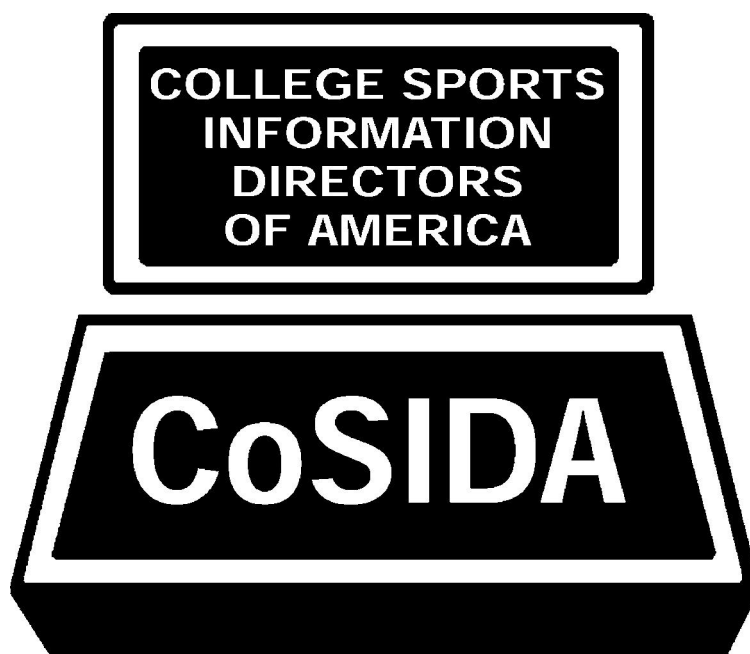


CoSIDA NEWS

Intercollegiate Athletics News from Around the Nation



May 11, 2007

LONGHORNS TENNIS

For good or bad, NCAA tennis has gone global

Influx of foreign players has left its mark on sport, though some are lamenting it



By John Maher
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF
Thursday, May 10, 2007

It might be hard to find four more different men's tennis programs than the University of Texas and the three teams it will be hosting this weekend in the first and second rounds of the NCAA tournament.

One of the main differences is in the use of foreign players, which remains a controversial topic in a sport where two-thirds of the top 125 players now are imports.

The Naval Academy has never had a foreign player. Boise State has only one, even though coach Greg Patton said, "I tell them California is a suburb of Boise, Idaho."

The Longhorns have a Tex-Mex and international mix.

Then there's Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Even though Corpus Christi has had a large public tennis center for more than 40 years, the Islanders don't have one player from their city, or even from the state of Texas. Nor do they have one from this country or even this continent.

In fact, it would just about take a globe and a tape measure to figure out which Islanders are closest and farthest away from home. The Islanders have two players from Guayaquil, Ecuador, a pair from Barcelona, Spain, two Russians and players from Belarus and the Slovak Republic.

"I want Texas kids. If they fit the mold, I want them more than the foreign kids," Islanders coach Steve Moore said. "But at this level, you've got to get the best athletes you possibly can. It's a worldwide market, kind of like the NBA."

Critics argue that foreign players take up scholarships that could be going to American players. It's an issue in some other college sports, but "It's probably the most egregious in tennis," said Navy coach John Officer.

The NCAA tournament is no longer the showcase for future American stars that it was in the 1960s and 1970s, when players such as Arthur Ashe, Stan Smith, Jimmy Connors and John McEnroe won NCAA singles titles.

NCAA winners no longer are assured success on the pro tour, but satellite tours have become a pathway for

<http://statesman.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=For+good+or+bad%2C+NCAA+tennis...> 5/10/2007

international players to get to U.S. colleges.

"As long as they don't make more than they have in expenses, they can be eligible," Officer said. "I don't begrudge it. The U.S. players have fallen off and you don't get the bang for your buck."

Moore, however, said he wants Texas and U.S. players. He just has trouble attracting them right now.

"We probably have the worst facility in Division I," he said. "It would be a bad intramural facility. We've got six courts, one in shambles. Two of the nets are torn down. Our fence is rusted through and balls can roll under it, and you've got to walk out into a field and get it."

Moore said the team's budget, not including the 4.5 scholarships that men's tennis teams are allowed to award, is a mere \$24,000. He's a part-time employee of the university; his other job is teaching tennis at a country club.

So how does he get players from Minsk and Moscow?

After nine years working for schools such as Southern Methodist, Texas A&M and Texas Tech, Moore has foreign connections.

"Kids may not know our school, but I tell them there's only two on an island, Hawaii and us. That's the Aqua Velva splash," he said. "Now they're kind of interested. Then I tell them 100 yards away, there's fishing and windsurfing. I think everyone on our team has a fishing pole now."

