

Where we are and how we got here...

The present regional alignment

The original Division I Outdoor Track & Field Championship regional model was approved by the Division I Championships/Competition Cabinet in 2002 and first implemented in 2003. The model was created to balance the number of student-athletes who qualified for the national championship meet across four regions, based upon a three-year history. The model developed by the Cabinet has not been adjusted since its implementation.

The problem

The regional alignment model approved in 2003 has become unacceptable. The imbalance in the number of competitors in the four regional meets has created a competitive inequity and was the primary factor in recommending realignment. Specifically, the East and Mideast regional meets have been significantly larger than the Midwest and West regional meets in each of the five years. In addition, certain events have radically different numbers of competitors, both across regions and across events.

The previous proposal for realignment

With this in mind, an ad-hoc committee of the Division I Track & Field Subcommittee and the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) developed a number of different models to address the inequities resulting from the current regional alignment. At the annual USTFCCCA NCAA Division I Track & Field meeting in December 2006, Division I coaches overwhelmingly approved one of those proposals, which would realign the four current qualifying regions, by a vote of 209-18. The NCAA Sport Committee also later approved this proposal.

The proposal then was brought before the NCAA Championships Cabinet, which delegated the proposal to the Division I Brackets and Formats Subcommittee. Materials regarding the proposal were submitted for the subcommittee's February 2007 meeting, although the issue did not make the agenda. At the committee's next meeting in June, the proposal was tabled for discussion until February 2008.

At this juncture, NCAA Division I Track & Field Committee Chair DeTrese Harrison, Division I USTFCCCA Track & Field president Rick McGuire, and USTFCCCA CEO Sam Seemes requested an earlier review by the Championships Cabinet and Brackets and Formats Subcommittee. DeTrese and Rick participated in a conference call in September in which the committee agreed to review the proposal again during its September meeting. The committee also asked for other alternative plans that were examined prior to the coaches' vote for one specific realignment proposal. This information was provided by the USTFCCCA national office to the NCAA national office and to the Brackets and Formats Subcommittee prior to its September meeting.

The Brackets and Formats Subcommittee's response

Following their second review of the proposal and their examination of other alternative proposals explored for regional realignment, the Brackets and Formats Subcommittee's response to the proposal was that they "recognize[d] the need for regional realignment. However, the cabinet could not identify a

single proposal of those offered that did not appear to unfairly disadvantage the West and Midwest. The subcommittee agreed to support the changes to the East and Mideast models but preferred to keep the Midwest and West regionals intact” (Source: Championships Cabinet September Meeting Report, http://www1.ncaa.org/membership/governance/division_i/champ_cabinet/2007/September_2007/Sept_Cabinet_Report_10-3-07.htm) In keeping the Midwest and West regionals intact, however, realignment of only the East and Mideast regionals would fail to address the competitive inequity issues of the current alignment, which was the primary reason for the formation of the Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee.

In addition, the committee requested Division I coaches explore other options beyond four region models that could provide competitive equity and not disadvantage geographical regions of the country. The committee and NCAA national staff members encouraged Division I coaches to think outside of the box in considering solutions that would keep fairness at the forefront.

Issues that must be considered

According to conversations with members of the NCAA Championships Cabinet and staff, the issue of unfairly disadvantaging the West is not unique to track and field. It is an issue that cuts across many NCAA sports and championships; therefore it is an issue that any proposal made by Division I track and field coaches must take into account.

In addition, it has been strongly indicated that the NCAA is unlikely to adopt a proposal for change that does not include rewarding conference champions with berths into the national championships structure. The NCAA Division I conducts 22 sports that have more than one round of nationals (e.g. a regional qualifier and a national meet or a national tournament with multiple rounds). Excluding men’s and women’s cross country and outdoor track and field, 17 of those sports include automatic berths into the national championships for conference qualifiers. None of the remaining sports that do not include automatic conference qualifiers (fencing, women’s gymnastics, men’s and women’s swimming and diving, wrestling) deal with the kind of numbers that men’s and women’s outdoor track and field does.

There are also two points on which Division I coaches stand firm. The first point is that we must change the current alignment, which has not provided equal competitive opportunities. The second point is that providing competitive equity must be the most important issue, regardless of the system chosen.

