

## NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship

### Tournament History

- 1939 The first national collegiate men's basketball tournament was held. For the first 12 years, district playoffs often were held with the winner entering an eight-team field for the championship. The district games were not considered a part of the tournament. The winners of the East and West regionals were the only two teams to advance to the final site.
- 1940 The National Association of Basketball Coaches held its annual convention at the site of the national finals for the first time. It has been held there ever since.
- 1946 The championship game was televised locally for the first time in New York City by CBS-TV as Oklahoma State defeated North Carolina, 43-40. The initial viewing audience was estimated to be 500,000.
- This was the first time four teams advanced to the final site. With only East and West regionals, the two regional champions played for the national title while the regional runner-ups played for third place.
- 1951 The field was expanded to 16 teams, with 10 conference champions qualifying automatically for the first time. Those 10 conferences were: Big Seven, Big Ten, Border, Eastern (Ivy), Missouri Valley, Pacific Coast, Skyline, Southeastern, Southern and Southwest.
- 1952 Tournament games were televised regionally for the first time.
- The number of regional sites changed from two to four, with the four winners advancing to the finals.
- 1953 The bracket expanded from 16 teams to 22 and fluctuated between 22 and 25 teams until 1974.
- 1954 The Tuesday-Wednesday format for semifinals and final game was changed to Friday-Saturday.
- The championship game was televised nationally for the first time as LaSalle defeated Bradley, 94-76, in Kansas City.
- 1957 The largest media group to that point in the tournament's history was assembled for the finals in Kansas City. Coverage included an 11-station television network, 64 newspaper writers and live radio broadcasts on 73 stations in 11 states.
- 1963 A contract to run through 1968 was effected with "Sports Network" for the championship game to be televised nationally. Television rights totaled \$140,000.
- 1966 Net income for the entire tournament exceeded \$500,000 for the first time.
- A television-blackout provision requiring a 48-hour advance sellout was adopted.
- 1969 The Friday-Saturday format for semifinals and final game changed to Thursday-Saturday.
- NBC was selected to televise the championship as television rights totaled \$547,500, exceeding \$500,000 for the first time. The tournament's net income of \$1,032,915 was the first time above

the million-dollar mark.

1971 NBC recorded the largest audience ever for a basketball network telecast during the semifinals as 9,320,000 households viewed the game.

1973 The Thursday-Saturday format for semifinals and final game changed to Saturday-Monday.

Television rights totaled \$1,165,755, exceeding \$1,000,000 for the first time. NBC reported that the championship game was the highest-rated basketball telecast of all time. The contest received a rating of 20.5 and was seen by 13,580,000 television households reaching a total audience of 39 million persons. For the first time, the championship game was televised in prime time.

TVS, with the approval of NBC, agreed to televise those games not carried by NBC for a two-year period at the rights fee of \$65,000 per year.

First-round byes were determined on the basis of an evaluation of the conference's won-lost record over the past 10 years in National Collegiate Championship play.

The first public random drawing to fill oversubscribed orders for Final Four game tickets was administered by the committee for the 1974 championship.

1974 The bracket rotation was changed for the first time, eliminating East vs. West bracketing in effect since 1939. East played West and Mideast played Midwest in national semifinals.

The Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference was divided to receive multiple automatic qualification berths in the tournament.

1975 A 32-team bracket was adopted. For the first time, teams other than the conference champions could be chosen at-large. No conference could be represented by more than two teams. Sixteen teams qualified as conference champions, four others as champions from the four regional tournaments which were conducted by the ECAC, and the committee selected the other 12 at-large.

Dressing rooms were opened to the media after a 10-minute "cooling off" period.

The term "Final Four" first appeared in an NCAA publication, the 1975 Official Collegiate Basketball Guide. On Page No. 5 in the National Preview-Review section written by Ed Chay of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Clay wrote, "Outspoken Al McGuire of Marquette, whose team was one of the final four in Greensboro, was among several coaches who said it was good for college basketball that UCLA was finally beaten."