Said Patton: "In a lot of ways, we're on an island — the island of Boise. We're in the boondocks. Our nearest competition, Idaho State, is three and one half or four hours away."

Patton is a former national junior coach, and his strategy is the opposite of Moore's. He wants to attract the top U.S. players that may be bypassed by some of the bigger powers who have international teams. Patton said 11 of his 12 players were from the United States, including Brent Werbeck, who is from Cedar Park but played at St. Stephen's.

Boise's attractiveness to players improved after Micron CEO Steve Appleton, a former Boise State tennis player, donated 10,000 shares of Micron stock and \$850,000 toward the construction of a new tennis facility that opened in 2003.

"We try to sell our facility. It blows their socks off," Patton said. "It's the Taj Mahal. It's so beautiful, it's where I want to be buried."

UT, of course, can pitch both its facilities and location.

The 11th-ranked Longhorns have attracted Texans such as Corpus Christi's Hubert Chodkiewicz, Rook Schellenberg of Dallas, Jon Wiegand of San Antonio and Josh Zavala of Amarillo. The Longhorns also have a pair of players from Mexico and others from such far-flung locales as Serbia, Bulgaria and Austria.

Texas isn't a newcomer when it comes to recruiting international players. The school's most successful professional was Kevin Curren, a South African who was also the 1979 NCAA champion.

"My recruiting strategy is first the state, then nationally, then internationally," Texas coach Michael Center said. "Most of these kids we've seen play in the United States."

Of the international influx, Center said, "I don't think it's bad for the game at all. It creates diversity. What I've been opposed to is the international player who has been on the tour who doesn't fit your student/athlete profile.

"They're 21, been ranked 400 in the world and transfer in as a sophomore. They're two years older and have a significant advantage physically, mentally and emotionally."

Center said some teams have become so convinced they need international players that a lot of his competition doesn't even show up to scout tournaments for U.S. players.

Officer said it would be possible for Navy to have an international player, but it's unlikely and hasn't happened yet. Rival American University used international players, won some Patriot League titles and then abruptly dropped the sport two years ago.

"That's where the foreign issue hurts us," Officer said. "If a program is on the chopping block, it's an easier cut for an athletic director if there's foreign players. There's not as many screaming parents around."

jmaher@statesman.com; 445-3956

NCAA men's tennis tournament

What: First and second rounds

When: Today, Saturday

Where: Penick-Allison Tennis Center, University of Texas

Today's schedule: 10 a.m., Texas vs. Navy; 1 p.m., Boise State vs. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

Saturday's schedule: 1 p.m., first-round winners

Find this article at:

<http://www.statesman.com/sports/content/sports/stories/longhorns/05/10/10textennis.html>

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

Academic Progress Rate: Numbers don't tell the story



May 7, 2007

By [Dennis Dodd](#)

CBS SportsLine.com Senior Writer

[Tell Dennis your opinion!](#)

Last week the NCAA asked you to suspend your beliefs.

It asked you to believe that Auburn football was one of the shining academic beacons less than a year after academic irregularities were uncovered by the *New York Times*.

It asked you to believe that mid-major schools were the main academic offenders in its annual Academic Progress Rate report, but that only one football program among BCS schools is academically deficient.



Dave Ridpath wants the NFL and NBA to use minor leagues, not colleges, to develop players.

There were other incredulity strainers when the NCAA's latest APR report was released. Dave Ridpath is surprised at none of them.

"I've screamed it from the hilltops," said Ridpath, an Ohio University assistant professor of sport administration. "The APR is just another layer of the shroud of what's going on on our campuses across America."

And what is happening is not promising, even if you have a shred of skepticism in academic reforms. You can identify if you've ever chased a number – sales quota, commission, etc. It's less about the process, more about getting to the number. It's easy to agree with Ridpath when he says some schools are more interested in chasing the 925 APR cutoff score than in meaningful degree programs.

The first APR scores were released two years ago to measure a school's ability to keep players eligible term-by-term. It was conceived as a faster measurement than graduation rates that take six years to calculate. The latest APR numbers are from the 2005-06 academic year.

The APR, Ridpath says, encourages players majoring in eligibility and schools enabling them. Schools find themselves chasing a number (925 is the cutoff, roughly equal to a 60 percent graduation rate). The NCAA

forces them into that chase.

"In some ways you're right," said Arizona athletic director Jim Livengood. "I would prefer you said that, rather than me."

Livengood's football program was the only one among the 66 BCS teams penalized with the loss of scholarships (four) last week. Eighty-one total programs were penalized. Only three of those were from BCS conferences – Cincinnati and Iowa State basketball and Arizona football.

