bringing the total number of guaranteed spots to 10 teams. The remaining ten teams in the field of 20 will be determined by the M1 computer ranking system.

The M1 National Tournament will continue to be same single elimination format as in previous years. Teams ranked #13 through #20 will compete in a play-in round of games on day one, April 15, 2021, with the day one winners advancing to play the teams ranked #1 through #4 on day two. Teams ranked #5 through #12 will play on day three. The day four quarterfinals will consist of the winners from days two and three, followed by two semifinal game on day five. The ACHA M1 National Championship game between the semifinal winners will be held on April 20, 2021.

Men's Division 2

Men's Division 2 (M2) has determined the minimum amount of games needed to qualify for the National Tournament this season will be twelve (12) games. Further, at least ten (10) of those 12 games must be against M2 teams.

M2 will not utilize computer rankings this season due to fewer non-conference games and travel restrictions throughout the country in accordance with institutional guidelines. Rather, M2 will use ranking committees on a per Region basis, with each committee comprised of seven to nine M2 coaches and administrators from their respective region. During the Spring 2021 season, there will be four separate ranking periods. M2 games played in Fall 2020 will count in the rankings. The last day for M2 Rankings will now be March 14, 2021.

The format for M2 Nationals and M2 Regionals will remain the same as in years past. The two (2) top ranked teams in each of the four M2 regions will automatically qualify for M2 Nationals. Teams ranked #3 through #14 in each region will compete in a Regional tournament over three days, with the two winners per Regional qualifying for M2 Nationals, resulting in four teams from each of the four M2 regions having earned a bid to M2 Nationals.

M2 Nationals will consist of 16 teams playing in round robin format in four separate pools for the first three days. The winner of each of the four pools will move on to single elimination semifinal games on day four of the tournament. The M2 National Tournament Championship game will be the last of 27 games held over five days from April 16-20, 2021.

Men's Division 3

Men's Division 3 (M3) has decided the minimum amount of games needed to qualify for the National Tournament this season will be eight (8) games, which can be played against either M2 or M3 teams.

M3 will not use computer rankings this season. In its place, M3 will use an eight-person National Ranking committee comprised of two M3 Atlantic region members, two M3 North region members, two M3 Pacific region members, one M3 Independent member, and one M3 Commissioner appointee. M3 rankings will be issued on a bi-weekly basis beginning on February 3, 2021. Only games played against M3 teams will count toward rankings and M3 teams must have completed three (3) games in order to be included in the rankings. Further, M3 games played in Fall 2020 will count for rankings.

The National Ranking committee will select the sixteen (16) teams that will comprise the field at the M3 National Tournament as M3 will not award autobids or conduct regionals during the 2020-2021 season. The M3 National Tournament will not change from its traditional format where pool play will take place and the top team from each of the four

pools will advance to the semifinal round. M3 will complete 27 games over six days from April 15-20, 2021 with a day off between the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds.

Women's Division 1

Women's Division 1 (W1) has determined the minimum amount of games needed during the 2020-2021 season for W1 teams to qualify for W1 Nationals will be at least nine (9) games played against at least four (4) unique opponents. W1 will not utilize a computer ranking but will use a coaches committee, the composition of which is yet to be determined, due to the anticipated travel restrictions and fewer non-conference games being played. Further, W1 has determined that rankings will only consider games played in Spring 2021.

For the W1 National Tournament, the division is following the directive of its membership and implementing a new format for this season and future seasons. Under the new format, W1 will now have ten teams qualifying for W1 Nationals. Seeds #3 through #10 will kick the tournament off on day one. Those teams that lose on day one will have a second chance to chase glory when they face one another on day two. On day three, the winners from day one and day two will join seeds #1 and #2 in a traditional, single elimination eight-team bracket. By the time the W1 National Champion is crowned, W1 will have completed 13 games over five days from April 15-19, 2021.

Women's Division 2

Like W1, Women's Division 2 (W2) has also decided the minimum amount of games needed during the 2020-2021 season to qualify for the W2 National Tournament will be at least nine (9) games against at least four (4) unique opponents. W2 has also determined that rankings will only consider games played in Spring 2021. W2 will not use a computer ranking but will utilize a coaches committee in which all W2 coaches will be encouraged to participate during four (4) ranking periods, beginning in February 2021. The final day for games to count in W2 rankings will be March 28, 2021.

The W2 National Tournament will consist of 21 games played over five (5) days from April 16-20, 2021. Twelve W2 teams will compete in pool play format with four (4) pools comprised of three (3) teams each. The top team from each pool will then advance to single elimination format, with semifinals followed by the W2 Championship game.

Tournament Locations

The ACHA Divisional Commissioners are currently working with ACHA staff to identify opportunities to host their respective individual division National Tournaments in locations central to their membership where teams can compete safely within the constraints of any state and local COVID-19 restrictions. Information regarding the location for the respective division National Tournament will be announced once finalized.

For further information, please contact ACHA Executive Director Craig Barnett at cbarnett@achahockey.org.

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About American Collegiate Hockey Association

The American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA) is a recognized 501(c)3 organization of almost 500 college and university-affiliated programs which provides structure, regulates operations, and promotes the quality of collegiate ice hockey throughout the United States. Headquartered in Troy, Michigan, the ACHA's primary mission is to support the growth and development of college hockey programs nationwide. The ACHA identifies standards which serve to unite and regulate teams at the collegiate level and enters its 30th season in September 2020. For more information, visit achahockey.org.