1976 The rights for the NCAA Radio Network were awarded to Host Communications, Inc., of Lexington, Kentucky.

Regional third-place games were eliminated.

For the first time, two teams from the same conference (Big Ten) played in the national championship game with Indiana defeating Michigan.

1977 NBC televised 23 hours and 18 minutes of tournament programming.

1978 A seeding process was used for the first time for individual teams. A maximum of four automatic qualifying conference teams were seeded in each of the four regional brackets. These teams were seeded based on their respective conferences' won-lost percentages in tournament play during the past five years. At-large seeding in each region was based on current won-lost records, strength of schedule and eligibility status of student-athletes for postseason competition.

NBC televised the four regional championship games and a first round doubleheader on Saturday and Sunday. NCAA Productions televised all regional semifinal games and all other tournament games.

Complimentary tickets for all NCAA championships were eliminated.

1979 The bracket was expanded to 40 teams. For the first time, all teams were seeded. The 16 conferences with the best won-lost records over the previous five years of championship play received byes into the second round. Eight additional byes were available to independents, second conference teams and champions of other conferences.

NBC received a record one-game rating with a 24.1 in Michigan State's national championship victory over Indiana State. The 38 share also is a record. There were 18 million households viewing, which ranks third.

Committee assigned three-man officiating crews for all tournament games.

1980 The bracket was expanded to 48 teams, which included 24 automatic qualifiers and 24 at-large teams. The top 16 seeds received byes to the second round. The committee eliminated restrictions on the number of at-large teams selected from one conference.

The committee's primary objective in the bracketing process became to provide equal balance in the four geographical regions, and the committee began to assign teams to any of the four regions in order to achieve balance while, when feasible, attempting to keep teams in their areas of natural interest.

1981 Principles for the seeding and placement of teams were implemented to develop a balanced tournament bracket. They included establishing 12 levels that transcended each of the four regions, dividing each region into three sections with four levels each, placing only one conference team in each regional, not assigning teams from a conference to meet before the regional championship and placing teams in their geographic area or on their home court if the first three principles were not compromised.

A computer ranking system, the Ratings Percentage Index, was used as an aid in evaluating teams in the preparation for making at-large selections.

It became policy that "no more than 50 percent of the tournament berths shall be filled by automatic qualifiers."

Virginia defeated Louisiana State in the last third-place game conducted at the Final Four.

For the first time, the NCAA registered a trademark for the term "Final Four," with a stated first use of 1978.

- 1982 The NCAA and CBS began a three-year television agreement for 16 exposures in the 1982, 1983 and 1984 tournaments.

The "selection show" was shown on live national television for the first time.

North Carolina's national championship win against Georgetown received a 21.6 rating and was the 11th-ranked prime time program for that week. CBS also achieved second-round record ratings with an 11.8 rating and 27 share on Saturday, and an 11.3 rating and 28 share on Sunday.

Host Communications and the CBS Radio Network co-produced the NCAA Radio Network.

- 1983 An opening round was added that required the representatives of eight automatic qualifying conferences to compete for four positions in the 52-team tournament bracket. This concept permitted the committee to retain a 48-team bracket evenly balanced with 24 automatic qualifiers and at-large selections, yet award automatic qualification to each of the 28 conferences that received it the year before. The 16 top-seeded teams received byes to the second round of the tournament.

A scheduling format was established so the tournament would begin the third weekend in March, regional championships on the fourth Saturday and Sunday, and the national semifinals and championship the following Saturday and Monday.

North Carolina State's national championship victory over Houston attracted a then-record 18.6 million households to the CBS telecast. The game had a 22.3 rating (third best) and a 32 share. It was the fifth-ranked prime time television program for that week.

A national semifinal record also was set in Houston's victory over Louisville. The game had a 17.8 rating and 33 share, and it was viewed by 14,800,000 households on CBS.