Meanwhile, there were 34 non-BCS schools encompassing 49 teams in various sports – all were issued a public warning by the NCAA. None of them from BCS leagues.

To some that would suggest that Idaho State's football players (whose program was warned) are dumber than Ohio State's (not on the list). The reality is that Ohio State (and its BCS brethren) can better afford to keep its athletes eligible than Idaho State.

There are academic support palaces built on major-college campuses that would make Frank Lloyd Wright jealous. That isn't necessarily a bad thing, unless those monuments are built so that athletes can be processed instead of educated.

The two most damaging words in the NCAA: academic fraud. Without academic integrity everything else is meaningless. The NCAA ceases to exist. That's why it will practically knuckle up to defend president Myles Brand's aggressive academic reforms. Fraud happened before (see Minnesota), when the APR wasn't looking over the shoulders of compliance officers. Now the pressure has been ramped up.

Conferences like the Sun Belt or SWAC can't afford to build such palaces, much less the staff to make them run smoothly. Compare that to Florida State (second in the ACC with a 952 APR): three compliance staffers, seven to eight persons in academic support, a registrar and a financial aid person who works only with athletes.

"Do I think it's better than what we had in the past? Yes," said Brian Battle, FSU's compliance coordinator of the APR. "Everybody complains about it but everybody adjusts to it. (However) you're sugarcoating a lot of things."

The NCAA considers Ridpath a radical. His dream was to be a big-time athletic director. He was on that track when the NCAA began

investigating Marshall football. As Marshall's compliance director, he was demoted after NCAA penalties hit the program in 2001. A suit filed against the school and then-coach Bobby Pruett for making false statements about his department is still pending.

More than that, Ridpath wants the NCAA's tax exempt status questioned. Either that or more disclosure of athletes and academics than the APR.

He wants you to know terms like "clustering," or pushing athletes into easy majors. He wants you to know about sympathetic faculty ("jock sniffers," he calls them) who pass athletes through the system. That's what was alleged at Auburn last year.

Auburn's interim president said athletes weren't being shown preferential treatment. However, two men were forced to resign as department heads in the wake of the *Times'* investigation.

Surprise! Nine months later, the football program showed up with a 981 APR last week, now in the upper 10 percent of Division I football schools along with Harvard, Yale and Princeton.

Auburn in an exclusive club with the Ivy group?

"How did they do that?" Ridpath said. "You had all these athletes take these independent studies (courses). I know academic advisors at most of these schools. Privately they'll tell me all this stuff that's going on."

He wants you to know about majors like Kinesiology, which is a fancy way to identify a degree perhaps less impressive than it sounds.

"I can't say it even too loud in my office," Ridpath said. "Kinesiology is now the buzzword for physical education. You can't say P.E. within the departments that I worked in without people getting really upset. P.E. is now a dirty world."

He wants you to know about schools that offer credit for varsity participation. While it is a common practice, one or two credits (usually once a semester during a career) for playing football goes a long way toward achieving eligibility.

"It's not atypical or wrong to give credit for participation," Ridpath said. "It's the stacking of these P.E. credits."

He wants the NFL and NBA to end the charade and establish their own minor leagues rather than colleges becoming de facto developmental leagues.

"It's one of the dirty little secrets we don't talk about," Ridpath said. "If we don't do that for them (pass athletes through school), they're going to go out and be gangbangers in midtown Washington, D.C."

"I finally grew out of that. It's one of the more pathetic excuses. Let's make it where you have to be an actual student to compete or let's force the NBA and NFL to take on the duty of player development themselves."

Ridpath and the Drake Group reform organization he heads as executive director want the NCAA to release GPAs, majors, classes, curriculum and even faculty members to see how these numbers are being attained. The NCAA argues that would violate student privacy laws, but Ridpath isn't asking for names, just a clearer picture of what's going on.

"If that were to happen, that becomes an advantage for us, not a disadvantage," Livengood said. "There would be a really clear picture (of) those schools that might give credit for varsity participation (or) pass-fail courses."

To get to his goals, Ridpath has testified before House Ways and Means Committee against the NCAA's tax exempt status.

"There is not a single group out there that has the breadth and depth of knowledge and experience of NCAA athletics," he said of the Drake Group. "We have forgotten more about college athletics than (NCAA president) Myles Brand and the Knight Commission (another prominent reform group) knows."

It can be argued that Brand has accomplished more in his four years and four months in office than any NCAA president since Walter Byers. Emergency recruiting reforms during the Colorado and Willie Williams scandals. More money funneled toward athletes' insurance and emergency funds. More academic support money, in fact, funneled toward historically black colleges, many of which were cited in the APR report.

