



MIDDLE ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

VOTING DELEGATES MEETING MINUTES

December 2, 2014

Delaware Valley College | Doylestown, Pa.

PARTICIPANTS:

Brett Adams (Stevenson), Ken Andrews (MAC), Heidi Birtwistle (Eastern), Steve Cantrell (Delaware Valley), Mike Clark (Lycoming), Jack Cole (Messiah), Scott Coval (DeSales), Nate Davis (Eastern), Tom Dickman (Hood), Erin Eddinger (Arcadia), Rick Ferry (Albright), Scott Frey (Messiah), Laura Gingrich (Alvernia), Brian Granata (Arcadia), Stacey Hollinger (Lebanon Valley), Jon Hower (MAC), Cheryl Ish (King's), Steve King (Messiah), Bill Klika (Fairleigh Dickinson), Keith Levinthal (Manhattanville), Matt Levy (Delaware Valley), Janice Luck (Albright), Addy Malatesta (Wilkes), Dave Martin (Misericordia), Jenn Noon (Fairleigh Dickinson), Gracia Perilli (DeSales), Kathy Railey (Stevenson), Jack Shafer (Widener), Bill Stiles (Alvernia), Marie Stroman (MAC)

President Joseph Brosnan (Delaware Valley), President Jim Harris (Widener), and Commissioner Terry Small (NJAC) were also present for a portion of the meeting.

Ken Andrews called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

1. Development of President's Agenda. The group discussed topics that would be reviewed with President Brosnan and President Harris including: the MAC Review Team report; branding; and sport sponsorship.
2. Meeting with President Brosnan & President Harris.
 - a. Communication Between Presidents and Directors of Athletics. Athletic directors voiced their desire for more transparency, especially related to membership, between the presidents group and the directors of athletics. It was also suggested that the current meeting structure be reformatted so that athletic directors can meet and discuss issues prior to the presidents meetings throughout the year.
 - b. Branding. While the group did not support a change in nomenclature of each conference (Commonwealth and Freedom) there was a consensus that the brand of the "MAC" is the common thread to all schools in the conference. There were concerns that changing conference names may affect eligibility for NCAA championship AQ's (automatic qualification). No direction for branding needs to be stipulated in the next strategic plan but an emphasis should remain on the conference's storied tradition.

- c. Realignment. The conference directors of athletics were charged to discuss possible realignments of the current conference structure based on the student-athlete experience and make two to three recommendations to the presidents and Strategic Planning Committee; a recommendation to remain in the current structure would be considered.
- d. Membership. Presidents *and* athletic directors would consider any discussion of new membership. Documentation of new membership criteria used in 2011 should continue to guide the criteria and process used to make decision regarding applications for membership in the MAC. The group noted the advantages with regard to scheduling that can be achieved when both conferences have an even number of members (i.e., 8 or 10).
- e. Institutional commitment. The group discussed what a re-commitment to the conference would entail. Among many things, the group specifically noted participation in conference events (including meetings) as well as a financial commitment. Athletic directors emphasized that an increase in member dues would need to be supported by the presidents.
- f. Sport Sponsorship. The conference office is constructing a sport sponsorship survey to gauge interest in new sports. Questions detail the current level of sponsorship (i.e., NCAA, club, intramural, or none), intended levels of sponsorship, timeline of intended level of sponsorship, and recommendations for the conference. The survey will be distributed electronically. Any consideration of additional conference sport sponsorship will take place on a case-by-case basis.
- g. Improving the MAC. Strong presidential leadership and a better working relationship between presidents and athletic directors will improve the conference. Additionally, an emphasis should be placed on promoting gender equity and racial diversity.
- h. Conference Office. The group agreed that the conference office space should continue to be housed on a member institution's campus. It was recommended that a half-time position be funded to cover many clerical responsibilities and help develop conference archives and records.
- i. Role of the Faculty Athletic Representative. While each institution has a different working relationship with their campus FAR, it was noted that FAR's should lead the discussion on missed class time with other faculty.
- j. Role of Athletic Direct Report. Discussion centered on current communication issues in correspondence from the conference to president and athletic directors. To better engage the athletic direct reports, the group supported them being involved in strategic conversations. Athletic direct reports will meet as a group at

the 2015 NCAA Convention; the group noted that ADR's may benefit from regular meetings in the future. ADR's are always invited to attend and participate in the annual meeting (May).

