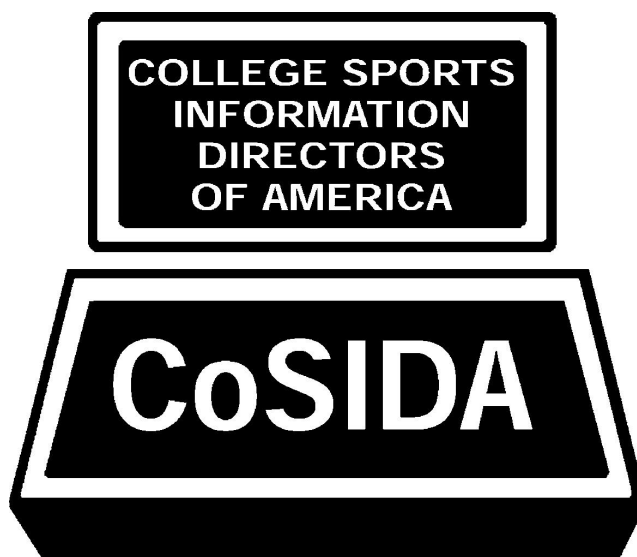


CoSIDA NEWS

Intercollegiate Athletics News and Issues from Around the Nation



JULY 18, 2006



Posted on Tue, Jul. 18, 2006

COLLEGE RECRUITING

New signing time an old idea

Some coaches say an early-signing period would take pressure off recruits, decrease backing out

By SETH EMERSON
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The calendar says July, but already 10 rising high school seniors have committed to play football at Clemson. At South Carolina, the number is four.

That is one less than before this past weekend, when USC's first 2007 commitment, Gary Gray, decided to back out. But the timing of Gray's oral commitment matters little, since football players cannot sign a letter of intent, making it official, until the first Wednesday of February.

For some time, many coaches have urged college football to adopt an early signing period, as most other sports have done. And with players committing earlier than ever, an early period seems like the logical next step.

An early signing period would allow players who sign to focus on their senior seasons, and prevent colleges from continuing to recruit players who have made oral commitments.

"I think it would be a great idea," said Goose Creek High School coach Chuck Reedy, a former head coach at Baylor and an assistant at Clemson and USC.

"Obviously it works fairly well for basketball, or at least appears to. I think once a kid's made up his mind, shoot, let him have a time where he can sign and focus on his senior year."

Basketball players can sign letters of intent in November of their senior years or wait until the following March. Those months bookend the basketball season.

The date of the football signing day means players must wait until well after their high school careers are over. Sometimes players are deciding on a college that day, while others are making official what they had announced months, or even more than a year, ago.

An early signing period has been discussed by Division I college coaches for more than a decade, according to the American Football Coaches Association. Todd Bell, the AFCA's director of media relations, said there is little consensus. Even among those in favor, there is disagreement on when it should be: August, December or sometime in between.

"Until there's a good feeling on when that date should be, I don't know if we're going to see a swing in support one way or another," Bell said.

There seems to be just as much disagreement among high school coaches.

Reedy suggested having a signing date as early as July, so as not to interfere with the season. But Spring Valley coach Jimmy Noonan, who has three Division I prospects this year, would rather see players first prove themselves as seniors.

"It takes an awful mature kid to read and look beyond his playing days at the institution he's at right now," Noonan said.

Orangeburg-Wilkinson coach Reggie Kennedy had two players sign Division I scholarships last year, when Kennedy was at Fairfield Central. Kennedy said an early period would make players complacent or make them rush decisions.

"I don't want them to sign and then they're playing for Clemson or Carolina and not for O-W," Kennedy said. "And also I think it's very important for a kid to take his (recruiting) visits. I don't see how a kid can make a commitment after one visit."

The trend of early commitments has led to more players backing out. Some change their minds on or just before Signing Day.

Mike Farrell, the national recruiting analyst for rivals.com, said that is a major reason he favors an August signing period. It

would make early commitments official, which Farrell thinks would be good for everyone involved.

"I think it would basically take away a lot of temptation, from kids and some schools," Farrell said.

Reach Emerson at (803) 771-8676.

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Athletics

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v52/i44/44a03701.htm>

From the issue dated July 7, 2006

A Classroom Comeback

Hundreds of former college athletes have returned for their degrees, helped in part by a new NCAA incentive

By EUGENE MCCORMACK

When C.J. Masters dropped out of Kansas State University in March 1993, he was just six classes shy of a degree in criminology. The starting safety on the 20th-ranked football team wanted to devote all of his energy to the forthcoming National Football League draft.

For months Mr. Masters flew from city to city, trying out for teams in three professional leagues. When no one offered him a contract, he moved to Kansas City, where, over the next few years, he held several low-paying jobs, including organizing schedules and appointments at a group home for troubled adolescents.

During the late 1990s, he tried his hand at sales, but never felt fulfilled. Then, in 2002, he learned about a job helping children with developmental disabilities, and was hired as a case manager.

He loved working with kids. But over the next few years, he was passed over for several higher-paying jobs because he didn't have a college degree. In late 2004, he called Kansas State's athletics officials to see what they could do to help him earn his diploma.

What Mr. Masters and hundreds of former college athletes have discovered in recent years is that many institutions — including Marshall University, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Nebraska at Lincoln — are making it easier for college athletes to complete the degrees that eluded them during their playing days.

Although thousands of athletes who left college early have returned during the past two decades, the numbers have recently spiked. Athletics officials attribute some of the growth to a new incentive from the National Collegiate Athletic Association that rewards teams when former athletes come back.