The NCAA Championships Cabinet has acknowledged both in conversations and in writing that there is a problem with the current regional alignment and that changes need to be made. This leaves us with only one issue. Whatever system is chosen, that system has to provide competitive equity.

The present

Since receiving the results of the Brackets and Formats Subcommittee’s September meeting, USTFCCA leadership has met with various NCAA personnel, including the NCAA Vice President for Championships, the NCAA Championships Director who is the liaison to the Championships Cabinet, and the chair of the Brackets and Formats Subcommittee, in efforts to identify the perceived problems with the previous proposal and alternatives, as well as to identify concerns that need to be addressed with new proposals forwarded to the cabinet.

Based on information received from those meetings, and statements from the Cabinet's September meeting minutes, the coaches association leadership worked to develop a strategy to move forward in exploring other possible alternatives for the Division I Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee, the Division I Track & Field Subcommittee, and Division I coaches.

The Division I officers of USTFCCA decided to proceed with a spectrum strategy. One end of the spectrum of acceptable plans consisted of the proposal submitted by the Division I Track & Field Committee to the Championships Cabinet along with the alternative regional realignment plans considered. The other end of the spectrum created a 100% competitive equity and inclusion-driven plan for a single site, two round national championship. This spectrum strategy also included additional plans that explored possible alternatives between these two ends.

Once developed, the spectrum strategy was distributed to the NCAA Brackets and Formats Subcommittee chair, the NCAA Division I national staff including the Vice President for Championships, the Director of Championships and Division I Track & Field liaison, the Division I USTFCCA officers and ad-hoc committee members, and the Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee members. The Division I USTFCCA officers' and Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee's recommendation is now being submitted to the Division I Track & Field Subcommittee for their consideration and review. In addition, executive summaries of other plans considered are also being submitted for review.

Recommendation of the USTFCCA Division I Officers and Ad-Hoc Committee Members

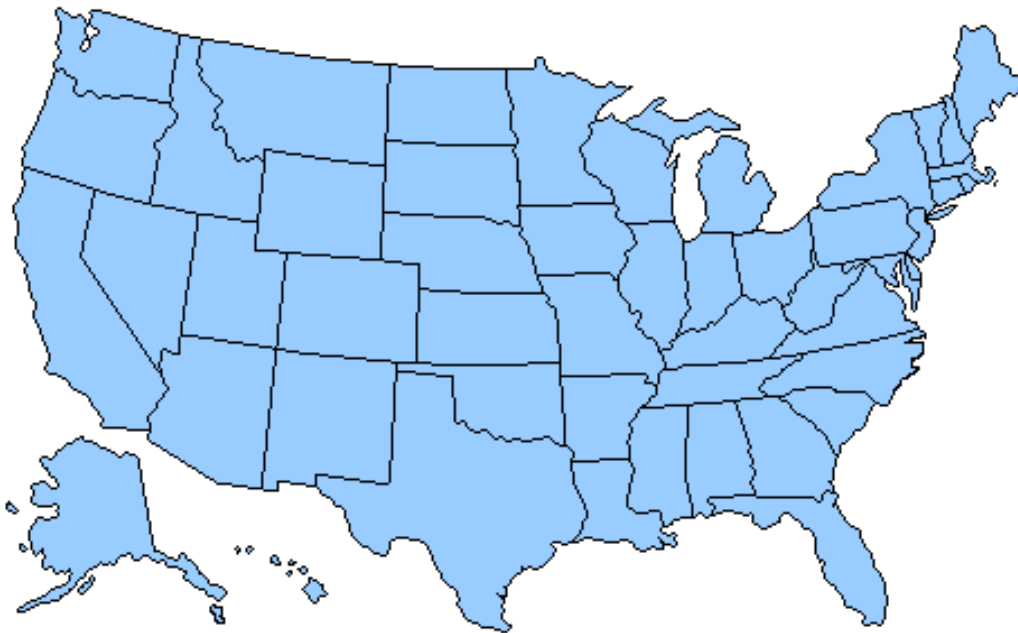
After review and discussion of the spectrum strategy and plans during a November 5 conference call, the nine representatives present of the Division I USTFCCA officers and ad-hoc committee members unanimously voted to recommend the single site, two round championships format (referred to as the Single Site Super 64 and Sweet 16 in this document) to replace the current championships qualifying procedure.

