



**Minutes from the BIG EAST Conference
Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Meeting**

Providence, Rhode Island
September 28-29, 2012

ATTENDEES: Amanda Hardewig, *University of Cincinnati*; Nicholas Cerra, Ann Fiorvanti (Campus SAAC Advisor), *University of Connecticut*; Drew Edwards, John McEnroe (FAR), *DePaul University*; James Heine, *Georgetown University*; Kevin Bandy, *University of Louisville*; Lauren Tibbs, *Marquette University*; Kiersten DeHaven, *University of Notre Dame*; Corinne Clauss, *Providence College*; Jonathan Lefferts, *Rutgers University*; Jamal Branch, *St. John's University*; Joey Lacus, *Seton Hall University*; Alex Mendez (BIG EAST National SAAC Representative), *University of South Florida*; Erin Malone, *Villanova University*; Jennifer Condaras, Roberto Sasso, Kenny Schank, Bobby Weygand, *BIG EAST Conference*.

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – Schank welcomed the group and introduced BIG EAST Commissioner Mike Aresco. Aresco thanked everyone for attending the meeting and gave an update on the BIG EAST Conference. Joe D'Antonio, Senior Associate Commissioner for Compliance & Governance, congratulated everyone for being selected as a BIG EAST Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) representative.
2. **NCAA Division I National SAAC Update** – Mendez welcomed the group and discussed the history of the NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Mendez shared the mission statement of the National SAAC and how SAAC's voice is heard throughout the Division I governance structure. Mendez reviewed pertinent items that were discussed at his most recent National SAAC meeting, which occurred July 20-22, 2012 in Indianapolis, IN. Specifically, Mendez noted the following:
 - a) Mendez reviewed legislative concepts that were developed by the NCAA Rules Working Group.
 - b) Mendez indicated that the following individuals were among the notable speakers that spoke to the National SAAC Representatives during their meeting: Jackie Thurnes (NCAA Director of Enforcement), Lynn Holzman and Binh Nguyen (NCAA Director and Associate Director of Academic and Membership Affairs), and Scott Bearby (NCAA Deputy General Counsel and Managing Director of Legal Affairs).
 - c) Mendez noted that the National SAAC is trying to increase awareness of SAAC through various social media outlets, like Facebook, Twitter, and blogs.
 - d) Mendez informed the group that the National SAAC is continuing discussions on further strengthening the collaboration they have with Samaritan's Feet on various community service initiatives.

- e) Mendez mentioned that the National SAAC received updates from various NCAA Cabinets and Committees, in addition to the NCAA Board of Directors, NCAA Leadership Council, and the NCAA Legislative Council.
- f) Mendez noted that various National SAAC Representatives were appointed to NCAA Associate-wide Committees and Cabinets. Mendez stated that he was appointed to be the National SAAC Representative to the Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sport.
- g) Mendez noted that the National SAAC had representatives from each of the three NCAA divisions attend the College Sports Information Directors of America Convention (CoSIDA). Mendez expressed that CoSIDA would like to continue to invite National SAAC representatives to future meetings. Mendez noted that this is a great opportunity for the voice of the National SAAC to be heard.
- h) Mendez noted that the National SAAC representatives developed three priorities for the current academic year. Mendez reviewed the rationale and purpose behind each of the three priorities, which included: enhancing the student-athlete voice, community service initiative, and increasing Division I SAAC awareness.

Mendez closed his National SAAC update by providing an overview of websites where everyone can follow the actions of the National SAAC.

3. **2012-13 NCAA Legislative Update** – Condaras provided an update on the current status of legislation within the 2012-13 NCAA legislative cycle. Condaras discussed the current role of the working groups and how the Rules Working Group has been charged to create legislation that is attached to a tenet of Division I or a principle of the overall Association (NCAA). Condaras noted that the National SAAC supported every concept developed by the Rules Working Group during their recent July 2012 meeting. Condaras proceeded to review each of the 20 proposed legislative concepts that the National SAAC was asked to provide feedback on. The BIG EAST Conference SAAC supported 18 of the 20 proposed legislative concepts. They opposed proposal 13-3 (Recruiting – Deregulation of modes and numerical limitations on communication) and noted that this particular proposal should include a “safe harbor” provision, so that institutions are prohibited from contacting prospects who have elected not be contacted anymore. In addition, the group opposed proposal 13-5-B (Recruiting-Recruiting materials-General Correspondence Only), as they feel this particular concept could possibly create more violations in this area.
4. **BIG EAST Athletic Director Update** – Schank noted that Bob Driscoll (Athletic Director – Providence College) had a last minute appointment and could not attend the meeting. Schank informed the group that Driscoll asked him to pass along his congratulations to the group for being selected as BIG EAST SAAC Representatives. Schank noted that Driscoll wanted to let everyone know that the BIG EAST Conference is in great hands under the leadership of new Commissioner Mike Aresco. Schank passed out two recent newspaper articles on behalf of Driscoll that summarize the state of the BIG EAST Conference and the positive work being done. Schank noted that he will be sending out an email to solicit feedback from each SAAC Representative on pertinent items relative to them being BIG EAST student-athletes. Schank noted that this feedback will be shared with Driscoll, who will in return share this with the BIG EAST Athletic Directors.

