

A History Of The NCAA Women's Outdoor Track & Field Championships 1982 – 2023

by E. Garry Hill

This compilation does not attempt to reproduce the complete results of the NCAA Women's Championships.

While the team-scoring section does include all teams which accumulated points each year, for the actual events the results are usually only given 8-deep (the depth of modern point-scoring).

For all years, schools are given with their current names.

Marks made in preliminaries are included only if they had some sort of record significance.

If a non-senior was an event winner but doesn't appear in the next year's listings, an attempt has been made to ID what she did in the subsequent year.

The athlete's class has been specified: Fr = frosh; So = soph; Jr = junior; Sr = senior.

A ' after an athlete's last name means not eligible for Team USA at that point (even if might have had U.S. citizenship).

Symbols: (A) = altitude over 1000m (in affected events only); w = illegally wind-aided; fs = false start; dnc = did not compete; dq = disqualified; WR = World Record; AR = American Record; CR = Collegiate Record; MR =

Meet Record; c = estimated time or distance; + = converted time using standard formulae.

Unlike the protocol used on the professional side of the sport, where last names are changed to reflect the last one under which the athlete competed, in this compilation women are switched to their married names only if they did so while in actual collegiate competition.

Field event results are given in Imperial measure, with the metric measure appended at the end of each year.

Where possible the number of contestants is given for each event, plus number of finalists and also what the last qualifier achieved to make the final in multi-round events.

See p. 03 for an explanation of who has been allowed into the meet through the years.

The author would like to thank all those who have helped with this project through the decades, especially statistical whizzes Richard Hymans, Dave Johnson & Howard Willman, whose sharp eyeballs and keen research have helped both fill in many holes and also catch those frustrating typos which creep into a project with so many numbers.

Who Got Into The Meet

The methodology for qualifying for the NCAA Women's Championships has evolved through the years, although not as much as the men.

Qualifying Standards

When the women's meet began the qualifying window ran from December 01 through the last Sunday before the Championships.

The '88 Guide includes the adoption of altitude-adjustment factors. Only outdoor marks were eligible for qualifying, but the '89 Guide reversed that, indoor marks for the first time being specifically cited as OK. (Note: '87 wLJ

champ Sheila Echols had no outdoor marks prior to the Championships.)

The '90 Guide gives us the introduction of Provisional Qualifiers. This was a secondary standard from which Nationals fields could be filled, should the “automatic” standard prove too tough. The end of the qualifying window moves to the Thursday before the meet starts.

The '92 Guide removes the use of indoor marks as qualifiers.

The '93 Guide tightens the Q window, marks ending 2 weekends before the Championships. This is the last change before Regionals arise.

The Advent Of Regionals

The Regionals concept debuted with the '03 season, with a set of preliminary meets held 2 weeks before Nationals. The nation was split into 4 Regions—West, Midwest, Mideast, East—along state-border lines, meaning some Conferences were split. The top 5 finishers in each event (save 10K and multis, which were chosen from yearly lists) automatically advanced to the Nationals. Fields were then filled with a half-dozen “wild card” entries from the yearly lists.

A major change came in '10 with the replacing of a 4-site preliminary set of meets with a simple 2-parter, East & West. Also gone, officially, was the titling of the first meets as Regionals. Instead, the NCAA took the stance that it simply had a 2-part Nationals, with the preliminary rounds held 2 weeks earlier at different sites than the final meet. (For ease of reference, *T&FN* has continued to call the first-round meets Regionals.) The first 24 from each Region (12 for relays) advance to the Nationals. The multis still advance from yearly list.

The Regionals are held 2 weeks before the Nationals, and 2 weeks after most Conferences (a few Conferences are held earlier).

The Lower Divisions

In '82, in addition to making Div. I standard, Div. II athletes had to finish in the first 4 and Div. III athletes in the first 2 to compete at the NCAA Championships.

For '83 through '90 the requirement was making standard plus being top 2 in Div. II or winner-only from Div. III.

Since '91 the divisions have been separate, with no Div. II or III athletes at the Div. I meet.