Recommendation of the Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee

In addition, after a separate conference call, the six members of the Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee present (with two members absent) also voted to recommend a single site, two round championships format.

**AD-HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION
SINGLE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

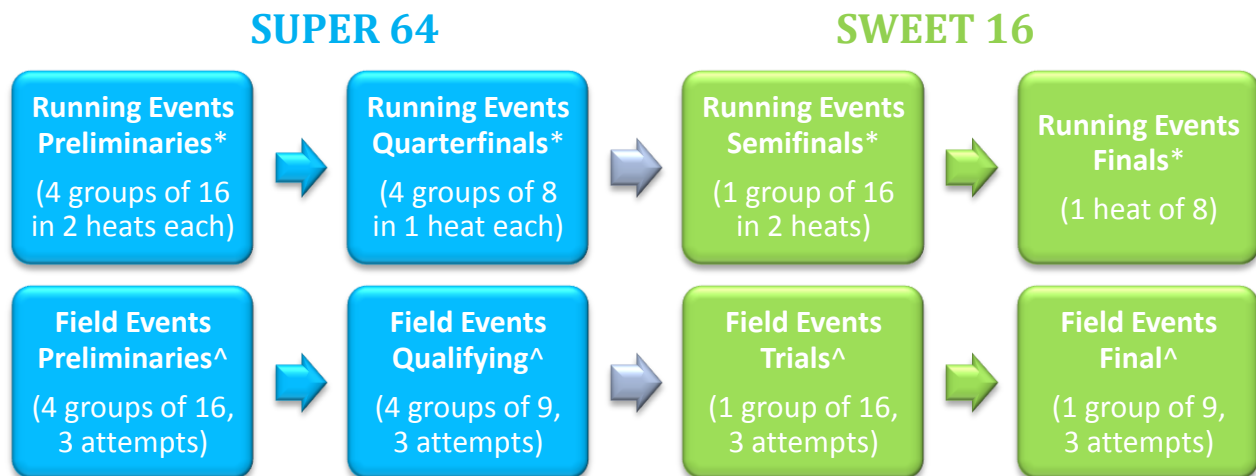
Single Site Super 64 and Sweet 16



Student-athletes compete at a single site for the Super 64 and Sweet 16 of the Men's and Women's Outdoor Track & Field Championships

**AD-HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION
SINGLE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Single Site Super 64 and Sweet 16



Student-athletes qualify to compete at a single site for the national championships

- Each event has a field size of 64, except combined events
 - Combined events take 24 competitors from a national descending order list to the Sweet 16
- Competition is broken up into two four-day competitions, the Super 64 and the Sweet 16
- Conference champions from eligible NCAA conferences automatically qualify to the Super 64 in each event (currently 30 women's conferences and 28 men's conferences)
- Remaining women's and men's student-athletes qualify at-large to the Super 64 in each event from a national descending order list of seasonal performances after conference champions declare

* 3000ST has 2 competitions in the Super 64 and 1 final in the Sweet 16

* 5000m and 10000m have 1 competition each in the Super 64 and Sweet 16

^ High jump and Pole vault compete in 4 groups of 16 in the Super 64 and 1 group of 16 in the Sweet 16

AD-HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

SINGLE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Single Site Super 64 and Sweet 16 Pros and Cons

COMPETITIVE EQUITY

PROS

- Provides the ultimate form of head-to-head competition
- Provides the most equitable way for student-athletes to advance through each round
 - Serpentine performances leads to equal groupings
 - For example, the season-best performances are ranked and grouped as follows:

1	2	3	4
8	7	6	5
...
64	63	62	61
- Total balance both in qualification to the Super 64 and advancement through the rounds of competition
- Removes the inequities caused by geographic distribution
 - Completely equal across event disciplines
 - Completely equal across genders
- Facilities are equal for all student-athletes
- As little weather variation as possible
- Consistency of officiating across events
 - Consistent application and interpretation of the rules throughout the championship
- Eliminates the use of “heats-against-time” qualification
 - In 2007, 4x400m competitors ran in heats against time finals in all regions except in the men’s West Region, creating a competitive disadvantage
 - Heats against time were also used in the women’s steeplechase in all regions in 2007 and in all but the Midwest region in the men’s steeplechase
- Eliminates use of regionals as practice
 - Because of different qualification for 10,000m and combined events, some student-athletes compete in events at regionals in which they have no intention of competing at nationals