Under the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate formula, which measures how well teams are performing in the classroom, teams with low scores can lose scholarships. But when former players return to complete their degrees, teams earn bonus points that can help them avoid such penalties.

The incentive has spurred some colleges to reach out to former athletes as never before, offering free tuition, housing, and other assistance — often in exchange for part-time work in the athletics department.

Academic officials' mixed view

Academic officials are happy to see former athletes return, as many show a newfound focus on their studies. But some critics say the change in attitude only proves that colleges put big-time athletes under too much physical and emotional strain to concentrate on their class work.

"Athletes returning to school is a positive step because the discipline that they learned in sports, they finally can apply to their course work," says Murray Sperber, professor emeritus of English and American studies at Indiana University at Bloomington and author of several books on college sports. "But the fact that athletes usually perform better academically when their eligibility is over shows the huge flaw in the current system."

Under NCAA rules, students may receive athletics aid for no more than five years in a six-year period, and many players in the NCAA's top division do not finish in that time. But students who come back for their degrees may qualify for NCAA grants or tuition assistance.

Many colleges that provide financial help to returning athletes are members of the National Consortium for Academics and Sports. Started in 1985, the program has helped thousands of former players finish their degrees at no cost to themselves, though they must participate in community-service projects for 10 hours a week. Colleges pay a small fee to join the consortium and cover the cost of the returning students' tuition.

Athletics officials credit the consortium with helping them bring back the majority of former athletes who have completed their degrees in recent years. But some colleges say the NCAA's new academic incentive has led them to redouble their efforts, or start new programs, to bring players back.

From 2003-4 to 2004-5 — the first two years that the NCAA has kept track of returning athletes — there was a 23-percent increase in the number of students who came back, with a total of 849 former players in the top division re-enrolling in those two years to finish their degrees.

More than half — 58 percent — of those students played baseball, football, or men's basketball in college. That is no surprise, several experts say, as graduation rates in those sports are usually among the lowest.

Football players have returned in droves. In fact, 38 percent of all NCAA Division I football programs have had at least one player come back to finish his degree in the two most recent academic years.

As athletes have returned, some have helped their alma maters avoid NCAA penalties. This spring was the first time the association stripped scholarships from teams that underperformed academically. According to the NCAA, 265 teams were at risk of being penalized.

Fifty of those teams avoided punishment with a combination of retention adjustments and graduation bonus points they received from returning athletes' finishing their degrees. One-third to one-half of those 50 teams, the NCAA estimates, got around penalties solely through graduation bonuses.

Searching Databases

Several universities say they are motivated to bring former athletes back because the students made many sacrifices for their institutions. Officials at the University of Texas at Austin, where 30 to 40 players have returned in the past five years, and at the University of Maryland at College Park, which has brought back about 25 former players in the same period, say that helping athletes is simply the right thing to do.

"These individuals have spent four to five years at our university and have given us a lot," says Anton E. Goff, an assistant athletics director for academic support at Maryland. "We know the importance of getting an education, and if we can help them get one, we will."

But some institutions, including Marshall University, say they developed a plan to bring back former athletes primarily to boost their teams' academic-progress rates.

Last year Marshall officials started searching their database for athletes who had left campus within the past 10 years but needed less than one year of credits to graduate. The university found that about a dozen former

students, some of whom now play professional sports, were already eligible for diplomas — sometimes in different majors than they had signed up for. One former student who plays in the NFL got his degree simply by paying \$100 in campus parking tickets.

To help students with 12 or fewer credit hours left to complete, the university has set up a program allowing students to work 20 hours a week in the athletics department to cover their tuition and living expenses. Two athletes have graduated under the plan, which began in August.

Marshall officials are not sure how much their returning students will help them avoid possible NCAA penalties once the returning graduates are factored into their scores.

Marshall's success in finding athletes close to earning their degrees has persuaded the university to start looking back 20 years to see if more players might need only a few classes to graduate.

Other universities have already helped students come back after an absence of more than 20 years. Clifford Moller, a former basketball player at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, left the Cornhuskers program after his junior year, in 1970, and returned to New York City, where for five years he drove a cab and installed telephone lines. Then, over the next 20 years, he worked in the real-estate business, eventually overseeing a 13-acre redevelopment project in Manhattan.

The project made him want to learn more about economic development, but he realized he needed a college degree to work in that field. He planned to go back to college in New York, but when he called Nebraska for his transcript, an academic adviser told him about a university program that helped former athletes. Mr. Moller learned that the university, a member of the National Consortium for Academics and Sports, would waive the cost of his tuition, fees, and books if he worked 12 hours a week as a study-hall counselor for athletes.

Mr. Moller says the offer was too good to pass up, and he returned to Lincoln in 1997, at age 47. Over the next three years, he sat through athletes' study halls four nights a week, telling students that they should focus on their studies to avoid ending up like him. "I would point to all the gray hairs on my head and say they don't want to be doing this when they're my age," he says.

Without basketball to distract him, Mr. Moller says, he dedicated himself to academics like never before, raising his grade-point average from 1.3 to 2.9 and finishing his undergraduate degree in communications in three years.

He went on to complete a master's degree in community and regional planning in 2003 and is now executive director of an economic-development association in Alexandria, La.

Paying for Scholarships

But many colleges do not have the money to help former athletes finish their academic work. Southern Utah University, for example, is more focused on securing a fifth year of aid for scholarship players than on trying to bring back athletes who did not graduate, says Myndee Larsen, an assistant athletics director.

"We're not even close to having the ability to look beyond that right now," she says.