It was determined that the Final Four competition venue must have a minimum of 17,000 seats.

- 1984 One additional open-round game was established, requiring 10 automatic qualifying conferences to compete for five positions in the 53-team bracket that included 24 automatic qualifiers and 24 at-large selections.

For the first time, awards were presented to all teams participating in the championship.

- 1985 The tournament bracket was expanded to include 64 teams, which eliminated all first-round byes.

The committee realigned each region and renamed the Mideast region the Southeast region. Specifically, the Southern Conference and MEAC were moved from the East to the Southeast region; the Big Ten, Mid-American and SWAC moved from the Southeast to the Midwest; the

Metro and Trans America were moved from the Midwest to the Southeast and the Southland and SWC were moved from the Midwest to the West region.

The number of automatic qualifiers was capped at 30 for a five-year period (1986-90).

CBS had a record 19.8 million homes view Villanova's national championship victory over Georgetown. This game attracted a 23.2 rating (second best) and a 33 share. The game was the second-rated prime time program on television for that week.

The East regional championship game (Georgetown defeated Georgia Tech) set television records for that level of tournament competition with a 12.6 rating, a 32 share and 10.7 million homes tuned to CBS.

The NCAA Radio Network reached an all-time high radio audience for any sports event when the Villanova-Georgetown game attracted 21 million listeners.

CBS began a second three-year contract that included 19 exposures in the 1985, 1986 and 1987 tournaments; the agreement was signed November 21, 1983.

1986 CBS televised 40 hours, 51 minutes of tournament programming.

The NCAA Radio network included a record 426 stations, including 92 of the top 100 markets.

The bracketing policy was changed so two teams from the same conference could not compete against each other prior to the regional semifinals.

The committee determined that regional competition would be played at neutral sites; if an institution serving as a regional host was selected to the tournament field, it would be bracketed in another region.

Three separate three-man officiating crews were assigned to the two national semifinals and championship games.

For the 1986 event in Dallas, the NCAA conducted its first random, computerized drawing for the general public's allotment of Final Four tickets.

1987 The National Association of Basketball Coaches reaffirmed its endorsement of the policy that permits an institution to participate on its home court in the first and second rounds of competition.

Policy was changed to prohibit teams from the same conference from competing against each other prior to regional championship game.

All 64 teams selected for the championship were subject to drug testing.

1988 Initiating an agreement that was reached December 6, 1986, CBS began a third three-year contract. All regional semifinal games were televised in prime time.

Separate three-man officiating crews were assigned to all competition at regional and national

championship sites.

The NCAA celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Division I Men's Basketball Championship; the score in the Oklahoma-Kansas championship game was tied, 50-50, at halftime.

- 1989 NCAA Executive Committee expanded a moratorium enacted in 1984 limiting the bracket to 30 automatic qualification conference champions and 34 at-large teams through the 1998 championship. (August 1988)

NCAA Executive Regulation 1-6-(b)-1 was amended to strengthen criteria governing automatic qualification for conferences. (August 1988)

A new bracket-rotation cycle was established. East vs. West, Midwest vs. Southeast in 1989; East vs. Midwest, Southeast vs. West in 1990; East vs. Southeast, West vs. Midwest in 1991.

It was agreed that neutral courts would be used in all rounds of the championship.

After determining that three of the next four Final Four host facilities should have a minimum capacity of 30,000, the committee selected Charlotte, Seattle, The Meadowlands and Indianapolis to host in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997.

- 1990 Each person entering the general public random computerized ticket drawing was limited to purchasing two Final Four tickets.

The basketball committee defined "home court" as an arena in which a team has played no more than 50 percent of its regular-season schedule, excluding conference tournament games.

The NCAA Executive Committee approved the "play-in" concept to identify the 30 automatic qualifying conferences in December, 1989. The Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) was computed for the nonconference schedules of all eligible conferences, with those with the lowest ranking competing for the available automatic-qualifying positions. The "play-in" was implemented in 1991 with 33 eligible conferences. Six conference representatives played for three automatic-qualifying berths in the 64-team bracket.