AD-HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

SINGLE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

PROS

- Creates a championship atmosphere and experience for the up to 3390 student-athletes competing at the Super 64
 - Actual number likely to be less due to student-athletes competing in multiple individual events/relays
- Rewards conference champions with Super 64 berths to the national championship
- Allows student-athletes who have had an outstanding season or performance during the season to gain a berth in the championship
- Physical and mental load of competition is reduced for most student-athletes
 - Over the course of the championship, student-athletes in the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 5000m, 100/110H, and 400H run fewer races to advance through each round
 - Over the course of the championship, most field event student-athletes take fewer attempts to advance through each round
- Sweet 16 can be conducted almost entirely in the evenings
 - Allows more fans to attend
 - Prevents most student-athletes from competing in the hottest part of the day
- Reduces travel for many student-athletes and coaches as they only have to make one trip for the Super 64 and Sweet 16
 - Currently, student-athletes and coaches travel to 1 of 4 regional meets and to the national meet at a separate site two weeks later

CONS

- Student-athletes may miss more consecutive days away from school if institutions use the quarter system (or summer school under the semester system)
 - However, under current system, many student-athletes miss about the same number of days for regional meets and national meets, two weeks apart
 - Participants in baseball's College World Series miss 13-14 consecutive days at one site at around the same time of year
 - Also, participants in the men's and women's tennis championships miss 13 consecutive days at one site around the same time of year

AD-HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

SINGLE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

MEET STRUCTURE

PROS

- Creates an 11-day long major sporting event for the city selected to host the championships
- Should yield more desire to host the national championships, due to the larger local economic impact of the format
- Time efficient for the number of competitors
 - Every lane of an 8-lane track used in every heat and round
- Structure of the championship does not change from year to year
 - Same number of heats/flights every year
 - Same time schedule can be followed every year

CONS

- The Super 64 is a four-day meet, rather than a two-day meet as currently used in the regional system
 - However, most student-athletes are out of school
 - Many teams already arrive early at the site of regional meets
 - Also, institutions have to feed/house qualifying student-athletes during this time frame whether at competition or not

AD-HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

SINGLE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

FINANCES

PROS

- Championships last 11 days versus 16 days under the current format from the start of regional meets to the end of the national meet
 - Season could be shortened by one week
 - Shortening the season would provide an institutional savings of 9 days of food and housing costs for the 1088 student-athletes currently selected to compete at the national meet
- NCAA pays 7 days of per diem for student-athletes who qualify for the Sweet 16 and reimburses their transportation to the national site
 - Remains within current NCAA budgetary limits for the national meet
 - Institutions whose student-athletes qualify to the Sweet 16 save on costs associated with athlete and coaching staff transportation to the regional sites under the current system
- Creates championship atmosphere without additional funding
 - All post-season finances can be focused on one championship event
 - In 2009, an additional \$15,000 is budgeted for each regional meet, yielding an additional \$60,000 in funding for one championship event under this proposal

CONS

- Teams will pay travel and per diem expenses for student-athletes for the Super 64
 - However, NCAA picks up per diem on Sunday after the Super 64
 - NCAA also reimburses transportation for student-athletes who qualify for the Sweet 16 and their official travel party
 - Also, teams already pay these expenses for a larger number of student-athletes at the regional meets

NCAA MANAGEMENT

PROS

- One championship event for the NCAA Sport Committee to manage
- Marketing of the championship event is focused on one site

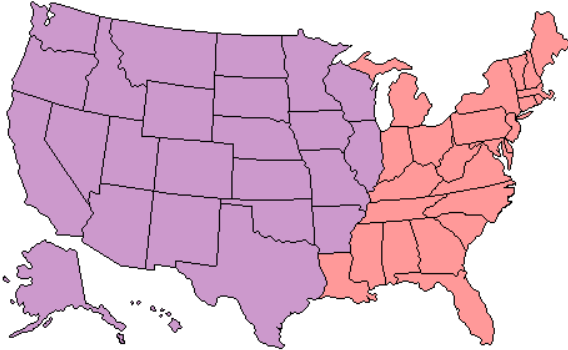
Additional plans considered, but not recommended

The following plans were considered by the Division I Regional Realignment Ad-Hoc Committee and the Division I USTFCCA officers and ad-hoc committee members, but they were not recommended because they failed to create competitive equity.