As Mr. Masters, the former Kansas State football player, discovered when he called the university in the spring of 2005, even some big-time athletics programs do not offer financial incentives for returning athletes. But university officials helped him secure a \$2,000 NCAA grant. Athletics officials also told him about the department's Second Wind program for comeback players.

The program provides former athletes assistance in scheduling classes and finding housing. If students don't

want to move back to Kansas, the program allows them to take classes online or at other colleges and have the credits count toward their degree at Kansas State.

Mr. Masters was living in Phoenix and didn't want to move. Last summer he returned to Kansas to take one class, and over the past year he completed three courses online and two at Scottsdale Community College, near his home. He finished his criminology degree in May.

This fall or next spring, Mr. Masters plans to enroll in a Kansas State master's program in youth and development administration. He still wants to work with children, but he would like to find a position in a public parks-and-recreation department, setting up and running an after-school program or creating better designs for parks.

Athletic departments that help pay for returning athletes do so with revenue from ticket sales, donations, and other sources. Athletics officials at Northeastern University say they receive about \$100,000 a year from the university's student-financial-services budget to bring back about 10 former players. Other institutions have set up endowments to offset scholarships and other expenses.

The University of Kentucky has established a fund in honor of Cawood Ledford, a former men's basketball announcer who died in 2001, to provide scholarship assistance to athletes who want to complete their degrees. To qualify for aid, players must work 20 hours a week in the athletics department and perform community-service work.

Since the fund was started, in 1992, it has helped more than 40 students, including the basketball star Allen Edwards, finish their educations. Mr. Edwards helped Kentucky win two national championships in the late 1990s, then left to play professionally for several years. He returned with financial assistance from the fund and finished his undergraduate work in sociology in 2002 with an eye toward becoming a college basketball coach. Now he is an assistant men's coach at Virginia Commonwealth University.

<http://chronicle.com>

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July 16, 2006

NCAA chief ponders donors' limits

BY DAVID JONES
FLORIDA TODAY

How far is too far?

Billionaires' egos have forced colleges nationwide to search deep within their economic souls to meet the wishes of some of their wealthiest alumni, who insist they have only the best intentions at heart.

But even NCAA president Myles Brand is concerned about the huge amounts of money that schools now are accepting from wealthy donors for elaborate projects. Often, the rest of the money to complete those projects is being raised by bonds in the "arms war" of trying to build bigger and better facilities.

During an interview at the NCAA men's basketball Final Four in April, Myles said if a program suddenly starts to lose more games, "Who will pay the bonds is the rest of the institution, mainly the academic side."

For example, in the chase for the dollar, Oklahoma State hit a home run that would have made Babe Ruth gasp.

But if not handled right, it could end up being a Sandy Koufax strikeout for the school.

Billionaire alumnus Boone Pickens agreed in January to donate \$165 million to the Oklahoma State athletic department, the largest single gift ever awarded to an NCAA athletic program.

No. 2 on the list? Las Vegas casino owner Ralph Engelstad donated \$100 million to North Dakota in 1998, which paid for the construction of a plush new hockey arena.

Pickens' money is supposed to go toward building an "athletic village" on campus that is projected to cost more than \$700 million.

Oklahoma State president David Schmidly said the donation will impact the entire school, making it easier to attract students and faculty -- not just win more games.

Pickens has a net worth of more than \$1 billion, having made most of his money in oil, and he is a 1951 graduate of Oklahoma State. He said he wanted the Cowboys to become more competitive in the Big 12.

When asked what he wanted for all the money, he joked that Oklahoma State can't name the football stadium after him. The school's already done that. But maybe OSU could put his name on each one of the seats.

One thing is certain, the donation caught the attention of everyone in college athletics. Oklahoma State undoubtedly will feel a huge impact. But could Pickens' wishes to build a bigger and better athletic program potentially put the university in the poor house?

His millions of dollars will help. But the school could be forced to absorb huge debt to finish financing the project by selling bonds.

More and more nationwide, major-college sports powers are implementing that strategy. A wealthy

booster donates millions for a project, but the school has to raise a large portion as well.

"I guess the question is, how much should one person be allowed to donate? Do they need to set limits?" said Florida Tech president Anthony Catanese, who helped start the football program at Florida Atlantic University and has served as a dean at three other traditional football schools: Florida, Miami and Georgia Tech.

NCAA officials also are concerned what kind of impact a booster such as Pickens could have on the decisions an athletic department makes. If a huge donor became angry and wanted a new football coach, for example, could that booster devastate the program's future plans by ending the flow of cash and lashing out publicly?

Brand has created a task force to study the facility expansions that have exploded nationwide.

"By taking on this facility-bonded indebtedness, you do increase the risk to the rest of the university," Brand said.

Oklahoma State's board of regents recently announced that the school's in-state tuition will be increased a little more than 5 percent this year for needs unrelated to sports.

The first school that can't pay its increased bills due to ambitious athletic goals and then turns to the student body for help may regret the day a billionaire walked on campus.

It's a scenario that has the NCAA's, and Myles Brand's, attention.

Contact Jones at 242-3682 or djones@flatoday.net



Posted on Sun, Jul. 16, 2006

NCAA's 12th game is all about money

NO ONE BELIEVED SCHEDULE INCREASE WAS TEMPORARY

By John Clay
HERALD-LEADER SPORTS COLUMNIST

The NCAA says that despite all evidence to the contrary, it is not a hypocritical body of governance interested only in money.

So the NCAA stands on its high moral ground and says it could never, ever approve anything so dreadfully abhorrent as a playoff system for Division I-A college football.

Too many games. Not fair to the student-athlete. Too many missed classes. The NCAA says a lot of things.