- 1991 CBS Sports began a new seven-year contract for \$1 billion, which included live coverage of all sessions of the championship through 1997. The agreement was signed November 22, 1989.

The NCAA began a new system for distributing championship revenue to the membership. The system was based upon sports sponsorship, grants-in-aid, and basketball performance, and also included funding for academic enhancement and special assistance to student-athletes. The basketball fund was based each conference's performance over a rolling six-year period.

The definition of "home court" was amended to be a facility in which a team plays more than three games during the regular season, excluding conference tournaments.

- 1992 Duke University won its second consecutive national championship, becoming the first team to defend its title since UCLA in 1973.

- 1993 The minimum facility seating capacity for first and second rounds and regionals was established at 12,000.
- The basketball committee selected San Antonio, St. Petersburg, Indianapolis, Minneapolis and Atlanta to host the Final Four in 1998 thru 2002.
- 1994 President Bill Clinton became the first sitting president to attend the tournament, when he was present at the Midwest Regional championship game in Dallas and the national semifinals and final in Charlotte.
- The use of combined shot clocks/game clocks was required at all sites.
- The committee agreed to attempt to assign the top four seeds in each region away from a site that may create a "home-crowd advantage" for their opponents. The committee recognized that it may be necessary to move lower-seeded teams from their natural regions in order to accomplish this.
- The weighting of the three factors comprising the ratings percentage index (RPI), Division I winning percentage, opponents' winning percentage and opponents' opponents' winning percentage, was adjusted from 20-40-20 to 25-50-25. Also a second RPI, adjusted based upon a team's good wins, bad losses and non-conference scheduling, was provided.
- 1995 The existing CBS Sports contract was replaced with a new agreement for \$1.725 billion extending for five years through the 2002 championship.
- 1996 The NCAA created the first on-line computer page for the Final Four.
- Pool reporters were permitted to interview game officials after games under specified conditions.
- Participating institutions' seating locations were moved closer to midcourt and nearer to the playing floor.
- 1997 Bracketing policies were changed so that, once the highest-seeded team from a conference was assigned to a region, only the eighth team selected from that conference could be placed in that region.
- The NCAA's on-line computer page was expanded to include preliminary rounds.
- 1998 Bracketing policies were changed so that competition at all three sites within each particular region would be conducted on the same days of the week and tournament hosts' teams would be permitted to play on the days they are hosting.
- The name of the Southeast Region was changed to the South Region.
- The basketball committee continued selecting Final Four host facilities with a minimum seating capacity of 30,000 when it picked New Orleans, San Antonio, St. Louis, Indianapolis and Atlanta to host in 2003-2007.

Effective 1999, bracketing policies were changed so that, once the highest-seeded team from a conference is assigned to a region, no other team from that conference could be assigned to the same region until the sixth team was chosen from the conference.

- 1999 The basketball committee extended the Final Four signs-covering policy to preliminary-round sites, effective 2002.

On November 18, the NCAA and CBS agreed to a new 11-year agreement, commencing with the 2003 championship. The agreement, for a minimum of \$6 billion, included rights to television (over-the-air, cable, satellite, digital and home video), marketing, game programs, radio, Internet, fan festivals and licensing (excluding concessionaire agreements).

In its continuing effort to combat the effects of gambling, the committee began conducting background checks on game officials. The NCAA checked 50 officials randomly selected from among the 96 who worked the previous year's tournament.

- 2000 Inasmuch as 31 conferences were to be eligible for automatic qualification in 2001, the committee agreed to conduct an opening-round game the Tuesday before the first/second rounds, pitting teams seeded No. 64 and 65.

The NCAA and the Illinois High School Association formed the "March Madness Athletic Association" and applied for trademark registration for the term "March Madness." The registration was granted in 2001.