5. **BIG EAST Faculty Athletic Representative Update** – McEnroe provided the group with a BIG EAST Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) update. McEnroe reviewed the role of an FAR. McEnroe specifically reviewed his role at DePaul and provided the group with a document that summarizes his duties. McEnroe reminded the group of the BIG EAST academic awards program and noted the BIG EAST FARs involvement with certain academic awards like the BIG EAST Scholar-Athlete Sport Excellence Award. McEnroe informed the group that the BIG EAST FARs meet regularly and discuss a variety of items, including sharing best practices from campuses. McEnroe encouraged the SAAC representatives to get to know their institution's FAR if they haven't already.
6. **Campus SAAC Advisor Update** - Fiorvanti provided the group with a campus SAAC Advisor update. Fiorvanti noted the importance of SAAC and trying to get more student-athletes involved. Fiorvanti distributed and reviewed a document outlining the University of Connecticut's SAAC, which included a 2011-12 academic year review of events. Fiorvanti explained ideas that she is trying to incorporate into her institution's SAAC during the 2012-13 academic year. Fiorvanti pointed out helpful information concerning NCAA resources, including the Career in Sports Forum, Student-Athlete Leadership Forum, and Student-Athlete Affairs programs and grants.
7. **BIG EAST Senior Woman Administrator Update** – Condaras provided the group with a BIG EAST Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) Update. Condaras noted that the SWAs met in Providence, RI earlier this month to discuss Olympic sport matters as well as other general business items. Condaras informed the group that among the items that were discussed at the meeting were site selections for Conference championships and scheduling.
8. **BIG EAST Conference Code of Sportsmanship** – Condaras provided an overview of the BIG EAST Conference Code of Sportsmanship. Condaras informed the group that the Code of Sportsmanship is a standing agenda item for all SWA, coaches, and SAAC meetings. Condaras noted that each BIG EAST member institution is required to review this policy with all of their student-athletes prior to the start of each academic year and reminded the group that any form of public criticism of the officials or opposing team members is a violation of the policy. Condaras noted that the majority of issues last year involved public criticism of the officials. Lastly, Condaras introduced an idea where SAAC representatives attending future BIG EAST SAAC Annual Meetings could produce public service announcements on sportsmanship that can be shared with the membership. The SAAC representatives supported this concept.
9. **BIG EAST Sport Administration Update** – Weygand provided a summary of the BIG EAST Sport Administration department, including staff and duties. Weygand distributed a handout that outlines all of the sponsored sports by each BIG EAST member institution. Weygand reviewed a variety of Olympic sport topics that are discussed at the BIG EAST Coaches Meetings. Weygand noted how the Sport Administration department administers the sport regulations and policies for each BIG EAST sponsored sport (an example of the BIG EAST Women's Soccer regulations and policies were provided to the group).
10. **BIG EAST Conference Update** – Sasso shared a recent press release concerning new BIG EAST Commissioner Mike Aresco. Sasso provided a brief overview of each incoming BIG EAST member institution that begins conference play during the 2013-14 academic year.

11. **BIG EAST SAAC Update** – Schank reviewed the 2012-13 BIG EAST SAAC meeting and conference call schedule. Schank asked that everyone who participates in a conference call to please exercise proper conference call etiquette (e.g., mute your phone lines to eliminate background noise). Schank noted the future BIG EAST SAAC annual meeting format. Schank reviewed the newly redesigned BIG EAST SAAC website. Schank highlighted the new “SAAC Spotlight” feature on the BIG EAST SAAC website. Schank asked each BIG EAST SAAC representative to fill out their questionnaire that was previously provided to them, which will be used to develop each representative’s “SAAC Spotlight.” Schank informed the group that this is Mendez’s last year as the BIG EAST National SAAC Representative and that the Conference will be soliciting nominations during the Spring 2013 academic term for our next BIG EAST National SAAC Representative. Schank provided the group with a document that summarizes the duties of the position. Mendez further discussed his role as the BIG EAST National SAAC Representative and encouraged any SAAC representatives to apply.
12. **Guest Speaker: Lee Gordon – 180 Communications** – Lee Gordon (Vice President of Corporate Communications) provided the group with a presentation on protecting your brand, social media awareness, and media tips.
13. **Community Service Activity - Hugs for Heroes** – The BIG EAST SAAC partnered with Hugs for Heroes to assemble military care packages that were sent to 150 American troops serving in Afghanistan.
14. **Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM EST on September 29, 2012.