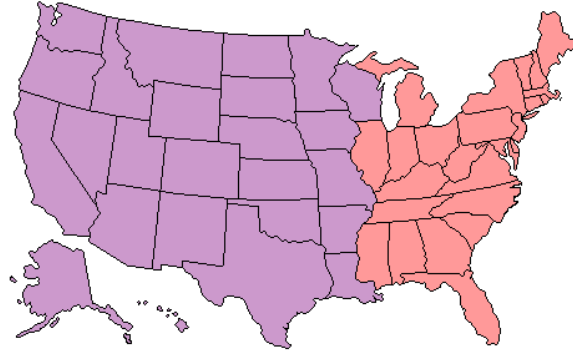
DUAL SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Dual Site: Two Super 64 Alignments

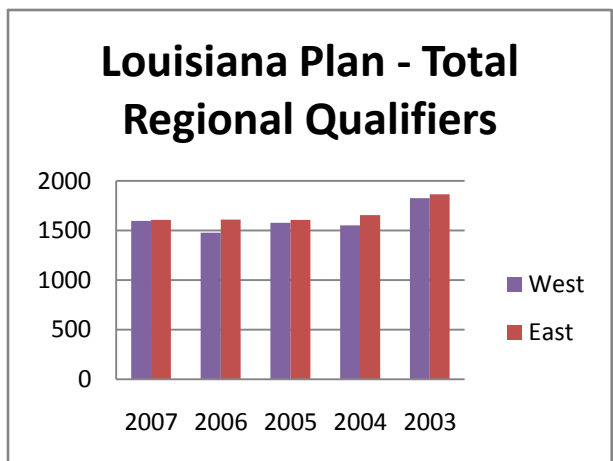
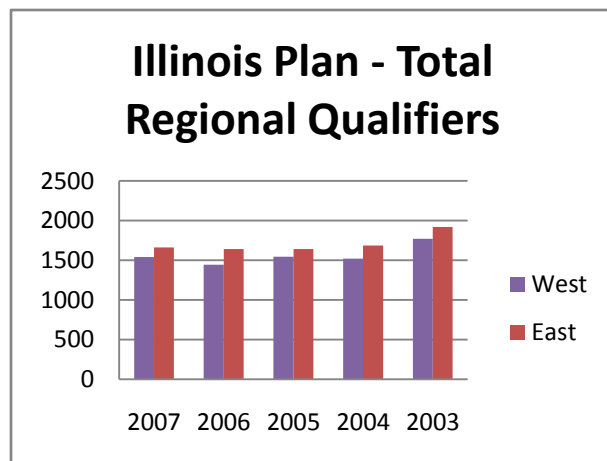
Illinois Plan



Louisiana Plan



These sites had the following numbers of regional qualifiers over the past 5 years:



ILLINOIS PLAN	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
EAST	1661	1643	1640	1686	1920
WEST	1541	1443	1544	1521	1771

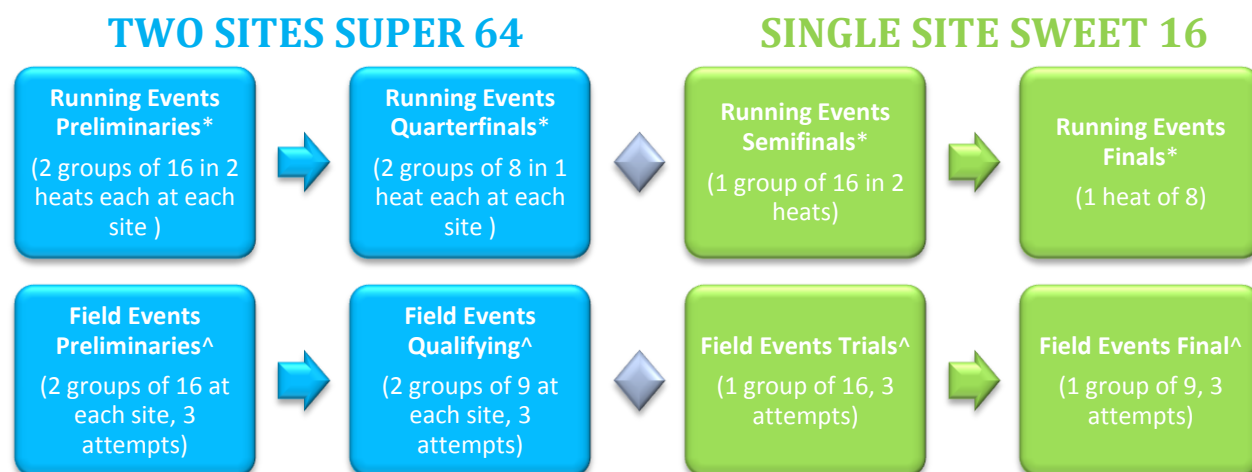
In the Illinois Plan, Illinois competes at the West Site, and Louisiana competes at the East Site.