But all academic reforms run into a brick wall of effectiveness at some point. The reformers don't want to admit this, but it's still easier to chase a number than to prepare thousands of athletes for a meaningful livelihood.

Progress toward a degree, but what degree? The temptation is to cluster athletes into those easier degree programs.

At best.

At worst, some of these reforms invite academic fraud. The best way to fight that perception might be the fuller disclosure that Ridpath is seeking. If it means one less All-American who is an academic slug, then good.

"Randy (Moss) had no business being at Marshall," Ridpath said of the former receiver. "Randy is not a dumb guy. ... He wasn't a genius by any means but he clearly was there to play football. There was no interest given to Randy in his academic pursuits."

Instead, "we had to put together a huge mechanism that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to keep Randy and others like him eligible."

Any sensible fan has to accept that there have been a lot of Randy Mosses before and after, all over the country.

"When you tell a school 'You have to meet this cutoff score,' those people down in the trenches, I can assure you, are being told by the Tommy Tubervilles of the world, 'You need to keep this person eligible or your butt is on the line,'" Ridpath said.

The NCAA penalized a lot of schools last week and sent warning letters to others. Brand says that if schools don't improve more, severe penalties will be applied next year when a full, four-year cycle of numbers is available.

We'll see. Meanwhile, don't be surprised if major college athletic directors with that compliance money and staff have cast an eye toward Arizona. They are rounding up their compliance officers to issue a simple mandate.

"This will *not* happen to us."

By any means necessary, when winning is at stake.

- [The Watts Line](#)
- [The Daily Meds](#)
- [Letters to the Editor](#)
- [Commentary](#)

Get the scoop

Adding zing to spring football

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

This past weekend would have been deliciously ideal, smack dab between the NFL draft and the first solid flurry of meaningful NBA playoff games.

The only real competition: An animal race, a human fight, another Rocket Clemens re-launch, Steve Nash and his bloody nose.

Once again, however, the sleepy people who run college football missed a chance to showcase a sport growing in popularity despite the lazy management. It wouldn't take much to make things a lot more fun for fans in the off-season and inter-team spring exhibition games are a great place to start.

Inter-squad spring football "games" are a hit already, what with 92,000-plus on hand to see Alabama and Nick Saban's hair at the annual A-Day fest.

South Carolina's garnet and white game attracted 35,153 ticket-buying fans to rank among the top eight in spring game attendance (behind Alabama, Ohio State, Penn State, Nebraska, Notre Dame, Florida and Texas).

Clemson's squads clashed — in more ways than one — in purple jerseys and orange jerseys.

Those were glorified practices. Just think of the ratcheted interest in, say, a Texas-Southern Cal spring game complete with the "Game Day" crew and a prime-time window.

Spring Football Weekend is as much a no-brainer as Steve Spurrier going for it on fourth down in Athens behind eight points with a minute left. In exchange for one weekend of travel for road teams, college football stands to soak up gobs of media exposure and donation-strapped athletic departments will get precious cash.

ACC vs. SEC

Oh, the potential joy of an ACC-SEC Spring Challenge.

Brought to you by (fill in your favorite big-name title sponsor):

Friday, 7 p.m.

Clemson at Florida (ESPN)

Saturday, 1 p.m.

Article tools

- ✉ [E-mail story](#)
- 🖨 [Printer-friendly version](#)
- 💬 [Comments](#)
- 📻 [iPod friendly](#)
- 📱 [Text alerts to your cell phone](#)
- ✉ [Get daily news e-mailed to you](#)
- 📧 [Subscribe to the Post and Courier](#)
- [Save this page to Del.icio.us](#)



Latest local stories

- [Ladson soldier dies in Iraq](#)
- [Parish looking at 205 years](#)
- [Cyclist's crash an instant that felt a lot like eternity](#)
- [1 kayaker found after 18 agonizing hours](#)
- [FBI: Man claims up to 40 heists](#)
- [Angry parents put brakes on school start-time plan](#)
- [With top District 4 honor, mom serves as good example for teacher-to-be daughter](#)
- [Weather to improve as storm sloshes on by](#)
- [BRIEFLY](#)
- [Community leader Johnson dies](#)

[--more local news](#)

Search Charleston.net

GO

[Click here](#) for our 1995-2007 archives



Customer Care

- [SUBSCRIBE to the newspaper](#)
- [Log on to our E-Edition](#)
- [Register for daily email updates](#)
- [Register for cell phone news alerts](#)
- [Manage your account](#)
- [Advertising rates](#)
- [Place a classified ad](#)
- [Contact us](#)

Wake Forest at South Carolina (CBS)

Virginia Tech at Auburn (ESPN)

Maryland at Vanderbilt (ESPN2)

Mississippi State at Duke

Kentucky at N.C. State

Saturday, 4 p.m.

