

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION  
DIVISION II CAUCUS MEETING**

*December 11, 2008*

*Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort, Marco Island, Fla.*

Chair Kelley Green, Division II representative to the NFCA Executive Board, called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. with 96 Division II members in attendance

I. Announcements

II. NCAA Rules Report

- a. Theresa Smith, NCAA Assistant Director of Playing Rules Administration, addressed the caucus
  1. There is a new 2009 rule book and there will be a new rule book for 2010. Beginning with the 2010 edition, the NCAA Softball rule book will be a two-year publication
  2. Survey participation from coaches is strongly encouraged
  3. No rule changes will be made in the “off years” once the rule book changes from an annual publication to a biennial publication.
  
- b. Dee Abrahamson, Secretary-Rules Editor, NCAA Softball Rules Committee, addressed the caucus
  1. There are Division II representatives on the rules committee and they vote on behalf of Division II
  2. The eight-run rule is being examined for potential changes in upcoming years.
  3. Chalk lines for a pitching lane have been added for the 2009 season
  4. The committee is also examining ways to uphold the image of the game, encouraging teams to be properly uniformed and legally equipped.
  5. Balls will be tested for dynamic stiffness beginning in July. Multi-layer balls will not pass this testing process.
  6. Bats continue to be an issue, but this situation is improving. Bats will continue to be tested to meet proper standards.
  
- c. Kathy Strahm, NCAA Softball Umpire Improvement Program National Coordinator, addressed the caucus

1. Strahm discussed the selection process to chose umpires for postseason play. With the changes to the NCAA Division II championship schedule for 2009, umpires will be at a premium for Division II's Regional weekend.
2. Umpiring clinics will take place in January. Coaches are always welcome to attend the clinics.
  - i. Clinics will be held Jan. 10 (San Jose), Jan. 17 (Tampa), Jan. 18 (Houston), Jan. 24 (Philadelphia) and Jan. 25 (Indianapolis)
3. Beginning in 2010, clinics will be conducted online, which should help umpires at all levels attend the clinics.
4. Last season was the first time an umpiring manual had been printed. It sold out and has been reprinted for 2009.
5. Observations and evaluations of umpires will happen at the Rebel Spring games.
6. Online testing for umpires started in 2008 and was very well received
7. Coaches are urged to encourage players to become umpires if they want to stay involved with the game once they conclude their collegiate careers.

### III. Head Coaches Committee Status/Update

- a. HCC was formed last year
- b. Format and structure have been determined. Positions were filled by conference offices. HCC will discuss if self-nominating basis be used rather than by conference appointment.
- c. Coaches are encouraged to submit legislative request forms to the HCC. Any coach may submit and forms should be sent to Kelley Green.
- d. Unlike NCAA Division I, the Division II HCC is unable to submit legislation to the floor at the NCAA Convention.

### IV. NCAA Division II Softball Committee Report Kevin Blaskowski of West Texas A&M reported to the caucus on changes to the NCAA Division II Championship format and regional realignment

- a. The Division II Championship will now mirror the three-weekend format of the Division I Championship with the exclusion of a three-game championship series
- b. Once bracket play at the eight-team championship is concluded, the NCAA champion will be determined in a one-game winner-take-all championship.

- c. The championship tournament will begin with 16 four-team regionals, two for each NCAA Region. Teams at each site will be determined by a combination of ranking and geography.
- d. Bids to host Regionals and Super Regionals must be submitted by April 24. Schools are encouraged to bid.