LOUISIANA PLAN	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
EAST	1605	1609	1605	1655	1865
WEST	1597	1477	1579	1552	1826

In the Louisiana Plan, Louisiana competes at the West Site, and Illinois competes at the East Site.

DUAL SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Dual Site Super 64, Single Site Sweet 16



Student-athletes qualify to compete at one of two sites for the Super 64

- Each event has a field size of 32 at each of two Super 64 sites, except combined events
 - Combined events take 24 competitors from a national descending order list to the Sweet 16
- Women's and men's conference champions from eligible NCAA conferences automatically qualify for the Super 64 in each event
 - Assigned by state to one of two sites for the Super 64
- Women's and men's at-large participants from east and west descending order lists of performances established after conference champions declare into the championships fill the remainder of 32 places at each site

* 3000ST has 2 competitions in the Super 64 and 1 final in the Sweet 16

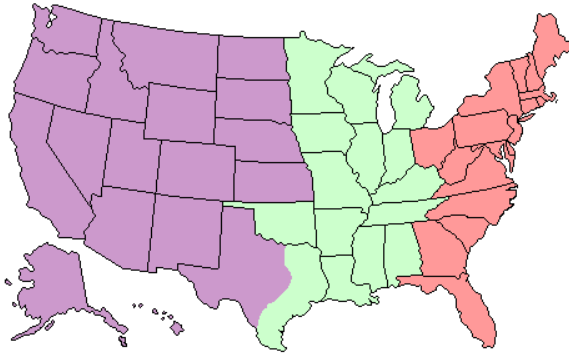
* 5000m and 10000m have 1 competition each in the Super 64 and Sweet 16

^ High jump and Pole vault compete in 2 groups of 16 at each site in the Super 64 and 1 group of 16 in the Sweet 16

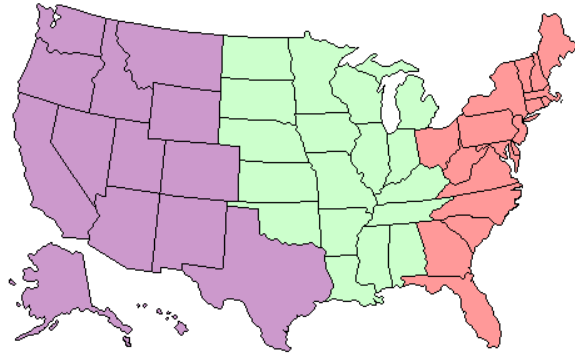
DUAL SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Three Sites: Two Super 72 Alignments

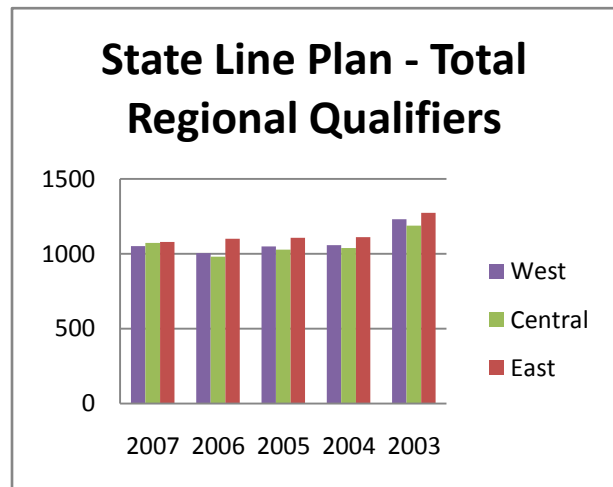
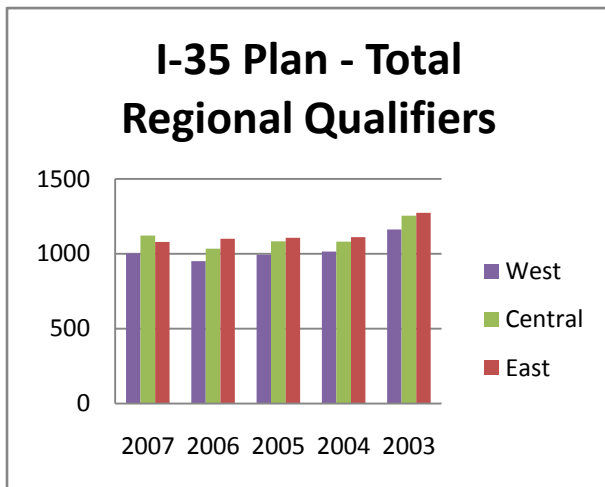
I-35 Plan