Virginia at Arkansas (ESPN)

Mississippi at Georgia Tech (ESPN2)

Saturday, 7 p.m.

Miami at Alabama (ABC)

Tennessee at Florida State (ESPN)

Sunday, 1 p.m.

North Carolina at LSU (ESPN)

Sunday, 7 p.m.

Georgia at Boston College (ESPN)

Lobby hobby

Television replays of these games would draw viewers from here to the Fourth of July.

To keep injuries to the current spring game minimum, no sacks or special teams returns allowed, and the clock runs as liberally as former Clemson football walk-on John Edwards.

A Clemson-Florida game might allow C.J. Spiller a chance to play for both teams, or at least get an up-close view of his options while Gator Nation christens the Tim Tebow Era.

South Carolina was only able to finish fifth in the SEC East, but how might the Gamecocks look against ACC power Wake Forest?

Quarterback Brian Brohm would make any Louisville game worth watching.

The Mountain West-WAC Challenge would have relative appeal, too. Think of all the potato farmers and french fry designers in Idaho who really don't want to wait until September to find out if Boise State can still keep it going.

Wyoming fans from West Yellowstone to Tie Siding want insight. Last weekend.

The only people who might not like the new zing in spring football? Coaches, afraid of reminders down the road that while they are undefeated against Arch Rival U. and are perennial bowl participants, their Spring Game record is 1-5.

Too bad. There is too much to like about Spring Football



topAutos

○ [2006 PORSCHE 911 COUPE](#)
[Midnight Blue, Tan Leather, 6](#)
[speed, Loaded! 4000 miles,....](#)

○ [67 Ford Mustang Coupe 90%](#)
[finished, \\$7000 firm, \(843\) 276-](#)
[4604 after 4:30pm,....](#)

topJobs

○ [Welders \(with experience\) — Nuclear](#)
[Submarine Machinist Mate —](#)
[Weldi....](#)

○ [Registered Dietician or CERTIFIED](#)
[DIETARY MANAGER Skilled healthcare](#)
[facility se....](#)

○ [APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY](#)
[FLOWERS And also...SIGN-ON](#)
[BONUSES!!! Licensed Nurses hi....](#)

○ [DELIVERY DRIVER Starting pay](#)
[\\$380/per wk, 401K, health ins.,](#)
[benefits. Must have....](#)

○ [We're cooking up changes at](#)
[OAKBROOK HEALTH & REHAB and our](#)
[recipe is callin....](#)

topHomes

○ [Dntn-Cozy 1br on Peninsula.](#)
[\\$650/mo. Off St. Parking. On the bus](#)
[line to MUSC &a....](#)

○ [S'VILLE- Highwoods Pnt 3br/2ba.](#)
[\\$1000/mo. \(843\) 442-1489,....](#)

○ [Mt. Pleasant- 2BR, 1BA \\$750 mo.](#)
[Seagull Dr. Call \(843\) 330-6087,....](#)

topBoats

○ [2005 26' Hurricane Deck Boat 2/115](#)
[Yamaha 4 strokes, 100hrs. Alpine](#)
[stereo, head....](#)

○ [30' Center Console Restored in 2005.](#)
[2/225 Optimax w/ 160hrs, fully](#)
[serviced, ne....](#)

Weekend, and maybe jamboree-style August scrimmages will follow. All it takes is a little persuasive lobbying from the mouths and wallets of loyalists.

The next time your favorite athletic director asks for a check, ask for two tickets to the next April shower of ACC-SEC Spring Challenge games.

Reach **Gene Sapakoff** at gsapakoff@postandcourier.com



Comments

Post a comment

(Requires free [registration](#).)

Username:

Password: ([Forgotten your password?](#))

Comment:

[Preview comment](#)



- [Today](#) |
- [News](#) |
- [Sports](#) |
- [Entertainment](#) |
- [Features](#) |
- [Web Extras](#) |
- [Editorial](#) |
- [Obituaries](#) |
- [Blogs](#) |
- [Archives](#)

- [SUBSCRIBE](#) |
- [Classifieds](#) |
- [Automotive](#) |
- [Real Estate](#) |
- [Careers](#) |
- [Shopping](#) |
- [Supplements](#)

Posted on Tue, May. 08, 2007

Freshman defections a disturbing trend

KEN TYSIAC

The worst-case scenario described by Bob Knight must sound like fingernails on a chalkboard at the NCAA headquarters in Indianapolis.