Says here do not judge the NCAA by its words, judge it by its actions.

Thanks to the NCAA, this year begins college football's arranged marriage with the 12-game season.

Back in the dark ages, it used to be a 10-game college season. Then the number grew to 11. A couple of years back, citing a quirk in the calendar, the boys up in Indy approved a 12th game for Division I-A teams, saying that because the moon and the stars so rarely align in such a fashion, the move was only temporary.

No one believed it, and rightfully so. No sooner had the institutions of higher learning deposited the extra gate receipts than the NCAA approved the idea of a permanent extra contest, citing the need to help increase revenue for schools that can't seem to balance their bank book.

Never mind that the vast majority of college football coaches were against the idea. Michigan Coach Lloyd Carr told the Orlando Sentinel he was against a playoff system, "but I'm for a playoff if we are going to play more games anyway."

Never mind that a 12th game only increases the chances for injuries, lessens the time for injuries to heal, and eliminates one off-week break for players to catch up on academics.

The 12th game means dollars. And athletics directors, with their escalating salaries, who have signed coaches to escalating contracts, need the extra dough.

You don't make extra dough by playing on the road. Kentucky has used the extra contest to schedule a seventh home game. Arkansas, Alabama, LSU, Auburn and Georgia each have eight home games on their schedules.

The ADs argue that one benefit of the extra game is that it allows schools to schedule I-AA opponents, who can use the guaranteed payouts to pay bills back home.

Eastern Kentucky opens at Cincinnati. Western Kentucky travels to Georgia. UK welcomes ECU to Lexington for its 2007 season opener.

But the NCAA also lessens the restrictions on how many I-AA victories a team can use to become bowl eligible. It used to be one every four years. Now it's one each year. And while the number of games has increased to 12, the number of wins required to become bowl eligible remains at six. And no I-A school is going to play at a I-AA school.

There have been a few winners in this new charade. Kudos to the Pac 10, which used the extra-game opportunity to add a ninth conference game. Every member will play every member during the season. No ducking. Kudos to schools such as Louisville, which instead of filling its basket with cupcakes, plays host to Miami (of Florida) and travels to Kansas State.

"The season will not be elongated," argued NCAA president Myles Brand when the rule was passed, "it just means the bye week will be taken out."

So there is room enough for a 12th game for the regular season, but not room enough for extra playoff games instead of, or in addition to, a bowl season.

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We can't ignore anonymous bloggers

The Virginian-Pilot

© July 16, 2006

Last updated: 5:08 PM

The news media, already under intense scrutiny for their use of anonymous sources, must now deal with an ever-growing source of concern: the proliferation of blogs and frequent anonymous postings.

As a result, newspapers and other news outlets are warning staffers of the dangers of using such Internet information in news reports. At The Virginian-Pilot, for instance, the paper's updated policy on anonymous sources addresses the matter:

"Anonymous comments from Web logs and other Internet sites should not be used. The same standards apply to these sources as to other sources. If blogged comments are used, the sources should be identified by their full name. Every effort should be made to verify the identification of the source to ensure accuracy."

Says Maria Carrillo, The Pilot's managing editor, "We can't completely ignore the Internet and blogs, of course, but we need to be as clear as possible and try to track the sources."

The paper's policy came into play last week with religion writer Steven G. Vegh's Tuesday Hampton Roads cover story, "Catholicosphere: Blogs broach sacred turf - the bishop and Richmond Diocese."

The story's lede, or opening paragraph, read:

"The Diocese of Richmond is either led by a bureaucratic meanie or manipulated by has-been liberals, according to two new Catholic blogs that are heartily criticizing the diocese two years after the arrival of Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo."

The blogs are A Richmond Voice and Richmond Catholic, both of which have anonymous sponsors and are not officially connected with the diocese.

"Because the bloggers were anonymous, I was wary of quoting from the blogs directly," Vegh said. "At the same time, the emergence of blogs as a new medium active in one of the largest faith communities in Virginia, namely the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, seemed worth reporting on, particularly since blogs in general are winning more attention all the time."

Vegh said that he shied away from the strongest criticism in the blogs partly because they were "focused on personalities," but "even more so since none of the commentators identified themselves."

"At the same time," he added, "the bishops of any Catholic diocese have strong influence and great name recognition; they are public figures, and that made the bloggers' commentaries more newsworthy than if their targets were less prominent individuals."

Also, the blogs "seemed to represent different, conflicting elements in the Richmond diocese than I had previously been aware of and reported on," Vegh said.

He said he "would never even consider using anonymous blogs as an authoritative information source." If he found "interesting content" on such a blog, Vegh said, he would try to confirm the information from "credible, on-the-record sources."

Chris Dinsmore, The Pilot's deputy business editor and the leader of the newsroom team that reviewed the paper's anonymous sources policy, thinks Vegh handled the Catholic blogs' story very well in that he characterized the discussions on the blogs instead of quoting anonymous postings.

Vegh "gave the tenor and then quoted actual people; he didn't just rely on tossing information out there," added Carrillo.

"That story," said Dinsmore, "really could serve as a model for how we should cover blogs."

MISSING NEWS: Carol Estock called to say she is "quite distressed" over the missing news summaries that, until recently, appeared daily on Page A2 above the corrections.

"That was the first section I would turn to (to) catch a grasp of what was going on in the day and then, you know, just take reading the paper from there, which (stories) interested me," Estock said.

The Chesapeake resident is among several readers who have inquired about - and requested the return of - the feature, a staple since 1997. It disappeared July 8.