State Line Plan



These sites had the following numbers of regional qualifiers over the past 5 years:

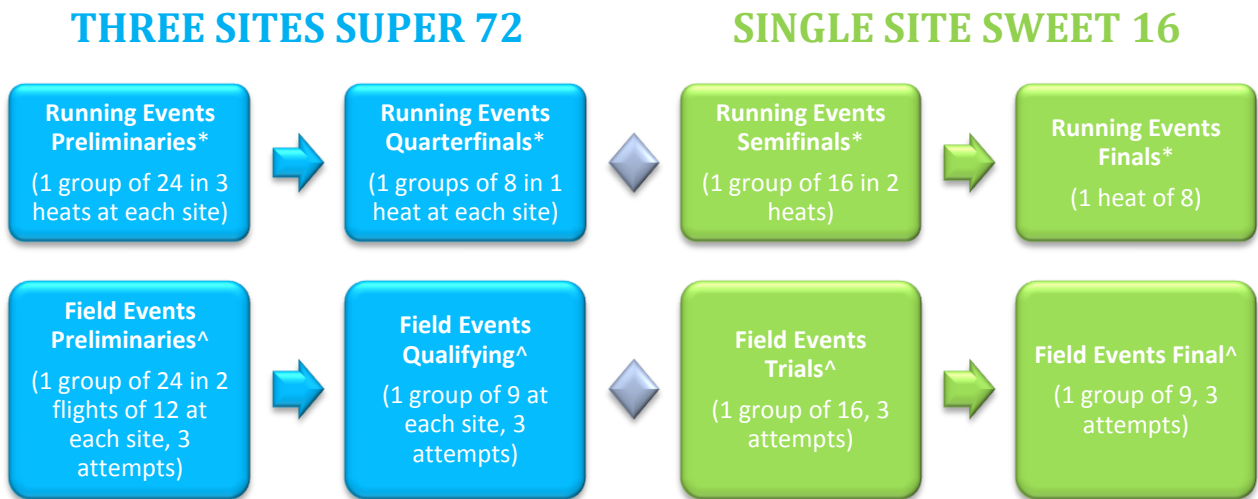


I-35 PLAN	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
WEST	1003	950	994	1014	1162
CENTRAL	1122	1035	1084	1082	1255
EAST	1078	1101	1106	1111	1274

STATE LINE PLAN	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
WEST	1051	1004	1050	1058	1230
CENTRAL	1073	981	1028	1038	1187
EAST	1078	1101	1106	1111	1274

THREE SITE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Three Site Super 72, Single Site Sweet 16



Student-athletes qualify to compete at one of three sites for the Super 72

- Each event has a field size of 24 at each of three Super 72 sites, except combined events
 - Combined events take 24 competitors from a national descending order list to the Sweet 16
- Women's and men's conference champions from eligible NCAA conferences automatically qualify for the Super 72 in each event
 - Assigned by state to one of three sites for the Super 72
- Women's and men's at-large participants from east, central, and west descending order lists of performances established after conference champions declare into the championships fill the remainder of 24 places at each site

* 3000ST has 2 competitions in the Super 72 and 1 final in the Sweet 16

* 5000m and 10000m have 1 competition each in the Super 72 and Sweet 16

^ High jump and Pole vault compete in 1 group of 24 at each site in the Super 72 and 1 group of 16 in the Sweet 16