

Empire 8 Football Conference Call Minutes
Wednesday April 18, 2012
9:00am

In attendance: Mark Carr – Hartwick College, Tom Rogish – Frostburg State University, Mike Welch – Ithaca College, Paul Vosburgh – St. John Fisher College, Dave Murray – Alfred University, Sherman Wood – Salisbury University, Blaise Faggiano – Utica College, Jerry Boyes – Buffalo State, Rocco Salomone – Brockport State, Jeff Myers – Director of NCAA Academic and Membership, Chuck Mitrano – Empire 8 Commissioner

- Blaise Faggiano welcomed Buffalo State and Brockport State into the conference. St. John Fisher, Salisbury, and Alfred were recognized for making the post-season.
- Jeff Myers of the NCAA took questions on watching film and having meetings during our 16 spring practice opportunities. Many of the coaches on the call felt that we should be able to meet with and watch film with our student-athletes during the 16 practices as long as the meeting was held on a day of practice. Coaches' referenced bylaw 17.02.1 Athletically Related Activities. Jeff and Chuck will review the language of this bylaw. The rules are in place for safety during this 16 day period and meeting/watching film does not increase any safety concerns.
- Jeff informed us that the NCAA is considering the use of Shields during spring practice. The committee was not in favor of the use of helmets or the use of blocking sleds. The coaches of the Empire 8 strongly feel that Helmets are needed for safety purposes. Using blocking technique on a shield held by a team mate is no different than using blocking technique on a shield held by a sled. There were concerns on the committee in regards to cost issues. I believe that at the higher levels helmets are not sent for reconditioning until after spring practice. There may be no additional cost in regards to reconditioning.
- Chuck Mitrano discussed the topic of Trash talking/taunting. He had a handful of players tell him some discouraging things on this topic at the Empire 8 SAAC Summit. Chuck advised the head football coaches that this was a noticeable problem prior to some football games. He asked that each of the head coaches address this issue with their teams and communicate clearly that this is unacceptable behavior.
- Division III Legislative action from the 2012 NCAA Convention was discussed.
- NCAA Rule Changes were discussed.
- Buffalo State is undergoing construction at their athletic facility. During Pre-Game and Half-Time teams will be provided tents to hold meetings, house medical staff, etc.
- Frostburg State and Buffalo State are unable to provide a covered end zone shot for filmers. Both schools utilize a Sky Hawk and will be able to provide a copy of the end zone directly after the game.
- Mike Welch from Ithaca College suggested that we meet as a Conference at the AFCA Convention in January. Mark Carr and Jerry Boyes would have difficulty attending and would need to be able to attend the meeting via conference call etc. We would also need an Empire 8 representative to attend the meeting in some fashion. We must have 100% attendance to hold a conference meeting.

- Chuck offered the ability to have Empire 8 patches for uniforms or stickers for helmets. During recruiting at Utica College we emphasize the strength of the Empire 8 Conference vs. our rival conferences. The more we can promote our conference the better. Utica College is in support of wearing helmet stickers and/or a patch on our uniforms.
- It has been brought to Chuck's attention that some of our non-conference opponents are pressuring student-athletes to make early decisions and commit to their institutions in the months of January and February. Hobart College, Cortland State College and NESCAC schools were named as institutions that were pressuring student-athletes to make decisions when they have not had the opportunity to visit and receive financial aid packages from the vast majority of Division III colleges and universities that are recruiting them. Coaches are encouraged to call Chuck directly to talk about specifics.
- Empire 8 coaches are encouraged to complete the Recruiting Calendar Survey that is currently being offered by the NCAA. After some discussion a few coaches volunteered to email Chuck some ideas on how we can make the recruiting process better for student-athletes, their families, and coaches.

“Recruiting at the NCAA Division III level is a 12-month proposition. Feedback from a 2012 NCAA Convention session suggested that it might be time to explore development of a recruiting calendar as well as limiting non-scholastic recruiting in order to help maintain a healthier life/work balance. NCAA staff is seeking feedback and input as to the reality of these two concepts – do current recruiting practices lead to high levels of burn out among Division III coaches or do institutional and team needs make current recruiting practices necessary? As this entire concept is a work in progress, we are seeking your feedback, and hope you will take a few minutes to complete the attached survey by **April 15**. Your responses will be anonymous and no attempt will be made to attribute any response to a particular individual. Click [here](#) to complete the survey.”

Blaise Faggiano 4/18/12