3. MAC Review Team Report. The review team of Brad Bankston (Old Dominion Athletic Conference), Terry Small (New Jersey Athletic Conference), and Steve Ulrich (Centennial Conference) constructed a report based off of their review of the conference after meeting with several constituent groups on October 14, 2014. Reflections of the report were discussed, specifically, the how the current meeting structure could be modified to foster better communication between athletic directors and presidents.
4. Strategic Planning Working Document.
 - a. Branding. In coordination with the construction of a new strategic plan, a branding opportunity exists to effectively market the conference. The group discussed in great length the confusion in nomenclature and visible branding for the Commonwealth and Freedom conferences. It was recommended that conference communications refer to the MAC Commonwealth and MAC Freedom as the conferences that compose the MAC. Communications should also highlight the history, traditions, and commitment to diversity and equity, as well as present the MAC as a top Division III conference.
 - b. Enrollment Pressures & Sport Sponsorship. The group discussed enrollment pressures and how they could be addressed with enhanced conference sport sponsorship. Among the discussion was the threshold to sponsor conference competition/championships (7 for AQ sports; 5 for non-AQ sports), including club sports. Ice hockey and men's volleyball were specific sports discussed.
 - c. Alignment & Membership. The group discussed how and when alignment (realignment) and membership considerations should be made. Understanding that any potential candidates for a new institutional member would need to have a clear perspective of where they would be situated among the split-conference system, all conversations of realignment would precede discussions of additional membership. Although the group noted the advantages with regard to scheduling that can be achieved when both the Commonwealth and Freedom have an even number of members, seeking to maintain a membership of not fewer than 16 schools and not more than 20 schools was desired.
5. Review of NCAA Legislation & Issues. Terry Small, Commissioner of the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) provided an overview of the following topics: DI Governance restructuring; 2015 NCAA Convention legislation; women's basketball joint championship (2016); in-region competition; DIII identity activation; Special Olympics partnership; Recruiting Working Group; Athletic Direct Report working group; 360 Proof; sportsmanship; conference rules seminar; committee training videos; financial aid resource; and diversity and inclusion.

6. Accept May Minutes as amended. The group **approved (15-0)** the May 20-22, 2014 meeting minutes as amended.

7. Championships.
 - a. 2014 Fall Championships Accounting. The committee reviewed accounting from the 2014 fall championships, although not all gate receipts had been collected. The increase in tennis championships was due to the usage of an indoor facility during inclement weather. Additional expenses were covered in the cross country championship. T-shirt sales have continued to produce revenue.
 - b. Championship Participant Evaluation. The MAC office has begun soliciting feedback from participants of conference individual championships. A report of their responses from fall championships was made available for the group to review.
 - c. ECAC Tennis. The ECAC will sponsor a spring tennis championship. The organization is seeking feedback from members for recommended formats for the championship. In addition, the ECAC hosted a fall golf championship, which featured several MAC teams.
 - d. Women's Golf. The waiver to allow only four women's golfers to compete in at least six contests will expire at the conclusion of the 2014-15 year. In the 2015-16 season, each women's golf team will need to have at least five individuals compete in six contests to meet NCAA sports sponsorship minimum requirements.

8. Governance.
 - a. Alignment Discussion. Directors of Athletics will convene for a special meeting on December 16 at DeSales to discuss realignment options and recommendations for the Strategic Planning Committee.
 - b. Faculty Athletics Representatives. FAR's will conduct their annual meeting on January 6, 2015 at DeSales University.
 - c. 2015 NCAA Meeting. The MAC meeting held during the 2015 NCAA Convention will include: legislative review; and a Strategic Planning Committee meeting with Direct Reports and the conference Review Team.
 - d. Location of Spring Voting Delegates Meeting. The spring voting delegates meeting will be held at the Spooky Nook Sports complex in Manheim, Pa. to explore possible partnerships for future conference events and functions.

- e. 2015 NCAA Conference Rules Seminar. The NCAA Conference Rules seminar hosted by MARCA (Mid-Atlantic Regional Commissioners Association) will be held at York College on June 18, 2015. Each sponsoring conference will be allowed up to eight registrants until April 1.
 - f. Preseason Calls. In order to inform coaching groups of important dates and any rule changes a preseason call will be instituted for each coaching group to connect with conference staff and the sport's coordinator of officials. Each call is expected to last 15-20 minutes.
 - g. All-America Voting. As a reminder, conference bylaws stipulate that: coaches must be a member of their respective coaching association in order to participate in all-America voting.
 - h. Restructure of the Operations Committee. The group **approved (15-0)** a restructure of the current Operations Committee to a group of three directors of athletics serving three-year terms (past chair, chair, and chair-elect). An individual from a differing conference will replace each term completion. Additionally, each of the following committees will be chaired by a conference administrator (preferably athletic director): Athletic Training; Baseball; Basketball (Men's); Basketball (Women's); Cross Country; Field Hockey; Football; Lacrosse (Men's); Lacrosse (Women's); Soccer (Men's); Soccer (Women's); Softball; Sports Information; Swimming; Tennis; Track & Field (Men's & Women's; Indoor & Outdoor); Volleyball; and Wrestling.
9. Miscellaneous.
- a. Women's Lacrosse Officials. The Division III commissioners continue to encourage coaches to oppose any nation-wide officiating proposals stemming from officiating groups.
 - b. Senior All-Star Basketball Games. In order to accommodate practice space for each team and a Special Olympics clinic the Senior All-Star Basketball games will be moved from Alvernia to Albright on Sunday, March 15, 2015.
 - c. START. Despite a lack of strong participation at Albright in the past, a request for a girl's lacrosse course was requested and sponsored this fall. Classes for other sports included baseball and softball. The spring START program will be held in the Wilkes-Barre area.
10. Committee Reports.
- a. Cross Country. Hood and Stevenson were added to the rotation of cross country championship hosts. A total of seven schools are included in the current rotation.

