

**MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION  
DIVISION III HEAD COACHES COMMITTEE MEETING**

December 2, 2015; Atlanta Marriott Marquis

The meeting was brought to order at 7:30 p.m. ET.

Those present were Chair Diana Pepin (Eastern Connecticut State and NFCA D3 Board representative), Atlantic representative John Byrne (Moravian), Central rep Erica Hanrahan (DePauw), Great Lakes reps Kat McCreery (Illinois Wesleyan) and Meghan Roman (Illinois College), Midwest reps Renae Hartl (Luther) and George Wares (Central), New England rep Jen Williams (MIT), Northeast reps Marie Curran (Buffalo State) and Hannah Shalett-Quintana (Skidmore), West rep Angela Froboese (Southwestern) and NFCA Division III liaison Dave Hines. Special guest Jan Gentry (NCAA).

Atlantic rep Brandon Elliott (Virginia Wesleyan), Central rep Josie Henry (Case Western Reserve), East rep Kim Wilson (Rowan), New England rep Dave Canan (Babson) and West rep Janae Shirley (East Texas Baptist) were unable to attend.

1. Welcome. Ms. Pepin welcomed the group to the inaugural D3 HCC meeting and initiated the roll call of attendees.
2. Review and approve HCC procedures.
  - a. Help each other and come up with basic deadlines.
  - b. Committee terms.
    - i. It was suggested that committee service dates are staggered to keep enough veteran members on the HCC to remain effective while newcomers to the committee get up to speed.
    - ii. It was suggested that D3 have a listening person on the D1 and D2 HCC calls to keep abreast of what issues those groups are discussing and if those topics affect/should be discussed in D3.
3. NCAA legislation.
  - a. NCAA staff support.
    - i. Ms. Gentry said she and/or Maureen Harty would be happy to sit in on any conference calls that the HCC thinks it would be helpful to have someone from the NCAA involved with.
  - b. Ten percent reduction.
    - i. Possible cut in games to 35.
    - ii. Modification to 5-10 percent in selected sports.
    - iii. Baseball and softball targeted as sports to look at.
    - iv. Softball should be considered its own entity, due to baseball's lack of doubleheaders.
    - v. Softball players don't miss as much class time.
    - vi. Coaches nine percent support for further look at it.
    - vii. Missed class time primary reason.
    - viii. Started with proposal by two conferences.

- ix. 430ish D3 schools (407 sponsor softball and are eligible for 2016 championship)
- x. Mr. Wares asked if we could go to the amount of games on spring trip not counting, since little or no class time is missed during this period.
- xi. Ms. Curran noted that the people who deal with athletes on a daily basis are not pushing for the change. Supporters are people like Faculty Athletic Representatives, Vice Presidents and Provosts.
- xii. Ms. Gentry said anything softball can do to show baseball and softball can be differentiated would be helpful to the cause.
- xiii. Ms. Pepin said if you know you'll be playing, say, Tuesdays and Thursdays, make sure your players schedule their classes in such a way to allow departure those days in early afternoon and not miss class time.
- xiv. Mr. Byrne said having coached both baseball and softball, they ARE different animals. The time is much more for a nine-inning (baseball) game.
- xv. Ms. Pepin said softball has a higher grade-point average and players are not missing as much class time as baseball. We need to stick to those facts to make a strong proposal.
- xvi. Ms. Curran said in the State University of New York Athletic Conference, there are 20 days of competition in softball and an average of 32.6 in baseball. The two sports have the same amount of games, but entirely different days of competition.
- xvii. Mr. Wares said the credibility in D3 is high. There have been no complaints about missed class time. "They're paying \$42K/year and you're going to take games away from them? If you diminish them, we're going to lose players to other levels (divisions)."
- xviii. Ms. Hartl said her school doesn't have a lighted field (and other softball teams don't either) and they're being compared to sports that do. "Our games have to be played during the day — when classes are in session."
- xix. Ms. Gentry said concern over rainouts/snowouts, missed class time and a large volume of the season's games being crammed into a small period of time — typically the two weeks at the end of the regular season — were among the reasons the group brought the proposal to the NCAA for consideration.
- xx. Ms. Hartl said it is important to go back to their conference offices and find out who is attending the NCAA Convention to make voices heard.
- xxi. Ms. Curran said a lot of schools are adding softball to combat football, not baseball (a null Title IX issue, since there are MANY more softball teams than baseball teams in D3).

