

NCAA Announces Men's Basketball Tournament Will Take Place In One Location



The NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Committee announced on Monday that the entirety of the 2021 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament will take place in one single location instead of the 13 preliminary round sites that had previously been decided.

"My committee colleagues and I did not come lightly to the difficult decision to relocate the preliminary rounds of the 2021 tournament, as we understand the disappointment 13 communities will feel to miss out on being part of March Madness next year," Mitch Barnhart, chair of the committee and the director of athletics at Kentucky, said in the statement. "With the University of Kentucky slated to host first- and second-round games in March, this is something that directly impacts our school and community, so we certainly share in their regret.

"The committee and staff deeply appreciate the efforts of all the host institutions and conferences, and we look forward to bringing the tournament back to the impacted sites in future years."

The statement also said the NCAA is in early talks with the state of Indiana and, specifically, the city of Indianapolis, on the possibility of hosting the tournament during the months of March and April. Indianapolis was previously already the location for the Men's Final Four, which was scheduled for April 3-5.

"We have learned so much from monitoring other successful sporting events in the last several months, and it became clear it's not feasible to manage this complex championship in so many different states with the challenges presented by the pandemic," Dan Gavitt, NCAA's senior vice president of basketball, said in the release. "However, we are developing a solid plan to present a safe, responsible and fantastic March Madness tournament unlike any other we've experienced."

While Columbus had been a prior location for tournament games, Dayton was the lone Ohio city to be affected by this year's decision as one of the sites, as the city has played host to the First Four games to decide the 64 teams to make it into the final bracket.

There has been no announcement on what the women's NCAA tournament format will look like at this

point in time.

“The committee and staff have thoughtfully monitored the pandemic to develop potential contingency plans,” NCAA President Mark Emmert said in the statement. “The Board of Governors and my top priorities are to protect the health and well-being of college athletes while also maintaining their opportunity to compete at the highest level. These principles have guided the decision-making process as we continue to assess how to have a fair and safe championship experience.”

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