

Empire 8 Softball Conference Call Agenda

December 18, 2014

3:30pm

Present on the Call

Gino Olivieri, Head Coach, Alfred University

Rhonda Faunce, Head Coach, Elmira College

Nora Duffy, Head Coach, Houghton College

Deb Pallozzi, Head Coach, Ithaca College

Shari Gerevics, Assistant Coach, Nazareth College

Bari Mance, Head Coach, St. John Fisher College

Erica Mehalick, Head Coach, Stevens Institute of Technology

Pat Mineo, Head Coach, Utica College

Michael Lippencott, Associate Athletic Director, Stevens Institute of Technology

Janelle Zera, Associate Commissioner, Empire 8

Agenda Items:

I. **Scheduling**

- a. **Review 2015 Schedule:** approved by all – Stevens and Alfred are playing Sunday 4/19
- b. **Review 2016 & 2017 Schedule:** no issues with the upcoming schedules
- c. **Empire 8 Scheduling Philosophy – discussed at AD's meeting:** At the last Presidents and ADs' meeting, they discussed creating concrete bylaws for scheduling. They are in the process of ranking the input (ie missed classed time, cost, etc). This will lead to a 4 year schedule. During the transition year teams could possibly play away at the same opponent in back-to-back years
- d. **Review policy for rescheduling games:** The 1st open date on each coach's schedule should be used first and the open rain date weekend should be for teams that have to travel further distances to reduce missed class time. When moving a weekend game to midweek, both AD's and Chuck Mitrano need to approve it. You cannot take away a weekend game without replacing it with another game.
- e. Discussed working better with each other on getting games in. As a group we are going to be more willing to give up a home game if we know in advance that our field will not be playable.

- f. Discussed creating a policy that will determine the regular season conference ranking if all conference games are able to be played. Deb is going to get the SUNYAC policy for the coaches to review.

II. **Empire 8 Softball Business**

- a. **Review home/away policy:** team hosting is home for both games:
- b. **Review tie breaker for conference regular season games:** ITB will be used in the 10th per NCAA rule book
- c. **Review inclement weather decisions during regular season games:** We will be using Halted Game Rule
- d. **Review Empire 8 by-laws for determining regular season champion if tie occurs:** review bylaws on E8 website
- e. **Empire 8 Conference Tournament date is May 1-3, 2015**
- f. **Houghton Eligible to participate in E8 Tournament:** After a brief discussion the AD's felt that since the games versus Houghton count they should be permitted to participate in the tournament if they qualify. While there was concern that they may take a slot from a team who would otherwise have a chance to earn the AQ the committee felt that the other teams should earn that spot and if Houghton is amongst the top teams that would further enhance a members profile for selection into NCAAs as compared to a team who is .500. AD's approved 8-0-1 that Houghton can participate in conference tournaments if they earn a seed and if they win the tournament the runner-up will get the AQ.
- g. **Game balls for conference championships:** Janelle will check with Chuck to see if this has been done.
- h. **Review responsibilities for hosting Empire 8 tournament:** In order to host you must have a tarp crew and an indoor practice facility in case of inclement weather
- i. **Review the home/away rules for E8 Championship (coin flip):** The tournament director needs to communicate with the coaches if the coin flip is necessary so they can make arrangements to return to the field.
- j. **All Tournament Recognition:** The All-Tournament team will not be announced at the tournament site (other than MVP) and will now happen via a press release at the conclusion of the tournament. This will allow coaches more time to consider athletes who are worthy and provide more recognition to those athletes. An all-tournament team will be named by the participating coaches in the tournament. The fourth place team will place one member, the third place team will name two members, the runner-up will name three athletes and the

champion team will place four members including the tournament MVP. This is across the board with all E8 sports.

- k. **All- Conference:** The coaches voted unanimously last year (8-0) to hold a conference call at the conclusion of the regular season and prior to the E8 tournament to discuss nominated players for All-Conference and vote online immediately following the call. (AD vote failed 0-8-0). Concerned it would be an unfair process potentially dominated by coaches with stronger personalities/speaking skills. As a result of Houghton games counting in conference standings and conference statistics since their games will be considered in NCAA selection criteria, the E8 All-Conference teams will be straight up, no longer adding an additional member for each Houghton player that is awarded.
 - i. **Timeline:** We decided to keep the timeline the same as previous years for nominations, voting and announcement of teams
 - ii. **Honorable Mention requirement:** Most sports have a minimum of two votes to be considered honorable mention, which turns about to be pretty much anyone who is nominated. With nine teams in most sports, the minimum should at least be 3 votes (one third). It was unanimously approved by the ADs that the minimum number of votes for honorable mention will be a third of competing teams.

III. **Officiating**

- a. **Names of officials for the Empire 8 tournament:** submit names of umpires to Erica Mehalick by Jan 15
- b. **The arbiter-(sup.arbitersports.com): rule book changes, bat list, rule interpretations, DP/Flex rule for dummies, online rule book**
- c. **Umpire evaluations- The arbiter**
- d. **Bat List:** New bat list came out Dec 8 and is on the Arbiter and NCAA websites: highlight and put the number of each bat

IV. **NCAA/NFCA Updates**

- a. **2014 Championship Format and dates:** Selection Sunday is May 3, Regionals May 8-10 (14- 4 team sites² three team sites), Super Regionals May 15&16 (8 sites, best of 3 series), Championship May 21-26 in Salem, VA
- b. **In region requirement: 70% of games must be in region. In region radius is now 500 miles**
- c. **Selection criteria:** all contest against DIII opponents will count in primary criteria (new last year)

- d. **Region rankings:** once ranked always ranked as been replaced with “ranked at time of selection (new last year)
- e. **NFCA Convention items- Deb Pallozzi**
 - i. Umpired were evaluated and have to be tested and attend a clinic to be post season qualified
 - ii. Padding will be required on all brick, concrete, etc backstops by 2016
 - iii. **Outfield Fence:** For all new construction after 2016, it is required that the fence be 6 feet or higher and be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields and 220 feet in center field. By 2017, an institutional field with a 4-foot fence must be a minimum of 210 feet in left and right fields and 230 in center field and it is highly recommended that a municipal field with a 4-foot fence used by the institution be at those same distances
 - iv. **Experimental Ball:** The stats were inconclusive on the new ball. Some believed it was faster, some slower. Many said it died once it hit the outfield
 - v. **LINK:** This could potentially replace the DP/FLEX Rule. DI teams used it this fall. Information is on the Arbiter
 - vi. **Leadoff Classic will occur in 2016.** Selection is based on regional rankings so budget for it just in case you are selected.

V. **Other Concerns**

- a. **Batting cage etiquette, bull pen, field usage per NCAA:** must give equal time in the cage and if you only have 1 bullpen it must be shared with visiting team if they want to use it
- b. **Role of on-site administrator:** Must have one for the arrival of the traveling team to go over policies and procedures for that day and site
- c. **Traveling without athletic trainers:** any issues? Contac the home team AT before competition
- d. **Janelle Zera- Maternity leave:** Plans to return to the office by mid-March. Contact Chuck with questions or issues.
- e. **Nominations for new E8 Chair:** Gino Olivieri nominated Bari Mance and Erica Mehalick seconded the nomination.
- f. **Other issues/concerns:** Julie Lenhart is on the DIII Rules Committee, Deb Pollazzi is on the NFCA Hall of Fame Committee and is E8 rep for the RAC.