- 2001 The committee determined that, effective with the 2002 championship, first- and second-round sites would no longer be assigned to specific regions. Rather, the committee would have flexibility to assign four-team "pods" to sites near the teams' natural geographic areas, if possible.

Effective 2002, the committee eliminated the bracketing provision that, once the highest-seeded team from a conference was assigned to a region, only the sixth team from that conference could be placed in that region.

The National Network (TNN) telecast the opening-round game.

For the first time, the NCAA registered a trademark for the term "Big Dance," with a stated first use of 2000.

- 2002 First-/second-round sites in non-domed stadiums drew 99.5 percent of capacity, an all-time record.

During the selection meeting, for the first time each committee member had the use of an individual computer for researching and evaluating teams.

CBS expanded its live selection show to one hour.

ESPN televised the opening-round game for the first time.

- 2003 As part of the 1999 "bundled rights" agreement, Westwood One assumed administration of the

tournament's radio rights.

The basketball committee agreed that the minimum Final Four seating capacity should be 40,000 and picked San Antonio, Detroit, Indianapolis and Houston to host in 2008-2011.

- 2004 Rather than using the traditional annual rotation of Final Four semifinals pairings (e.g., West vs. East, South vs. Midwest) the committee began assigning the pairings during selection weekend, making best effort to assign the winner of top seed's region to meet the fourth seed's region and the second seed's region to meet the third seed's region.

Instead of using the regional site designations (i.e., East, Midwest, South, West), the committee identified regional sites by the city in which the games are being played (i.e., Atlanta Regional).

- 2005 Culminating a four-year study, the committee implemented a revised RPI formula to give additional weight to playing and winning games on the road. The new formula weighs road victories and home losses at 1.4; home victories and road losses, at .6; and neutral-site victories and losses at 1.0.

CBS began a two-year deal with CSTV.com for exclusive internet video streaming rights for out-of-market game coverage for the first 58 games of the championship.

Effective with the 2006 championship, the committee revised the bracketing principles so that if it is unable to reconcile 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.

Attendance at first-/second-round and regional sites was 98.4 percent of the facilities' capacity, an all-time record. Arenas other than domes were filled to 99.9 percent of capacity, also a record.

- 2006 The Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) was made public for the first time, with updated rankings appearing on [www.ncaasports.com](http://www.ncaasports.com) weekly.

Becoming only the second double-digit seed to make the Final Four, 11<sup>th</sup>-seeded George Mason stuns top-seeded Connecticut in the Washington, D.C. Regional final. The Patriots defeated Michigan St. and defending national champion North Carolina to reach the regional semifinals, where they beat Wichita St. George Mason's memorable run came to an end with a loss to eventual champion Florida in the national semifinals.

- 2007 The committee returned to geographical regional site designations rather than identifying the sites by the host city, as it did from 2004-06. Regional sites were referred to as East, South, Midwest and West rather than East Rutherford, San Antonio, St. Louis and San Jose.

In response to tremendous traffic resulting in 19 million video streams and five million visits in 2006, CBS Sportsline doubled its bandwidth capacity for March Madness on Demand, which offers free live internet streams of each game of the first three rounds of the championship.

CSTV's coverage expanded to include live broadcasts of two first-round games, pregame and postgame previews and recaps on all competition dates, and video streaming of postgame press

conferences that are archived at [www.ncaasports.com](http://www.ncaasports.com). In addition, CSTV aired live programming during open practice day at the Final Four, aired a National Championship Pregame Show live from the Georgia Dome, and provided coverage to ancillary events such as Hoop City, My CokeFest and The Big Dance at Centennial Olympic Park.

The University of Florida became the seventh school to successfully defend its national championship as the Gators defeated The Ohio State University 84-75 in the title game. Florida joined Oklahoma St. (1945-46), Kentucky (1948-49), San Francisco (1955-56), Cincinnati (1961-62), UCLA (1964-65 and 1967-73), and Duke (1991-92) as repeat champions.