Imagine a freshman basketball player completing six credit hours during the first semester to stay eligible, then playing during the spring semester while never attending a class.

This is what can happen, Knight said, when players who have no interest in education come to college because of the NBA's age limit.

"We're supposed to be playing students," Knight said, "not rent-for-a-year players."

Knight, the Texas Tech coach and NCAA career wins leader, blasted the NBA age limit this spring before the Red Raiders met Boston College in a first-round NCAA tournament game in Winston-Salem.

Starting in 2006, players had to be 19 by the end of the calendar year and one year removed from high school to enter the NBA draft. Elite players such as Ohio State's Greg Oden, Texas' Kevin Durant and North Carolina's Brandan Wright spent last season in college before leaving for the NBA.

Nine freshmen were on the NBA's list of early-entry draft candidates released last week. That compares to three from the 2005-06 freshman class, which was depleted when nine high school players were drafted in 2005.

This year, Ohio State alone has three early-entry freshmen -- Oden, Mike Conley Jr. and Daequan Cook -- though players who don't sign with an agent can withdraw from the draft by June 18.

In many ways, the age limit benefited college basketball. A Sports Illustrated cover story in February dubbed 2006-07 the Year of the Freshman. Durant swept the national player of the year awards, and Oden led the Buckeyes to the NCAA title game.

But some coaches and educators worry about the consequences of a rule that has added a term to the grass-roots basketball vernacular. Now when a McDonald's All-American commits to a school, fans ask if he is "one-and-done."

If so, he could follow the worst-case route through college that Knight described. That route seems antithetical to an NCAA governing principle that says intercollegiate athletics should enhance the integrity of higher education.

"I'd like to hope that kind of abuse isn't happening," said North Carolina faculty athletics representative Jack Evans. "I think (Knight) makes the point in the right way. If the coaches don't stay on top of it and don't require anything more, it's possible for a kid to exploit this."

Though the academic side of one-and-done can be hazardous at the college level, administrators hope it will improve the academic performance of high school athletes.

The popularity of Oden and Durant demonstrated that a year of college can boost a player's marketability and/or draft prospects. That could lead to greater academic effort among high school players so they can get into college.

"Now they'll be in college, they're prepared for college, and the likelihood they'll stay on is increased because they've prepared for it," said NCAA President Myles Brand, "and we hope that will show up in the graduation rates and the education of these young people."

NBA sets agenda

Brand agrees with the many coaches and administrators who would prefer a rule keeping basketball players in college for two or three years. North Carolina faculty athletics committee chair Lissa Broome said it's not difficult for athletes who spend three years in school to come back and finish their degrees.

Broome said players such as Wright and Marvin Williams, who was drafted in 2005 after a year at North Carolina, face a challenging road toward their degrees despite good intentions.

Coaches also are concerned they will lose scholarships under the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate formula if NBA-bound players ignore academic responsibilities.

Last year, East Carolina was penalized two scholarships in men's basketball based on three-year aggregate APR scores. In fact, 44 percent of Division I men's basketball teams posted APRs below the NCAA acceptable standard and will lose scholarships if their numbers don't improve.

But the college coaches don't set this agenda. The age limit was established in the NBA's collective-bargaining agreement with its players.

The colleges must adapt to it and hope Knight's worst-case scenario is a rare occurrence.

"More (education) is better than a little, and a little is better than none," Evans said, "but a little doesn't justify abusing the system."

Ken Tysiac: 919-834-8471

Who is ... Earl Johnson?

Forward from Clinton Junior College in Rock Hill is the only one of nine freshmen on the NBA's early-entry draft list (which includes the eight players pictured above) who's not from a Division I team:

HT., WT.: 6-7, 220

HOMETOWN: Myrtle Beach

STATS: Averaged 11.7 points and 7.5 rebounds, shot 44 percent from 3-point range and 52 percent from the field last season.

STRENGTHS: Athletic ability, perimeter shot.

WEAKNESSES: Ball-handling, inexperience.

WHY TURN PRO? Johnson would like a big paycheck so his family can live better than it is now. If he gets scouts' attention, he could play professionally overseas if he's not drafted.

QUOTE: "Most likely, I may pull out and go back to school. But I'm confident right now."

Posted on Sun, May. 06, 2007**Pack radio grows, now big business**

CHIP ALEXANDER

In the early 1960s, a flood of phone calls from N.C. State fraternities helped link Wolfpack sports with WPTF radio.

"We weren't looking to make money," said Frank Weedon, then the school's sports information director. "What we wanted was exposure."

