

**National Fastpitch Coaches Association**  
**Softball Summit Minutes**  
FRIDAY DECEMBER 4, 2015 – Atlanta Marriott Marquis

I. Opening Remarks

A. Patrick Murphy (past president/moderator) – Welcomed everyone and introduced NFCA interim executive director Carol Bruggeman

B. Carol Bruggeman presented outgoing board awards to First Vice President Pat Conlan, Third Vice President Kathryn Gleason and NJCAA representative Tommy Ramos

II. Bylaw Changes

A. Murphy presented bylaw changes and proposed they be voted on as a package. Vote passed unanimously.

III. Chalk Talks

A. Diane Miller (Assistant Coach Rep)

1. Mentoring session raised \$20,000 (thanks to a \$10,000 matching donation) at Mentoring session; Thank you Sue Enquist & Jacquie Joseph for moderating.
2. First-year Assistant Coach University was a success/very well received; It got off the ground through hard work of Sam Marder and Ashley Chastain
3. NFCA is committed to helping assistants; goal is to provide programming

B. Carrie Austgen (High School)

1. Launched state liaison program last year; helped NFCA gather a lot more high school information
2. Need to do a better a job of recognizing high school coaches for HOF
3. Cindy Bristow's SB excellence (ebooks) is a great tool. Gathering information on how it was received in the first year. What do the high school coaches need

C. LeeAnn Taylor (Cal JC)

1. Pushing for our state tournament to get back to eight teams (was cut to four in 2010 due to budgetary constraints).

D. Tommy Ramos (NJCAA)

1. Improve line of communication with NJCAA office
2. Discussed bat testing
3. In favor of moving up the signing date to coincide with NCAA
4. Increase involvement with NFCA

E. Hal Wynn (NAIA)

1. Working to increase numbers in NFCA
2. Discussed moving Leadoff Classic from three to two years.
3. Made decision broadcasting postseason games online from opening round sites to our World Series.
4. Discussed technology in the dugout/waiting to see what everybody else's feelings are before we make a decision

*Patrick Murphy – If every member got one person to join that would bring our membership to 8,000*

- F. Diana Pepin
  1. Formed an HCC for the first time
  2. Created action plans for NCAA legislation get commissioners, FARs, ADS on board
    - a. NCAA wants to cut games from 40 to 35.
    - b. Playing split season
- G. Voiced opinion on rule proposals (all divisions)
  - a. Take in consideration the timeline because not getting a lot of surveys back
  - b. We think there should be a new timeline (February rule proposals/10 day window to talk). Need to be more updated from NCAA
  - c. Financial restraints on smaller schools with only a two-year window to get done
- H. Conducting a salary survey.
- I. Gary Bryce (DII)
  1. Congratulated HCC and thanked them
  2. In favor of a lawyer
  3. Work to see how we go about pushing back date of festival (losing part of regular season)
  4. Discussed increasing scholarships. Have a lot of data. Need to put it all together
  5. More NFCA involvement from our group
- J. Natalie Poole (DI)
  1. Understand the NCAA's new governance structure. It is the only way we are going to pass proposal moving forward.
  2. Recruiting calendar did not go through (plan to resubmit)
  3. Proposal for transfer exception was sent back to us with feedback
  4. Early Recruiting proposal (four pieces) was sent back with feedback. (We feel strongly about it and will push forward.)
    - a. The NFCA no longer has a direct connection to NCAA.
      - i. Need coaches to go to athletic directors and president to lobby to help pass those proposals

6. Proposal already on docket would increase skill instruction over your eight-hour segment.
  7. ACC put a proposal together to have a student-athlete play in the fall and redshirt in the spring. (A lot of people felt strongly about)
  8. Discussed postseason issues (three-day supers)
    - a. One game a day at WCWS.
    - b. No longer play four games on first day of WCWS (student-athlete welfare)
      - i. Need to communicate with ESPN to lay out a strategic plan.
- K. Kevin Shelton (Travel Ball)
1. Talked about the DI hot topics (none applied to us)
  2. Early recruiting - Frustrated with how early kids committing.
  3. Need to improve travel ball membership after recent decline; put together ideas to help improve
  4. Discussed on how to educate players and parents and how we should conduct ourselves
  5. Created subcommittee to look at All-Region/All-American awards

Natalie Poole addressed NCAA early recruiting proposals to travel ball coaches

1. Four parts
  - a. Control prearranged or unarranged phone calls before sophomore year
  - b. Control prearranged/unofficial visits before sophomore year
  - c. Moving the unofficial visits to after the sophomore year/official visits junior year so they can make a better quality decision
  - d. Limiting recruiting conversations at camps until after sophomore year
2. NCAA feedback
  - a. Do not want to monitor what is prearranged and unarranged
  - b. Why do you need something so sports specific
3. HCCs Job
  - a. Identify why softball needs some of these. Why they need to be specific.
  - b. Issues come from their thoughts. Do not understand out sport

K. Recruiting discussion

1. Kevin Shelton
  - a. Three pieces to it; college coaches, travel ball coaches and parents. We would have to change behaviors. If not scholarship is offered the kid cannot take it. It's a real challenge.
2. Boo De Oliveira (Arkansas/Recruiting Committee chair)
  - a. Recruiting committee is tasked with recruit parent and coach education
    - i. Email, visits, phone calls, tournament behavior

- ii. Kids do not have social skills; educate the kids with life lessons
- iii. This is how you conduct a proper email; how you conduct and interview; how you seems professional

3. Beth Torina - SWAs from the SEC – they will back points two and three if the early recruiting. If we want one and four, we were advised to make them separate proposals (felt it was too big to propose at one time). Lobby to administration if you want to push it through.