Since then, the space has been labeled "For Your Information," with "How To Reach Us" information, including the names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers for top newsroom editors, appearing in the space once devoted to Today's Top Stories. The contact information previously appeared under the 24-hour weather snapshot on Page A2.

You may have noticed that the contact information that appears daily depends on how much space is needed for corrections and clarifications. Hence, on a given day, one, two, three or four names and their contact information may appear under the "Deputy Managing Editors" heading.

Whither the news summaries?

The feature was discontinued, for the time being, I'm told, because the copy desk, which prepares it daily, has been short-staffed. It takes "a fair bit of time" to compile. Whether it will resume in the near future, or once The Pilot undergoes a targeted January redesign, is uncertain.

Feel free to e-mail or call me to share your thoughts.

- *Marvin Lake is the public editor at The Virginian-Pilot. Reach him at 757-446-2475 or marvin.lake@pilotonline.com. other opinions*

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Coach K produces winning formula

Posted: July 15, 2006



Michael Hunt

[E-MAIL](#)

A strange and wondrous thing is happening with USA Basketball. The organizing body that represents the country that invented the sport - you know, the country that was humiliated at the 2002 World Championship and then embarrassed at the 2004 Olympics - is actually interested in winning again.

USA Basketball will ask - no, demand - that the players who wear the United States of America on the front of their jerseys to make a three-year commitment to the *program*. Yes, program. It will now be a regimented program, just like in the other countries that routinely beat on the USA. That means no last-minute withdrawals by NBA stars who suddenly can't be bothered with the Olympic experience. You are either in or you're out.

Old-school approach

USA Basketball will no longer select its team based on marketability. It will not invite players to the 2008 Beijing Games just because they might be able to sell shoes to a worldwide audience. It will actually choose a balanced roster with defenders and - believe it or not based on the Athens Games - shooters who just might be able to take advantage of the international rules. But mostly defenders. You must be able to make an actual defensive stop now to play for USA Basketball.

"We will select the best team, not the best 12 players," said coach Mike Krzyzewski.

That's right, *coach* Mike Krzyzewski. No more NBA caretakers who cannot get along with NBA players during the World Championship and Olympics because they could not possibly get along with them during the NBA season. No more whining Larry Brown, no more George Karl. Yes, there will still be NBA players because, otherwise, the USA would have no chance against the rest of the world and its NBA players, but it's a good bet that this mix of NBA players will be somewhat more interested in the team concept.

Advertisement

Dwyane Wade, Michael Redd, Chauncey Billups, Bruce Bowen, Shawn Marion, guys like that with amateurs sprinkled in, maybe even the fabulous Indianapolis high school player Greg Oden, on his way to Ohio State.

Of course, Krzyzewski will alter his approach somewhat. "A little bit, yeah, because (pros) are able to pick things up a lot faster," he said. "But I'll still look them in the eye and tell them the truth and expect the same in return."

Whether this retro approach is practical as USA Basketball gathers this week in Las Vegas to begin preparation for the World Championship in Japan is unclear, but it has to beat the recent alternative.

Pride and teamwork

As part of the original Dream Team experience, Krzyzewski said he recalled a tremendous sense of pride and teamwork - yes, from even Charles Barkley - as those superstars flattened the Earth in Barcelona. But somewhere along the way apathy set in and the rest of the world caught up, leading to the infamous meltdown of '02 in Indianapolis and the indignity of double-digit losses and a bronze medal two years ago in Greece.

Something had to change, and outside of the reactionary move of sending amateurs to get mowed down in the Olympics, this is the only sensible path available: a brilliant, no-nonsense coach who will be given the freedom to choose a real team consisting mostly of dedicated professionals.

Maybe this works, maybe it doesn't, but at least the mission is righteous.

"This group is charged to return USA Basketball to its rightful spot in the world," said Krzyzewski. "It's my responsibility to make sure that happens."

Send e-mail to mhunt@journalssentinel.com

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From the July 16, 2006 editions of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
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THE ENQUIRER

Last Updated: 8:57 am | Wednesday, July 5, 2006

New president extols Miami

Hodge says all RedHawks' athletics in good shape

BY MIKE DYER | ENQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Dr. David Hodge was named Miami University's 21st president by the board of trustees April 21. His first official day was Saturday.

Hodge, who previously worked at the University of Washington, is no stranger to college athletics. He ran track and was nationally ranked in Division II at Macalester College (Minn.) from 1966-70. He is the school's outdoor record-holder in the 800 meters (1:50.20).

On Monday, Hodge spoke by telephone with The Enquirer about athletics.

Question: What is your view of Miami athletics as you enter your new job?

Answer: I'm very impressed and feel very connected to Miami athletics. The academic success of the teams is very, very high, so I am pleased to see that. Also, (Miami) has been successful competing and, whether winning championships or not, students should feel they have a shot (at the title). The facilities are in excellent condition. We have great coaches and a super athletic director.

Q: How will the new ice arena benefit fans and hockey players this season?

A: The facility is drop-dead beautiful. I recently walked through it with a hard hat. It is such a fantastic place for fans and players, whether it's hockey or synchronized skating. It's just an inspiring place to play.

Q: Before you got to Miami, how did your West Coast colleagues view the school?

A: The Mid-American Conference is a strong conference and is very well-positioned.

To be honest, Miami was not a place to see often (on TV in Washington). I guess you could say we had this "attitude" about (former Miami quarterback) Ben Roethlisberger and we weren't real happy to see the Super Bowl and the results of it (a Pittsburgh victory over the Seattle Seahawks). I had to overcome several prejudices to come here, that being at the top of the list (*laughing*).

Q: Some of the NCAA Division I men's basketball coaches recently discussed expanding the NCAA Tournament field of 65. What is your view of that?