In those days, Weedon was a one-man marketing arm for the athletics department and traveled around the state lining up stations for a fledgling sports network. The radio crew for State's games -- Bill Jackson, Wally Ausley and later Garry Dornburg -- worked for WPTF-AM 680.

These days, it's a multi-layered, multi-million-dollar business.

Wolfpack play-by-play man Gary Hahn and color analyst Tony Haynes work for Capitol Broadcasting Company. Wolfpack Sports Marketing is a division of Capitol, the rights holder for NCSU's sports broadcasts and the coaches' TV and radio shows. It handles the corporate and advertising sales, produces game programs and operates the athletics department's official Web site, gopack.com.

And, starting this fall, the flagship radio station for Wolfpack sports will no longer be WPTF but WRAL-FM 101.5, which is owned by Capitol. A 10-year deal recently was announced.

The use of outside marketing firms by college athletics departments is a trend that began in the 1980s and early 1990s. Host Communications, based in Lexington, Ky., and later ISP Sports in Winston-Salem began taking on the marketing duties for several schools.

In 1996, Capitol's Wolfpack Sports Marketing became the marketing arm for NCSU, joining the move to add on a third-party marketing contractor.

"The way I've always explained it is if you need your plumbing fixed and have the time, talent and tools, you can do it yourself," said Jerry Reckerd, former general manager of Wolfpack Sports Marketing. "If you don't, you call a plumber."

"That's why schools started outsourcing marketing. In many cases they did not have the time or the skills. They were great at athletics issues but did not have the necessary background in marketing to really make money for the schools."

Including the money to help pay the escalating salaries of coaches in the high-profile sports. Rather than universities paying exorbitant annual salaries -- often higher than the school president's -- to coaches, revenue generated by the sports marketing firms is used to boost the coaches' total compensation packages.

"That's clearly part of it," Reckerd said. "About every Division I-A school I know of has some kind of arrangement like that."

In 2006, ISP Sports and Auburn University inked a nine-year, \$51.3 million deal. Football coach Tommy Tuberville will be paid an average of \$1.5 million a year, USA Today reported.

Diane Moose, associate athletics director for business operations at NCSU, said Wolfpack Sports Marketing would pay the school \$1.7 million in 2006-07. A big chunk of the annual payment, she said, goes to coaches' salaries.

Former Pack basketball coach Herb Sendek, for example, was paid \$575,000 by Wolfpack Sports Marketing for his TV and radio shows, personal endorsements and commercial appearances.

Sidney Lowe, hired when Sendek left for Arizona State last year, structured his contract differently. Lowe is paid \$250,000 by Wolfpack Sports Marketing, receiving \$760,000 in annual salary from the school -- an arrangement that matches the contract he had with the NBA's Detroit Pistons.

"That's become more of a national thing with coaches' contracts -- asking for more guaranteed money in salary," athletics director Lee Fowler said.

In 1960, when Weedon was hired by State, he sought to secure guarantees for coverage. Not every Pack football and basketball game was on the air.

"It was hit and miss," he said.

Weedon got the State fraternities involved. He urged fraternity leaders to have their brothers call WPTF and ask that State games be broadcast by the station.

"PTF got a slew of calls," he said. "Soon, PTF called me in to discuss carrying our games. The first year, we all but gave the games to them to get us going."

The Wolfpack Sports Network began in 1961, with WPTF the flagship station. Weedon even fired the first network radio crew -- Jim Reid, later Raleigh's mayor, and color man C.A. Dillon -- and replaced them with Jackson and Ausley.

Now, WPTF is being replaced as the flagship. Brian Asbill, general manager of Wolfpack Sports Marketing, said the move will shore up coverage gaps, notably north of Raleigh where the PTF signal is weak in night-time hours.

"WPTF was a great partner for many years," Asbill said. "There's much history and tradition. This is not just about finances. We're addressing some coverage concerns."

Weedon, senior associate athletics director emeritus at NCSU, said the change had caused some sadness given the ties between N.C. State sports and WPTF.

"It's like losing a longtime friend," he said. "It's big business now. But it worked out fine with WPTF all these years and this will, too."

Today's News

Friday, May 11, 2007

Gender-Equity Advocates Brace for Civil-Rights Commission Briefing on Title IX

By [SARA LIPKA](#)

How to improve a controversial way of measuring female students' interest in playing college sports will be the focus of a briefing at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights today, and gender-equity advocates say that question poses a threat to women's athletic opportunities.

The civil-rights commission will take up the so-called third prong of the options colleges can choose from to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Under that option, institutions must show they are meeting the athletic interest and abilities of their female students. Institutions can also comply with Title IX by offering female students a number of roster spots proportional to their representation in the undergraduate population, or by periodically expanding athletics opportunities for women.

