

Empire 8 Baseball Coaches Fall Meeting Minutes – Tuesday 10/14/14

- **Commissioner Chuck Mitrano**
 - Commissioner Mitrano updated us on SUNY Canton potentially joining the conference as an affiliate member. The Empire 8 is hopefully optimistic that SUNY Canton will be approved as an affiliate member in the near future (in time for the 2015 season).
 - Chuck requested a sub-committee to form and for this committee to propose a conference tournament proposal for the 2015 season (need to look into host sites, baseballs, umpires, tournament format etc...)
 - Chuck updated us on Empire 8's stance on the 10% reduction in games (not in favor)

- **SUNY Canton Affiliate Discussion + Empire 8 Conference Tournament**
 - Does each Empire 8 school look to play SUNY Canton 3 times in regular season in 2015 and beyond (teams would need to quickly make adjustments to their 2015 schedule)? **Or** do we look to play a seven team conference tournament (making the regular season essentially "non-conference" games between Empire 8 opponents)? General consensus seems to be to NOT play SUNY Canton in 2015 and 2016 during the regular season. Instead we would look to include them in the conference tournament. This means that the previously sent out 2016 schedule will **likely** still stay intact (other than the addition of the conference tournament), but that the 2017 block schedule may now be subject to change if SUNY Canton is added to the block schedule during the year when they are eligible for the conference tournament and automatic bid.
 - Brandon Potter, Kristaps Aldins, Joe Milazzo, and Russ Rogers will meet on Wednesday 10/15 as part of the Empire 8 Conference Tournament Sub Committee
 - Games versus SUNY Canton will count in 2015 season for NCAA tournament selection purposes. So will Houghton. Both Houghton (year 3 provisional) and SUNY Canton (year 4 provisional) should be eligible in 2017 to compete in the conference tournament and be eligible for an NCAA tournament berth.
 - When will E8 Conference Tournament be played? Weekend of May 8-10 was discussed. This would still allow for rain weekend to stay intact.
 - Clarification made that if tournament is played on May 8-10 it means that Empire 8 teams would not play in ECAC tournament because it would be taking place at the same time.

- **NCAA Tournament & In Region/Out of Region Talk**
 - REVIEWED ALL INFO BELOW:
 - What Empire 8 Teams can do to best position themselves for an at large bid
 - Any proposed changes to regional playoff format?
 - "70% in region rule" for 2015 and beyond. Waiver form and other "in region" FAQ's are attached
 - 500 mile radius for "in region" in 2015

- **Empire 8 2015 Conference Schedule and Beyond** – (proposed 2016, 2017 schedules are below)
 - REVIEWED ALL INFO BELOW:
 - 15 total conference games. Play each opposing school in one 3-game weekend (or Fri/Sat. when applicable) block.
 - DHs on Saturday's will be 7/9 innings. If game goes extra inning in game one, game two will still be a nine inning game.
 - Any team playing Houghton would be Single Game on Friday (9-inning) and Doubleheader on Saturday (7/9-inning).
 - Conference commissioner must approve any change to conference schedule... Form is attached in this email. Time changes do not need the form. But changes to date do.
 - 12:00 pm starts are encouraged to help accommodate 7/9 inning format

- **Choosing Umpires for E8**
 - Discussed the choices of Nick Zibelli and ECAC for umpires. Plan is to wait and see how things play out with the umpires (which group will umpires choose to go with: Zibelli or ECAC) and other conferences until a decision is made.

- **Empire 8 Makeup Game Policy**
 - Confirmed that the teams should make up games at the earliest possible date... And if this is not possible then to use the "rain weekend" to make up any conference games.

- **Empire 8 Members for Baseball**
 - REVIEWED ALL INFO BELOW:
 - Elmira – Joining League Play in 2015
 - Houghton games will count towards conference standings starting in 2015?
 - Stevens is no longer in the CUNY and is only a member of the Empire 8.

- **Diamond is the New Empire 8 Conference Baseball AND NEW BALL SPECIFICATIONS**
 - Agreement was made that the D1 Pro LS (aka D1 Pro Empire 8) – the new low seam ball – **must be used in Empire 8 regular and postseason play.** If anyone disagrees with this then please send kaldins@stevens.edu an email and we can do an anonymous vote for usage during the regular season. This would potentially be a non-issue with SUNY Canton because we would only be competing against them in the conference tournament (and not during the regular season)

 - ALSO REVIEWED ALL INFO BELOW:
 - New Diamond Baseball to order is **D1 Pro LS (D1 Pro Empire 8)**
 - **Important:** Contact Heidi hdorling@diamond-sports.com 800 366 2999 x222 and Anne anne@diamond-sports.com 714 415 7600 to get the order process going.
 - 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.

- **Empire 8 All-Conference and Weekly Awards Voting**
 - Voting will once again be done online and will likely take place a few days before the All Region Nominations are due (last year All Region nominations were due 5/12)
 - Janelle confirmed that E8 will not be able to inscribe conference awards (will be each school's responsibility to write in their own names)
 - Janelle confirmed that the "Coach of the Year Award" likely will be changed to "Coaching Staff of the Year Award"
 - The athletic directors voted down the request to have a "Rookie of the Week Award."