1. Look at things that other sports did to get off the table (for reduction) and find the same answers.
  2. Create five bullet points to give to Athletic Directors at the 400-plus schools to help differentiate softball from baseball, such as less missed class time and shorter game times.
- xxii. Ms. Pepin asked if the group wanted to put together something before the NCAA Convention in January. There's time set aside for addressing issues on playing practices.
- xxiii. Mr. Wares said that coaches need to go back to their schools and see where their representatives stand and get them to speak, rather than sit there while others speak.
- xxiv. Ms. Gentry noted that polls and surveys help sway decisions at the NCAA.
- xxv. Ms. Shalett-Quintana asked if it was known where the National Student-Athlete Advisory Committee stands on this issue.
- xxvi. Ms. Curran said the players don't want to practice as much and want to play more games.
- xxvii. Ms. Hanrahan pointed out that there is a cost reduction involved with the reduction of games, but maybe decision makers haven't heard from coaches enough about their feelings on the topic. "(Reducing games) is a major difference in the student-athlete experience.
- xxviii. Mr. Byrne said the ironic thing is schools never play a full 40 games anyway. "In reality, we are doing that now. Nature is making us play 35 games."
- xxix. Ms. Pepin said if the decision is made to go to 35 games, schools might end up playing 30 games then.
- xxx. Mr. Wares said if you reduce games so much, you're talking about playing glorified intramurals. One of the great things about D3 sports is that you can the opportunity to study abroad and have a really competitive level of play. "If we lose the competitive part, we lose the D3 model."
- xxxi. Ms. Curran said we shouldn't make a big deal out of not being able to play 40 games, because then administrators will say, "fine, well you're doing that anyway, so you won't mind us reducing your days then."
- xxxii. Agreement to create list of five bullet points by Jan. 16 for people attending NCAA Convention, which Ms. Curran will spearhead with help from Ms. McCreery and Ms. Roman.
1. Questions to include:
    - a. Name?
    - b. School?
    - c. Are you full or part-time?
    - d. Does your league allow you to play the full 40 games?

- e. How many missed days of class do you have?
  - f. What time do you start softball games?
  - g. What time do your baseball games begin?
  - h. What are your days of competition?
  - i. Do you feel a decrease in games is appropriate?
  - j. Should softball keep the same amount of games? Increase? Decrease?
  - k. Do you feel that it benefits the student-athlete experience to decrease the amount of games to 35?
- c. Move season back/split season into fall and spring segments.
- i. Replace traditional season with two-semester model.
  - ii. Mr. Byrne said staffing in the fall would be an issue, as SIDs, training staffs and event personnel are spread thin already due to existing in-season sports. It would disjoint things – the flow of the season wouldn't be there.
  - iii. Ms. Hartl said the fall season is not hurting people. You don't have to worry about games in the fall, which is nice. You can actually teach skills.
  - iv. Ms. Curran asked how splitting the season would affect redshirt possibilities. Would they be able to come back?
  - v. Ms. Shalett-Quintana noted that those doing pre-med or student teaching typically load up on classes in the fall to allow them to compete in the spring.
  - vi. Ms. Pepin suggested a bullet list for this issue, too, would be helpful when talking to Athletic Directors, conference commissioners and other people of influence. "Anything we can do to get our message out there."
4. Salary study.
- a. Penny Siqueiros (Emory) has really spearheaded this effort.
  - b. Survey is expected to be sent out by the NFCA office in January.
    - i. Questions to include:
      - 1. What is your secondary responsibility if one is part of your full-time salary?
      - 2. If you have one, how much time do you spend on it each week (hours or percentage of your total work time)?
      - 3. Do you have a full-time assistant?
    - ii. Ms. Hartl said that no one at her school is 100 percent coaching, not even their football coach.
    - iii. Ms. Pepin said she received a salary survey done by field hockey coaches and it was very interesting — there's a wide range of salaries.
    - iv. Mr. Wares said it's important to get full-time assistants. "I'm concerned that we (don't) pay our assistant coaches well."
    - v. Ms. McCreery noted that someone may be, say, only 10 percent softball in the balance of their workload, but they are a

considered a full-time coach. She suggested finding out what incentives/perks coaches get. "I get no extra bonus for making the postseason, but if I'm active in my community and/or a good professor, I get more money."

5. Recruiting calendar.
  - i. Ms. Pepin reported no momentum right now. If it becomes an issue again, the HCC will need to talk about it.
6. Next meeting. A conference call is scheduled for Monday, February 8. Ms. Pepin suggested planning conference calls on the first Monday of the month, but if there is nothing to discuss, that month's call will be skipped.
7. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.