

2014 National Fastpitch Coaches Association Convention
Division II Caucus
December 4, 2014 | Bally's Las Vegas | Las Vegas, Nevada

Division II Board Representative Bill Gray called the caucus to order at 8:30 a.m. 101* member coaches were attendance.

- A. Kristen Decker (NCAA)
 - 1. Ms. Decker presented the 2014 NCAA recap and provided information about the 2015 WCWS in Oklahoma City, which included the announcement that there will be use of multiple fields.
 - 2. Provided handout of NCAA Division II Softball Committee Annual Report
 - i. Future Sites – Denver (2016/Festival), 2017 & 2018 (Salem, Va.)
 - ii. Selection Requirements (Primary & Secondary Criteria),
 - iii. Date and Site of Annual Meeting (June 24-25, 2015)
 - iv. Approved list of automatic qualifying conferences for 2015
 - v. Approved (pending final approval no later than Feb. 1) a true double-elimination softball bracket used through at final site moving format from Thu-Mon to Thu-Tue (best 2-of-3 championship series), effective 2015-16 academic year

-- Bill Gray introduced new NFCA DII liaison Brian Stanley and incoming NFCA board rep Don Kennedy (Missouri S&T).

-- All coaches in attendance introduced themselves and how many years they have been a coach (overall and with present program)

-- Bill Gray talked about his passion for Division II and how to change its image

- B. Hall of Fame
 - 1. Bill Gray handed out NFCA Hall of Fame criteria.
 - 2. Urged those in attendance to make a push for more coaches to be nominated (replenish the pool)
 - 3. Urged assistants get on it now
- C. Player and Freshman of the Year proposal
 - 1. It will be designated by the All-American Committee.
 - 2. Provide more exposure, help with the All-American process (committee will get to know players and freshmen earlier during the season)
 - 3. Announced the HCC members and Freshman & Player of the Year sub committee
 - 4. Process and timelines were explained
 - i. Urged coaches that we need help
 - ii. Work with your SIDs to form Freshman list
 - 5. Discussion
 - i. Compared timing with conference and final awards
 - ii. Pros/cons of using national stats/conference stats.

6. A motion was made by Don Kennedy (Missouri S&T) to go forward with the Player of the Year. Seconded by Patti Gerckens (UC San Diego) – Bill Gray asked those in attendance to vote yay or nay. Motion was passed unanimously.
 7. A motion was made by Miles Mallette (Kentucky Wesleyan) to go forward with the Freshman of the Year. Seconded by Ron Faubion (SE Oklahoma) – Bill Gray asked those in attendance to vote yay or nay. Motion was passed unanimously.
- D. General Discussion/Announcements
- Bill Gray**
1. Survey will be sent out before Christmas on “Why we should have Player of the Year.”
 2. We just made All-American committee most important committee in Div. II
 3. Mentoring session - sign up, get involved and learn
 4. Sharing groups (Recruiting, Improving D2, Team Chemistry, Community Service)
 5. Make convention goals
 - i. Spend time with former players and mentors, meet a new person
 - ii. You have resources use them
 - iii. Personal goals this week (Bill)
 - a. Get you guys excited about this level
 - b. Build five new relationships
 - c. Say thank you

Gary Bryce (Wayne State) – This is a good place to be.

1. Find a reason to be better and make this work
2. We need more coaches involved and to take an active part.
3. More speakers and involvement with NFCA. Make this work.
4. It’s up to the younger coaches. WE HAVE TO TAKE PART.

Kevin Blaskowski (West Texas A&M) - We have an image issue

1. Need a permanent home/location for DII National Championships
2. We’re not supporting our own
3. The Image issue is on us
4. We need to promote so other people choose it.
5. Time to step in front of the class and represent our association.

The coaches broke up into the four “Sharing” groups headed by Les Stuedeman (UAH), Gary Bryce (Wayne State), Kevin Blaskowski (West Texas A&M) and Lori Meyer (Minnesota State). Each session went approximately 15 minutes.

- E. Umpires - Donna Vavrinec (National Umpire Coordinator)

1. Introduced Vicki Van Kleeck (Secretary Rules Editor elect) and Dee Abrahamson (outgoing Secretary Rules Editor) NCAA rules. Recognized Dee's service
 2. Thanked the coaches for their partnership with the softball umpire program.
 - i. Program –
 - a. Education is an on going non-stop process
 - b. Over 1600 umpires registered on the Central Hub
 - c. Explained updates and information for Central Hub.
 - d. Discussed 3-man crews, doubleheaders (where are you putting umpires, providing transportation).
 3. Umpire judgment - Coaches need to be more vocal to their coordinators. It's a numbers game.
 - i. Ophir Sadgh (Adelphi Asst.) – Talked about pitching. Simplifying the rules to make the umpires' job easier so they can be more consistent. Gave several examples.
 - 4. Questions ensued about two and three-man crews
 - i. How do we propose to NCAA to make a 3-man crew permanent? (Mike Davenport, North Georgia). Kevin Blaskowski (W Texas A&M) added examples.
 - a. Dee Abrahamson : have not been able to break through. We will try again.
 - b. Abrahamson: Write a rule proposal from the caucus instead of individual (will have more clout)
 - c. Kevin Blaskowski: Make rules the same across the board instead of just simplifying the pitching rule
 - d. Discussion on quality of umpires
- F. Rules - Dee Abrahamson (Softball Secretary-Rules Editor)
1. Introduced Susan Cassidy-Lyke (Molloy) of Rules Interpretation Committee
 2. Brought to attention the fence heights and field dimension rules
 - i. Will take full effect in 2016 – program will not be able host contests if field is not to conformity
 3. No new rules
 4. Rule proposals: send them to us
 5. New bat list comes out Monday, Dec. 8
 - i. Four models going off list
 6. New Central Hub rules video will go up in January
 7. Build calendar for barrel compression testing (let Dee know, for example tournament with 10 teams)
 8. Balls
 - i. Livelier but softer
 - a. 33 programs used new balls this fall
 - b. 93 out of 100 programs returned surveys.
 - c. 70 percent did not notice difference.
 - ii. Reasoning behind new ball

- a. lower severity (hope to get injuries down).
 - b. More temperature stability
 - c. Does not fly as far as fast
 - d. Negative – less ball flight
 - 9. Helmets – no mirror colored
 - 10. Bat Testing results – 11 bats failed barrel compression testing.
 - 11. DP/Flex
 - i. Links: Interested in feedback
 - ii. Committee in June will vote
 - iii. Biggest problem is coaches and or umpires do and don't understand the rule (Differences of opinions)
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- Bill Gray announced text messaging updates
 - Meeting adjourned at 11:39 a.m.