A: I just heard about that. I can't really give an answer, because I haven't gone through the pros and cons. I hope to (have an answer) very soon. Our goal at Miami is, no matter (the size of the Tournament), is to get into those (65) teams.

Q: Would you be in favor of expanding the field?

A: On the surface, it sounds right, but to me, it might end up diluting the competition. I'm a fan of tradition. I just don't know yet.

Q: What is your view of the attendance of Miami athletic events on campus?

A: We would like to have more. Hockey, it's not so (much of a problem). Football, it is, and basketball, I have heard it is a mix. ... We have huge competition (with) Ohio State because of the fans around the state that come with that loyalty. We are hoping for more TV exposure, and I think we are a good draw on TV because we have good sports. ... As we try to stress the sense of community at Miami, I am hoping students are more interested in all the various events (including concerts and other non-athletic-related activities).

Q: How has the student-athlete changed since you competed in college?

A: It's hard to translate because I was competing on a different level (Division II) than a Division I school. ... I just loved it, and it was an amazingly important part of my college life. I found it to be one of the cornerstones of college.

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From the Baltimore Sun

Take it from me: YouTube.com

Medium Well: Ray Frager

July 7, 2006

I will give the tip of the cursor to ESPN.com columnist Bill Simmons for a recent piece that sang the praises of YouTube.com.



The Web site is a collection point for video clips, some homemade - warning, adult material - and others collected from television or perhaps some other source. Because it involves no more than a few clicks or typing in search terms, it's low tech enough for me.

Type in "Dr. J ABA" and you get the 1976 American Basketball Association dunk contest, with Julius Erving, George Gervin and David Thompson among the participants. The short shorts, the big Afros, the \$1,200 in prize money.

The crowd in Denver oohs and aahs when Artis Gilmore picks up two basketballs. I guess we're all so jaded now.

Try "manager argue" and there is the Orioles' Sam Perlozzo protesting [Ramon Hernandez](#)'s ejection, though it's from a fan - and apparently a New York Mets fan - in the stands who is mocking Perlozzo.

And how about "baseball umpire"? See the ever-popular clips of umps getting nailed with foul tips to the crotch, but also check out the Asheville Tourists manager having a major meltdown and minor leaguer Delmon Young throwing a bat at an umpire.

You can't necessarily find everything. No response for "Boog Powell" or "John Lowenstein." I was hoping to see one of Powell's beer commercials or see if there was video of Lowenstein hopping off that stretcher.

There are also other things you may not want to relive. A "[Ray Lewis](#) Ravens" search yields Terrell Owens scoring against the Ravens and doing his imitation of Lewis' pre-game dance. "NFL big hits" includes some long clips with action old and new, including one of John Unitas blindsided by one of the Chicago Bears.

As you might expect, some terms turn up more clips than you would ever care to see. Such as "NHL fights," with 235. I mean, did you even know there could be a "Top 5 Goalie Fights"?

My advice: Go to YouTube.com and browse away, but better get that yardwork done first. Next thing you know, the sun will have gone down while you were watching that guy break his leg in a soccer game.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/sports/bal-sp.fragr07jul07,1,1673121.print.column?coll=bal-sports...> 7/15/2006

Listening in

From what I've heard so far of Anita Marks on her afternoon talk show on WJFK (1300 AM), it seems she may really hit her stride come football season. That sport appears to be her strength.

We certainly could do with fewer South Florida-related references. We also could do with less talking by her board operator.

And if the station wants to sell her show to the audience based on her looks and sexual innuendo, that's one thing. However, she should trust her passion for sports and engaging touch with callers rather than head down Flirt Road too often. I'm no prude and some of the radio femme fatale bit may be funny, but ultimately Marks will be judged on how well she talks sports.

So when a discussion of her taping a television commercial for the show goes to a question of her acting skills and she offers how all women have "faked it" at one time or another, that's fine to give the audience a chuckle - as long as there is no faking when it comes to the sports chat.

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL INSIDER

10 questions to ponder until kickoff

By [TONY BARNHART](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Published on: 07/16/06

The ACC preseason meetings kick off a week from today. Players report to camp shortly after that. The first game's just 46 days away. Time to get serious and ponder these pressing questions as we approach the 2006 college football season.

1. Are you telling me the BCS has changed again?

Yep. There will be *five* BCS bowls this season instead of the usual four. The Fiesta and Rose will be held on Jan. 1, the Orange on Jan. 2, the Sugar on Jan. 3. A fifth game — for the BCS championship — will be played in the new stadium in Glendale, Ariz., on Jan. 8.

Remember, this is not a "plus-one," where the two best teams from the four BCS bowls advance. We'll have to wait at least four more years for that.

2. Is Notre Dame really that good?

After their team went 9-3 with tough losses to Southern Cal and Ohio State last fall, Fighting Irish fans are convinced quarterback Brady Quinn will take them all the way this time around. Our friends at The Sporting News have put Notre Dame at No. 1. We respectfully disagree.

The offense will be top-notch again with Charlie Weis calling the plays. But the defense, which returns nine starters, has to get better. The secondary needs more athleticism. The linebackers are average.

Frankly, Notre Dame will be fortunate to win at Georgia Tech on Sept. 2, and should be an underdog when it goes to USC in November. Penn State and Michigan are also on the schedule.