V. Division II Hot Topics

- a. The Division II All-America selection committee recommends that the maximum number of nominees allowed to each school be increased from six to eight student-athletes.
- b. Discussion took place regarding potential changes to the NCAA Division I scholarship limits and a potential change from equivalency to headcount.
- c. Changes to the NFCA Top 25 Coaches Poll were discussed with an eye towards increasing the credibility of the poll by making it more stable.
- d. Changes to the start date of weekly awards were discussed, as was a potential split to Player of the Week and Pitcher of the Week being awarded separately rather than having a single honoree each week.
  - 1. Amy Hughes, NFCA Director of Media Relations and Division II group liason strongly encouraged coaches to nominate student-athletes for the weekly awards

VI. Adjournment Green adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

VII. Business Meeting Green called the business meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. on Friday, December 12 with 74 Division II members in attendance and explained the mechanics of parliamentary procedure to the caucus

VIII. Consideration of Amendments

- a. Proposal I -- **Recommendation:** To add one additional award to the in-season player of the week awards program, which would be called "Pitcher of the Week." **Rationale:** This would honor another deserving athlete. *Proposed by Kelley Green, Lock Haven. Moved by Bill Gray, Missouri Southern and seconded by Laura Phillip, Wisconsin-Parkside. Amended to state:* that a student-athlete can be selected for both awards if she is nominated separately for each award. **PASSED** (58-2)
  - 1. Discussion: A) Don Kennedy, Missouri S&T, suggested that a student-athlete should not be able to receive both awards in a single week. B) Kevin Blaskowski, West Texas A&M, said a student-athlete should be recognized for both awards if her performance merits both awards. C) Jimmy Martin, Limestone College, suggested the proposal be amended to say that a student-athlete could be recognized for both awards if she is

nominated separately for Pitcher of the Week and Player of the Week.

- b. Proposal II – **Recommendation:** To initiate the selection of the NFCA player(s) of the week to coincide with the beginning of the Division II season. **Rationale:** That player(s) of the week should be honored at the start of the season. *Proposed by Kelly Green, Lock Haven. Moved by Kevin Blaskowski, West Texas A&M and seconded by Frank Gillom, Tusculum. PASSED (60-0)*
- c. Proposal III – **Recommendation:** To increase the number of All-Region nominations per institution from six to eight. **Rationale:** To make certain that the best athletes are being nominated. A coach should not have to leave a worthy player off the All-Region ballot. *Proposed by the Division II All-America and Coaching Staff of the Year Committee. Moved by Danielle Penner, Barry and seconded by Kelley Green, Lock Haven. PASSED (32-29)*
1. Discussion: A) Ms. Penner, Chair of the All-America/CSOY committee, detailed the committee’s belief that there are cases where a coach has more than six student-athletes deserving of nomination and that we should trust our peers to use good judgement on their nominations. B) Ms. Phillip noted that you can’t mandate ethics and this is a chance to make sure that the most deserving athletes are recognized. C) Gary Bryce, Wayne State, is concerned that expanding the number of eligible All-Region candidates will lead to undeserving athletes being selected for the All-Region teams. D) Green agrees that situations where one team has more than six deserving student-athletes are rare, but this legislation has been proposed to accommodate those instances and that coaches should be trusted to only nominate deserving student-athletes regardless of what the maximum number of nominees are.
- d. Proposal IV – **Recommendation:** To increase the number of representatives from one to two on the NFCA Top 25 Poll. Representatives should be from different conferences in the region. **Rationale:** To give more stability and justification to the poll so it doesn’t fluctuate as much throughout the season. *Proposed by Bill Gray, Missouri Southern State University. Moved by Mr. Gray, seconded by Mr. Blaskowski. PASSED (42-24)*
1. Discussion: A) Lisa Bonee, Nova Southeastern, asked if this change would take effect for the 2009 season (yes). B) Ms. Penner explains that this poll fits a regional sport into a rational model. She does not believe that adding an additional voter will

solve the problem, as there is no good way to compare teams across regions. C) Frank Cheek, Humboldt State, believes that adding an additional voter per reason will complicate the process.

- e. Proposal V – ***Recommendation:*** To require faceguards on helmets for NCAA play. ***Rationale:*** This will help reduce injuries in the game. *Proposed by Jerry Grasso, Goldey-Beacom College. Was not moved to the floor.*

IX. Adjournment Green adjourned the meeting at 9:06 a.m.