

## **Empire 8 Baseball Coaches 2013 Spring Meeting Minutes – 6/5/13 @ 10:00 am**

Corey Paluga, Elmira  
Brian Reitnour, Houghton  
George Valesente, Ithaca  
Brandon Potter, St. John Fisher  
Kristaps Aldins, Stevens  
Michael Lippencott, Associate AD Stevens  
Gil Burgmaster, Assistant AD/SID Utica  
Janelle Feuz, Empire 8

Note: any items that were voted on by E8 coaches are highlighted in **YELLOW**

### **A) Welcome and Congrats to Corey Paluga at Elmira... Congrats to Ithaca for World Series Run and St. John Fisher's ECAC Championship.**

#### **B) 7/9-Inning Format Rationale for AD's**

-A nine-inning game is the way baseball is played in a nine inning format... Anytime you are in postseason baseball (NCAA, ECAC) the games are always nine innings.

-A nine-inning game tests **THE TEAM** rather than the **PITCHER**. A nine inning game correctly gives advantage to deeper teams.

-All other top conferences play either all 9 inning games or at least a 7/9 format. There are very few (if any) elite conferences that play all 7 inning games. The Empire 8 is an elite conference and our schedule format should reflect this.

-A 7/9-inning format is in line with all other conferences regardless of division.

-A 7/9-inning allows coaches to use more players – more opportunities to distribute playing time.

#### **C) 2014 E8 Schedule Discussion**

-Change to mandatory 70% in region games is a major rule adjustment for E8 baseball teams at the present moment. It is a big deal right now (specifically for baseball) because games versus Houghton do not count towards helping NCAA profile. Wins versus Houghton only count as secondary criteria. Puts Empire 8 teams at major disadvantage in NCAA selection process. Brandon Potter expressed that it definitely hurt St. John Fisher this spring. Coaches expressed that baseball cannot be lumped into the same discussion as other E8 sports. The reason is because sports like softball have an AQ and baseball does not. We rely on the “at large bid” for our chance at the NCAA tournament.

-Several baseball coaches expressed that Chuck Mitrano and the Athletic Directors of each baseball-supporting E8 school need to have a conference call to discuss current baseball conference schedule. The rationale for this call would be to discuss

the negative ramifications of current E8 conference schedule for chances at NCAA tournament selection. Several coaches expressed that it was important that baseball coaches concerns regarding the E8 schedule are brought to serious discussion with the appropriate decision-makers. Coaches are concerned that our concerns are not being heard and/or brought to the table. Frustration is that other conferences have AQ's and baseball in the E8 does not. Coaches had a consensus that it is important to have Baseball Chair Kristaps Aldins and Brandon Potter from St. John Fisher (member of the NCAA selection committee) on a conference call with Chuck sometime in the near future. Several schools expressed a proposal to change the amount of required games versus Houghton from 4 to 2. One E8 school stated that if games versus Houghton are rained out they will simply not make these games up either on rain date weekend or any other date. The team's rationale is that their kids are being robbed of an opportunity of making it to the NCAA's due to Houghton games not counting toward NCAA tournament selection process.

-Important to note that Utica, Elmira, and Houghton did not participate very much in bringing up these frustrations. Ithaca, Stevens, and St. John Fisher (in no particular order) were the most active in bringing up these concerns about an E8 team's NCAA Tournament profile being hurt by current format.

-No changes on the horizon for Houghton on weekend scheduling... They will stay with Friday/Saturday conference format... The only time Houghton is allowed to play on Sundays is if Empire 8 mandates a rainout or if Houghton's administrative board votes to make an exception. Change on this policy will likely be slow at Houghton. They want to keep Sundays free. Stevens brought up concern in 2015 about traveling to Houghton for Friday/Saturday format. This causes Stevens to have their kids miss 2 days of classes. Stevens requested an exception to be made to play a Saturday/Sunday series during times when Stevens is playing at Houghton.

#### **D) 2015 Schedule Proposal**

-E8 coaches voted 6-to-0 to return to 3 game series in 2015 (3x5=15).

-Doubleheader Saturday (7/9-inning format) and Single Game Sunday (9-inning)

-Any team playing Houghton would be Single Game on Friday (9-inning) and Doubleheader on Saturday (7/9-inning)

-E8 coaches voted 6-to-0 that all 3 games would be played at one site.

-E8 coaches confirmed that in 2015 "bye week" would be eliminated and makeup weekend (rain date weekend) would still exist

#### **E) Stevens' Status in Empire 8 and Empire 8 Future Status**

-Discussed how Stevens will remain in E8 block schedule

-Discussed how Stevens' participation in CUNY tournament would allow them the chance for an AQ in 2014. Dates of CUNY tournament will be 5/7, 5/8, and 5/10.

-Discussion about would happen if Empire 8 got a 7<sup>th</sup> team for baseball... Stevens coach Kristaps Aldins stated that "we will cross that bridge when we get there."

-Discussion about possible satellite members for baseball, which would allow E8 to get a 7<sup>th</sup> team and an AQ. No ideas from coaches at the present time. Janelle confirmed that Baptist Bible, Marywood, Keuka have been brought up in the past.

### **F) Empire 8 Rain Weekend Policy**

-Coaches agree that we need to reword rainout policy.

-Need to add mention of rain date weekend in the official policy. Must make up conference games during rain weekend.

### **G) End of the Year Awards**

-E8 Coaches Voted 6-to-0 to adopt an additional award. Instead of Rookie of the Year we would like to have Rookie Positional Player of the Year and Rookie Pitcher of the Year.

-Empire 8 reviewed voting for 2013 Rookie of the Year and recognized that Matt Connolly was not, in fact, a rookie. As a result... Coaches in E8 voted 6-to-0 to award a Co-Rookie of the Year award in 2013, which will be now be given to Matt Connolly of Ithaca and Jayson Yano of Stevens.

-E8 coaches voted 6-to-0 to change the wording of the Coach of the Year Award to Coaching Staff of the Year

-George from Ithaca brought up whether it may be possible to inscribe the names of the winners of E8 baseball awards.

### **H) Diamond Baseball Update**

-Collected all necessary info on Diamond baseball ordering from each school... Only school that still needs to get us this info is Utica. Utica confirmed that they will get us this info by the end of the week

-Contact people at Diamond are Heidi [hdorling@diamond-sports.com](mailto:hdorling@diamond-sports.com) 800 366 2999 x222 and Anne [anne@diamond-sports.com](mailto:anne@diamond-sports.com) 714 415 7600

-Each institution is responsible for purchasing the appropriate amount of baseballs for themselves directly from Diamond

-Anne will work with each coach to assign \$200 merchandise credit

### **I) E8 Conference Tournament**

-Coaches agreed that conducting an E8 conference tournament is at a standstill

**J) Utica Coaching Situation**

-Utica coach Andy Weimer resigned... He has a full time job outside of baseball.

-Utica will look to hire as soon as possible. Will remain as a part time job.

**K) Call Wrapup**

-Best wishes for the summer!