- b. Field Hockey.
 - i. Ball Runners. The group **approved (15-0)** adding language to the *Fact Book* to indicate that at least four trained ball runners should be on staff for field hockey contests in order to maintain the pace of the game.
 - ii. Coordinator of Officials. The group **approved (15-0)** retaining Lois Pinto as the coordinator of field hockey officials for the 2015 and 2016 seasons.
- c. Football.
 - i. Coordinator of Officials. As the ECFOA agreement concludes at the end of the 2015 season, at least three officiating options will be available for discussion at the spring voting delegates meeting.
 - ii. Start of Conference Games/Timing of Bye Week. The group **approved (9-0-6)** revising the conference schedule to start on week two and include a bye in weeks four-six, ideally during each school's fall break schedule. The schedule revision will not occur until the 2017 football season. This change should alleviate some of the financial burden football schools incur while student-athletes compete during fall break periods.
- d. Men's Soccer. The group **approved (15-0)** retaining Mark Garcia as coordinator of men's and women's soccer officials for the 2015 and 2016 seasons.
- e. Women's Soccer. The group **tabled** a vote to determine film exchange policies and procedures for women's soccer in the 2015 fall season. Although supported (5-0) by the Operations Committee, the group wanted a vote from the women's soccer coaches before making a decision.
- f. Sports Information. With increased coverage in streaming contests, participants, coaches, and fans are reminded to display appropriate behavior in press box and press row areas. Sports information staffs were also encouraged to make JV schedules readily available to assist in tracking of participation for medical hardship waivers.
- g. Volleyball.
 - i. Film Exchange. The group **approved (15-0)** starting film exchange through Hudl in the sport of volleyball in fall 2015.
 - ii. Crossover Contests. Due to football scheduling conflicts, Manhattanville (instead of Fairleigh Dickinson) and Wilkes (instead of Misericordia) will host crossover tournament contests the first weekend of October. When

surveyed, a majority of volleyball coaches were in favor (9-2-4) of continuing the crossover contests.

- iii. Coordinator of Officials. The group **approved (15-0)** retaining Larry Fetterhoff as the coordinator of volleyball officials for the 2015 and 2016 seasons.
 - h. Track & Field. It was noted that schools currently sponsoring cross country but not track & field (indoor or outdoor) would be allowed to compete in MAC track & field championships if their teams were declared through the NCAA. Minimum sponsorship requirements for indoor track & field are at least 10 participants competing in at least five contests, while the requirements for outdoor track & field are at least 12 participants competing in at least six contests. This may be a beneficial opportunity for any school looking to grow cross country and/or develop track & field teams.
 - i. MAC SAAC. Dr. Nancy Kaplan of the National Consortium for Academics and Sport (NCAS) and Associate Vice President at St. John's University gave a presentation about personal branding at the fall meeting. The group discussed proposed legislation on their fall conference call. They also reviewed strategic planning topics such as: crossover contests, championship access, pre-determined championship sites, and an honors event. Seventeen individuals will be attending the 2015 NCAA Convention and participate in conference meetings. Rob Wingert (Stevenson, Men's Volleyball) was selected by the NCAA to represent the conference and the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) on the Division III SAAC.
 - j. Baseball. The MAC has submitted a bid for the 2015 NCAA Division III Mid-Atlantic Baseball Regional at Santander Stadium in York, Pa from May 13-17.
 - k. Women's Lacrosse. A brief discussion was held about the current regulations on video exchange and it's impact in a time when the Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association (IWLCA) holds a library with an open exchange between all collegiate women's lacrosse teams. Continuation of the discussion was tabled for the group's meeting at the 2015 NCAA Convention.
11. Future Meetings. Directors of athletics will convene for a special meeting on December 16 to discuss realignment. The full voting delegates group will meet next on Tuesday, March 31 at Spooky Nook Sports in Manheim, Pa.
12. Adjournment. The committee adjourned at approximately 3:18 p.m.

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