

University hosting NCAA regional softball championship games

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Alfred University has been chosen to host a four-team NCAA Division III regional softball championship this weekend at Harrington Park on the AU campus.

AU (35-4), fresh off a victory over St. John Fisher in Sunday's Empire 8 Conference championship tournament title game, is the second seed in the four-team Alfred Regional. Other participating teams will be top-seeded Rowan University, third-seeded Lebanon Valley College and fourth-seeded Penn State-Behrend.

The winner of the double-elimination regional tournament, scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday (May 8-10), advances to next weekend's Super Regional round.

Friday's regionals open with Alfred taking on Lebanon Valley at 1 p.m., followed by Rowan playing Behrend at 3:30 p.m.

The winners of those first two contests will meet in Game 3 at 10 a.m. Saturday; the losers will square off in Game 4 at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, with the loser of that game eliminated. The winner of Game 4 will play the loser of Game 3 at 3 p.m. Saturday (Game 5), with the loser of that game eliminated.

The winner of Game 3 faces the winner of Game 5 at noon on Sunday in Game 6. If the winner of Game 5 wins that matchup, the two teams will meet again in a winner-take-all regional title game at 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

Alfred earned a bid to the regional round by winning the Empire 8 championship tournament at AU last weekend, claiming the league's automatic bid to the NCAA playoffs. Rowan (36-6), a member of the New Jersey Athletic Conference, earned an at-large bid despite falling to Ramapo in Sunday's NJAC tournament title game.

Lebanon Valley (17-22) won the Commonwealth Conference's automatic bid to the NCAAs by defeating Widener for the conference tournament championship on Sunday. Behrend (25-14) defeated D'Youville on Sunday to claim the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference tournament title and the AMCC's NCAA bid.

Alfred, ranked 18th in the latest NFCA Division III poll and first in the NCAA Northeast Regional rankings, will be making its second straight NCAA appearance and third overall. AU earned at-large bids to the tournament in 2010 and 2014; the Saxons' E8 title this year, and automatic bid to the NCAAs, is the program's first.

The winner of the 16 NCAA regional tournaments will compete in eight best-of-three "Super Regional" matchups next weekend (May 15-16). The eight winners of the Super Regionals advance to the NCAA Division III College World Series May 21-26 in Salem, VA.