

MIDDLE ATLANTIC CORPORATION

PRESIDENT'S MEETING

October 11, 2004
Lafayette College
Farinon Campus Center

Attendance: Ken Andrews, Dan Dutcher, David Stineback, Bernie O'Connor, Tom Kepple, Tom O'Hara, Steve MacDonald, Jim Douthat, Erv Rokke, Jay Lemons, Jim Harris, Tim Gilmour

Bernie O'Connor welcomed everyone and congratulated Steve MacDonald on being named president at Lebanon Valley.

Dan Dutcher reviewed the status of the NCAA financial aid audit. The 2004 pilot is due on November 1. Schools that submit their information by this deadline receive a \$1,000 honorarium. The main purpose of the pilot is to establish reasonable variances for future evaluation. Schools are to use the initial audit results to conduct self-studies of their financial aid program. Variances that don't meet the standard may result from extenuating circumstances that can be documented. Schools that cannot explain or rectify variances over time (a couple of years) will have their case sent to the NCAA enforcement staff. The presidents asked Ken Andrews to collect MAC data from the audit in March 2005 and collate it for the Annual Meeting.

A brief discussion about three pieces of NCAA legislation to be considered at the 2005 Convention ensued: the use of a football in the non-traditional football season, allowing an alumni contest in the non-traditional season, and, approval of the AQ in tennis and golf.

Geographic proximity is the only common element in our alliance of schools. Many conferences tie academics, mission, and other functions to their conference philosophy. Often those principles are supported by restricting many of the NCAA rules. The MAC simply abides by the *NCAA Manual*. Ken Andrews will provide the presidents with the restrictions that other conferences have imposed (attached to this document). Although most agreed that it would be beneficial to be proactive about conference alignment, in reality, it will probably be a reactive process, similar to the Centennial move in 1993.

Most of the focus on possible subdivision of Division III centers on "neighborhood" issues. While the overall philosophy of the athletic experience is at the core of this conversation, access and success in championships is the primary factor. Although the overwhelming majority of Division III institutions have opposed subdivision, practically that position is in jeopardy as championship pools approach 64 teams. Managing the growth of Division III will delay this problem, but eventually subdivision, or changes in the championship structure (mainly championships would be extended past the present

three week format), will have to be implemented. Changes in the NCAA revenue stream could force other changes in the championships. The present budget allows for fully funded championships and many special initiatives. If the NCAA budget needs to be modified, most athletic interests would favor maintaining the championship structure at the expense of special initiatives.

Dan Dutcher spoke about several conference initiatives: tracking sportsmanship, lifestyle choices, leadership, etc. Our conference initiatives on women's coaching, logo change, and promotion were also cited. This spurred a conversation about "best practices" for conferences. Dan indicated that the NCAA did not have data on this subject, but it seemed like a good idea to pull this information together. There was general agreement that academic profiles would be of primary interest.

Interest in publicity for Division III and the MAC raised several issues. Although many of the NCAA public service announcements are Division III in spirit, Division I athletes are portrayed. The MAC is well known and should be a major part of our identity; Freedom and Commonwealth Conferences are unknown except to those involved in the NCAA automatic qualification process. Before the CBS basketball contract, Division III had more championship exposure on national television. The presidents asked the Ken Andrews put together a proposal for cable or web-based broadcasts of MAC events. Ken has placed this on the agenda for the commissioners meeting at the NCAA Convention.

There group next discussed "competitiveness" and football issues. For many, the competitive nature of the athletic program is cumulative – all your teams do fairly well rather than having a couple of high profile teams that enjoy national success. It was noted that most of the Corporation championships are now dominated by schools that do not offer football. One possible way to subdivide Division III would be over football roster size. If the MAC attracted three more football playing schools, two conferences (seven teams each) could be created. Since inception of the AQ, MAC football has had fewer representatives in the NCAA playoffs; an additional AQ would allow entry for another team. A smaller conference schedule would allow schools more flexibility in their schedule.

Ken Andrews noted that the wrestling coaches would like to add affiliate members. Some present programs may be dropped, and the number of competitors we send to nationals is unrepresentative of the conference strength. About half of our NCAA entries are All-Americans – by having more wrestlers in the conference meet, we would earn more spots at the NCAA tournament. If the Directors of Athletics approve of this move, the wrestling coaches will craft a formal proposal for presidential approval in May.

The data from *2004 Petersons College Guide* and the 2002-03 EADA reports spurred some conversation. The financial aid data were provided to support claims that averages may indicate compliance, but one needs to delve deeper to reveal the true story. For example:

In a large sample, the data on 50 entering football players may be consistent with the overall class, but what about the top ten players?

In a small sample, two no-need golfers who are top students (big academic awards) make a small squad look out of range with the overall student population.

At adjournment, the group decided this meeting should be held every year in conjunction with the AICUP fall regional meeting.