3. Who are the five coaches who need to show significant improvement — right now?

•**Dennis Franchione, Texas A&M.** Franchione was hired to close the gap in the Big 12 South between the Aggies and Texas and Oklahoma. It hasn't happened. A&M is 0-6 against the benchmark programs under <http://ajc.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=10+questions+to+ponder+until+kickof...> 7/15/2006

•**Larry Coker, Miami.** It's ridiculous he's even on this list. In five seasons, Coker is 53-9 with a national championship. But when you lose your bowl game 40-3 and you're at Miami, ridiculous things happen.

•**Lloyd Carr, Michigan.** The Wolverines were 7-5 last year and lost to Ohio State for the third time in four seasons. Now the Buckeyes are No. 1 in the preseason, which is never good for the coach at Michigan.

•**Chuck Amato, N.C. State.** Just 6-10 in ACC play since quarterback Philip Rivers left and 23-25 in six seasons in a league that's getting tougher by the minute. Amato has everything he needs in terms of facilities and budgets. It's time to produce a contender.

4. Is Clemson good enough to win the ACC Atlantic Division?

On paper, yes. The Tigers, who return 17 starters, are better than Florida State, which returns only 10. But the world is not ready to jump on the Clemson bandwagon until Will Proctor proves he can be an adequate quarterback and Clemson proves it can avoid the inexplicable bad loss after a big win. We'll find out early if the Tigers are ready for prime time; they have back-to-back road games at Boston College (Sept. 9) and FSU (Sept. 16).

5. Who's the early leader for the Heisman Trophy?

Notre Dame's Quinn and Oklahoma running back Adrian Peterson start the season as co-favorites until somebody does something dramatic and plays their way into the race (think Ted Ginn, Jr. of Ohio State, or Kenny Irons of Auburn). Georgia Tech wide receiver Calvin Johnson is as good as any of them. He just needs to get more touches.

6. Can Texas repeat as national champion — even without Vince Young?

Ask us again on Sept. 9. That's when the Longhorns, who return 14 starters, host Ohio State. Win that one and find a way to beat Oklahoma in Dallas on Oct. 7 and Texas could be playing on Jan. 8 for a second straight title. Mack Brown will have to do it with a first-year player at quarterback, but whoever wins the job will be surrounded by a ton of talent.

7. Why is West Virginia in everybody's preseason top 5?

First off, they all remember how the Mountaineers ripped through Georgia for a half in the Sugar Bowl. And the guys who did most of the damage — quarterback Pat White and running back Steve Slaton — are both back.

Second, there's the schedule — or lack of it. A Nov. 2 trip to Louisville looks like the only potential stumbling block. But consider this: Would the BCS standings put a 12-1 team from the SEC ahead of a 12-0 West Virginia? Just something to think about.

8. Who's going to bounce back in a very big way?

You have to like Oklahoma, which played for the BCS championship in 2004, then fell back to 8-4 in 2005. Peterson is healthy and ready to make a Heisman run. If the offensive line comes through, Bob Stoops & Co. should challenge Texas for the Big 12 crown.

9. When the season's over, whose fans are going to be the most disappointed?

We're going with LSU's.

After the Tigers humiliated Miami 40-3 in the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl, their fans immediately starting thinking

<http://ajc.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=10+questions+to+ponder+until+kickof...> 7/15/2006

national championship. Here's the reality: A major quarterback controversy looms after Matt Flynn's brilliant bowl showing when an injured JaMarcus Russell couldn't go. And superstar recruit Ryan Perrilloux is still waiting in the wings. The top two running backs (Alley Broussard, Justin Vincent) are both coming off knee injuries. The schedule includes road trips to Auburn, Florida, Tennessee and Arkansas (in Little Rock).

10. Is there a team that could come out of nowhere and get in the BCS mix?

Take a long, hard look at Iowa. The Hawkeyes have been a fashionable choice to contend the last few years but always found a way to stumble out of the gate. With Drew Tate back for his third year at quarterback, Iowa just might avoid its past problems.

Ohio State comes to Iowa City on Sept. 30. The only tough road game is at Michigan (Oct. 21).

Find this article at:

<http://www.ajc.com/sports/content/sports/stories/0716colfoot.html>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

A horizontal banner advertisement for GutterGuard. On the left, there is a photograph of a house with a gutter. The text "Enter for a FREE Original GutterGuard Installation on your House!" is written in a serif font. Below this, a dark blue bar contains the text "STOP CLEANING YOUR GUTTERS FOREVER! CLICK HERE FOR MORE DETAILS" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. On the right side of the banner is the GutterGuard logo, which includes a stylized house icon and the text "The Original GutterGuard" and "FROM DIXIE HOMECRAFTERS, INC." in smaller text.

Enter for a FREE Original GutterGuard Installation on your House!

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Coaches blow whistle on athlete indiscretions on networking sites

By [CARTER STRICKLAND](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Published on: 07/16/06

Before DeMarcus Dobbs plays a game at Georgia, we know this much: He has 271 friends. He was at Whitney's for a party over Memorial Day weekend. (But he doesn't drink or smoke.) He broke Jake the Snake's nose. (But it was Justin's fault.) He has a girl named Anna who will always love him despite the paint handprint he put on her shirt. And he'd better bring his money next time he sees Bobby "cuz it's on."

Welcome to the online social networking/self-profiling world of MySpace.com, Facebook.com and dozens of similar Internet sites.

That emerging world has started to collide with a well-established one — college athletics.

The resulting big bang is what coaches, athletic departments and players have started to deal with in recent months. Administrators and coaches, previously out of touch with the new technology, are coming to understand its power and their athletes' sometimes brazen willingness to share almost anything on the public domain.

They're in line behind middle and high school administrators, police and parents who for months have worried about safety and privacy consequences of posting private information on the sites.