#### L. Technology in the dugout (no discussion)

#### M. Other Topics/Open Forum

1. Salaries (Patrick Murphy) – as a group it filters down from DI to high school. We don't do a good job of helping each other. Football, basketball, baseball are publicized, but we are not. If somebody does well, we should know about. Ex) If coach A makes this then if coach B does the same thing then coach B should make as much as coach A. They do it in football.
2. Dot Richardson (Liberty) – move to four paid coaches for softball – allow volunteers to recruit. Help the rest of us especially mid-majors.

#### Jacque Joseph (Michigan State)–

1. Great opportunity on how we meet and how we get things done. There are so many great ideas in this room. Elaborated on why we need to redesign the softball summit. Feels this format does not work anymore as the organization has evolved. Inviting the board on how we conduct the business in a real radical way. Asking to separate more to create more dialogue, allow people to do more work and not have people feel excluded from the discussion.
2. Pushing season back – radical model for baseball (move all the way to summer/ a lot more steam) – would love March 1 start, why are we still playing 56 games? Why are we still playing in February?

#### Heather Tarr (Washington)

1. Would like a straw vote on who would agree on four paid coaches. (passed)
2. Be careful of what you hear about baseball season (asked a few baseball coaches and have not heard about it.). No what your baseball coach polls.

Kat McCreery (Illinois Wesleyan) – Important to include everyone instead of breaking it down by division. We are the largest division here with 407 teams, but with you guys getting another assistant it does affect me in a good way. It means it would be easier for my grad assistant could get a full-time job. I'm in favor of Division I to get a fourth paid assistant. It will make our organization grow. It's empowers women. It helps our student athletes

Patrick Murphy polled the coaches - Would you get rid of six games to get a fourth paid coach?

Diana Pepin (Eastern Connecticut) – I am a little offended. This is a great forum for us (DIII coaches). Maybe I'm misinterpreting what you're saying. You do affect us and I know you want to make more progress for the sport of softball. But please understand this is just an hour of your time to see what other coaches and divisions are doing. Have some patience with us and let us speak for a little bit.

Jane Worthington (EKU) – I agree with Jacquie. Want to meet more with school's my size to figure out the best way to help our situation and then still meet with all the coaches to help each other make progress. We don't need to work against each other, but figure out what's important for a school my size. Let's work together, you give a little, I'll give a little and we can work something out.

Karen Weekly (Tennessee) – We need to devote more time to discuss business. We get all these minds together one time a year and only have four hours of constructive meeting time. There needs to be more time.

Kat McCreery (Illinois Wesleyan) – I'm spread pretty thin (coach, asst. Professor, academic advisor, mom, wife) already. Emails in March when I'm on spring break (quarter of our season) are hard to stay abreast of all the issues. Is there any way to have a meeting of the minds (like congress/house of reps) outside of convention with small groups (i.e. all HCCs, NAIA, JC, TB, HS) so we can be more productive and efficient, which is what we want to do. It'll keep everyone on the same page and aware of issues, concerns, and goals amongst all divisions so we can keep building softball up.

Patrick Murphy – Do you feel you are comfortable and know what is going on in Division III.

McCreery – Yes, I feel I do I believe most of us are on the same page. We do feel separated sometimes. Your hot topics are very different than ours. But you do in DI does affect us. I could purchase a machine this year because I had to put in padding. That's hard.

Kris Herman (Williams College) – I want to piggyback on what Jacquie started, Karen and other have spoke on. We do spend more time speaking on issues at convention. I don't believe we need to put aside extra time outside convention to meet. Put aside personal situations and spend significant time at convention to think what's best for the entire game. I agree there is time to personalize (best for us) and we should do it. There is time to compartmentalize (Big 5, power conference, DIII, etc.). Asking the board to come up with some structural differences so we can talk about the general issues (have forum similar to NCAAs & our mentoring session).

George Wares (Central) – I agree with everything Kris said. There is a difference between trying to grow the game and admitting our divisions are different. We need to embrace our differences and spend more time within our own divisions. We are very fortunate as we are able to meet with all coaches from all level. (our football/basketball coaches sometimes don't even get to eat in the same room as Division I). Maybe at the DIII level some coaches choose to be offended by what DI has to say, but also DI needs to be patient and get to know you and learn what you're all about. I feel there's been too much of a battle lately. We're a sport that is respected and we don't need to battle. I wish everyone would put aside the fighting and come together as a group.

N. Donna Newberry "Perseverance" Award

1. Patrick Murphy presented the Donna Newberry "Perseverance" Award to the late John Keyes. His wife Marcia Keyes and daughter Holly Nyholm accepted the award on his behalf.

Summit adjourned at 2:25 p.m.