The sites have begun to respond to such concerns. For example, MySpace recently tightened access to some profiles and appointed a chief security officer who formerly served as a federal prosecutor.

At Northwestern University, photos of the women's soccer team hazing the freshmen players, taken from Webshots.com, surfaced on BadJocks.com.

The Evanston, Ill., university was one of the 12 schools where athletes had posted various pictures of alcohol-fueled behavior. BadJocks.com grabbed the photos from the public domain of Webshots.com, packaged them, called them "The Dirty Dozen" and had more than 600,000 unique visitors the day the story broke.

At Louisiana State University, swimmers Eddie Kenney and Matt Coenen were booted from the team after it was learned of their disparaging remarks about the coach on Facebook.com, a wildly popular site where college students interact and can re-create their image with a few keystrokes.

At the University of Colorado, offensive tackle Clint O'Neal was suspended from the Champs Sports Bowl after <http://ajc.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Coaches+blow+whistle+on+athlete+in...> 7/15/2006

he was accused of sending a racially threatening facebook message to a Hispanic cross country runner. He was also ticketed by campus police for harassment.

At Kent State, Facebook.com,

open to those with an e-mail address that ends in .edu, was banned after athletics director Laing Kennedy became concerned about athletes' safety and his school's image.

Kennedy, who received harsh criticism, quickly backed off his ban and said last week he now restricts and monitors athletes' use of the site.

"You have student-athletes misrepresenting their team and themselves," Kennedy said. "We had one situation that really got our attention. There was some information inappropriate outside the realm of the team that was leading down a road we felt became dangerous." Kennedy wouldn't provide further details.

That dangerous road, according to Kennedy and other athletics directors, is lined with hangers-on, gamblers and agents who could use a Facebook friendship to compromise eligibility.

Image concerns

There are also images to protect: The image of the program, which at its core operates like a business, and of the athletes who make that business money.

"From the stance of an athletic department, the thing that is the most dangerous to them is the disclosure of information, and information that shines a negative light back to the program," said Fred Stutzman, a University of North Carolina doctoral student who has published a paper on Facebook.com. "There is so much money tied into these departments, I think that they want to control all variables they can control."

The University of Georgia exercised control in the spring. Football coach Mark Richt had someone from his staff surf the sites, and Richt subsequently asked a few players to take down items that could be viewed negatively.

Richt said it was for the players' protection.

"Everybody's got to be careful with what they put out there," he said. "These guys are ours. Just like I would with my son, we're trying to get on there and see what's going on."

Facebook officials also are concerned about the images posted and the messages those might send.

"Student athletes should not be posting pictures that show them drinking when they are underage or with illegal drugs," said Melanie Deitch, director of marketing for the company. "It is against our terms of service [to post such pictures]."

There is also the future to think about, said Georgia athletics director Damon Evans. Because once an image is portrayed on the Internet, it may not be forgotten.

"Stuff spreads on there pretty quickly," Georgia quarterback Joe Tereshinski said. "If you want to have a party going on, you can get on there and set one up that night."

"Then if people get mad at you for some certain reason, your picture is up there, or any type of information about you. It might not be true. But if it is up there, people are going to believe it."

A year ago is like history

Georgia, as well as Georgia Tech, continues to grapple with the proper response to the increasing presence of online sites in players' lives.

"This is a very public domain, and there are potential consequences," Tech athletics director Dan Radakovich said.

Radakovich, who has been at the university three months, knows the consequences better than most. He was working in LSU's athletic department when Kenney and Coenen were dismissed.

"That was the first heads-up we got [of Facebook.com's potential]," he said. "But even a year ago, [Facebook] was not as prevalent as it is now."

Today, Stutzman said, the Web site's market penetration is astounding. At North Carolina, 94 percent of incoming freshmen signed up for a free Facebook.com account.

"Every college student seems to have a digital camera," said Bob Reno, publisher of BadJocks.com "They are all wired to the Internet. Then you combine the social networks, it gives the outlet.

"It is the perfect storm."

And the storm clouds continue to grow. Even after the publication of "The Dirty Dozen," more photos were found and compiled into the "Dirty 30" on a separate site.

'Put that on the Internet'?

"People need to understand they have a role and responsibility to a larger community," said Peter Roby, director for the Boston-based Center for the Study of Sport in Society. "Why in the world they would want to put that on the Internet is mind-boggling."

Athletics administrators have found they can exert some control.

Shortly after student athletes sign scholarship agreements with schools, they also sign codes of conduct, which can include any number of stipulations. Athletic scholarships are renewed on a year-to-year basis.

"We have always recognized that students can give up certain rights to play athletics in college," said Greg Lukianoff, president of TheFire.org, a group that fights to defend the right to free speech on college campuses. "They are representatives of the college. So we do recognize that universities have increased power to place limitations on students who are athletes.

"We have seen a worrisome trend this might be going a bit far."

Such as in Kent State's case. Only approved friends are allowed on Facebook.com — a blocking tool can keep the unwanted out — and coaches must be given access.

"[Blocking people out], that is counterintuitive to how the network works," UNC's Stutzman said. "Being on the facebook is a critical part of being at college because it is so widely used. Students plan out gatherings, they communicate with each other, they really leverage a lot of what the facebook offers. If you are not a part of that, it would be like a college student without a cellphone now."

Lukianoff said it also could damage the educational experience.

"[Universities] are places that are supposed to welcome and nurture freedom of speech," he said. "Open academic expression requires unfettered and uncensored speech and exchange of ideas.

"Do you have to give up all your express rights to be on the sports team? By monitoring or censoring these sites, [college athletic programs] seem to be ignoring that these are both athletes and students," he said.

Find this article at:

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