The three-part test was introduced in 1979 by the then U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare among its regulations for carrying out the law, and it left the interest prong the most vague. Debate over that means of compliance intensified in 2005 when the Education Department issued a clarification allowing institutions to use an e-mail survey to gauge female students' interest in playing sports ([The Chronicle](#), April 1, 2005).

Gender-equity advocates see a model e-mail-survey that was developed by the department as methodologically flawed -- a lack of response, for example, would count as a lack of interest. The advocates worry that athletics departments could use the survey option to avoid offering more women's teams.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association has encouraged its members not to use e-mail surveys as a means of Title IX compliance, and to date no institution has announced that it has or will.

On Thursday, several women's-sports advocates expressed serious concern about the civil-rights commission's briefing.

"We think this is a clear effort on the part of the commission to create a public record in support of the huge Title IX loophole created by the Department of Education in March of 2005," Donna Lopiano, chief executive of the Women's Sports Foundation, said at a news conference organized by the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education.

Ms. Lopiano called the briefing an extension of "a concerted effort to weaken Title IX."

She cited the formation of a federal panel in 2002, the Secretary of Education's Commission on Opportunity in Athletics, which some gender-equity advocates saw as an attempt to revise the law amid concern that it was prompting colleges to cut men's teams. Gerald A. Reynolds, who was the assistant secretary of education for civil rights at the time and was an ex-officio member of the athletics commission, is now chairman of the civil-rights commission.

Myles Brand, president of the NCAA, echoed Ms. Lopiano's concerns. "These persistent efforts weaken the regulations, they do not serve the general public, and they do not serve our students and our members," he said.

"We don't need repeated efforts to undermine the law," Mr. Brand said. "We need better enforcement."

Use of an e-mail survey to gauge their interest would do a disservice to female students, he said. "At best it could

Asking female students to prove their interest in sports as a condition of offering them opportunities would reflect a dramatic shift in civil-rights enforcement, said Ms. Lopiano. Her organization and other advocacy groups for women's sports are lobbying Congress to draft legislation to do away with the 2005 clarification, she said.

Nancy Hogshead-Makar, a professor at the Florida Coastal School of Law and a three-time Olympic gold medalist in swimming, said measuring women's interest in sports without offering them new opportunities to play defies common sense.

"Interest explodes when opportunities are made widely available," she said.

The College Sports Council, an advocacy group for men's sports, called the furor over the civil-rights commission's briefing alarmist.

"We're trying scrupulously to have a good-faith public discussion about the issue," said Jim McCarthy, a spokesman for the group. "I'd like nothing more than to have a full, open, thorough airing of these topics."

Jessica Gavora, vice president of the College Sports Council, will speak at today's briefing, along with Daniel A. Cohen, a lawyer who specializes in Title IX issues; Jocelyn Samuels, vice president for education and employment at the National Women's Law Center; and Judith M. Sweet, a consultant and former senior vice president for the NCAA.

The civil-rights commission has no legislative authority but may issue findings and recommendations to the president and Congress based on the briefing.

[Copyright](#) © 2007 by [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

[Subscribe](#) | [About The Chronicle](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Terms of use](#) | [Privacy policy](#) | [Help](#)

WAC weighs tools for refs

Conference considers a turn to technology to aid officials for men's, women's hoops.

By George Hostetter / The Fresno Bee

05/11/07 05:10:53

It's one of college basketball's blessings -- a buzzer-beating 3-point basket for the big win.

And second-guessing is one of the game's curses.

Wasn't that sneaker touching the line? Didn't the clock die with the ball still in the shooter's hands?

Western Athletic Conference referees could have more tools next season to answer those and other difficult officiating questions that shouldn't pivot on unaided human judgment, but all too often do.

The WAC council voted last week to require all schools to have play-review capabilities for home conference men's and women's basketball games beginning next season.

That means strategically-located cameras to record the action, trained employees to operate the equipment and courtside monitors so referees can review controversial plays at the end of the half and game.

WAC schools also must foot the bill for arena backboards that light up when time expires at the end of both halves and a wireless system worn by referees that stops the clock when they blow their whistle.

The NCAA requires a light be placed above backboards that goes on when time expires. But a single light can be overlooked by officials in the heat of a game. The WAC wants the entire backboard to light up at the end so referees can't miss the message.

The WAC council, which includes athletic directors and some senior administrators, met April 30 and May 1 in Arizona. Its recommendations must be approved by the conference members' nine chief executives when they gather next month for the annual WAC board meeting.

Fresno State men's basketball coach Steve Cleveland said the play-review and wireless whistle-clock systems are "musts." When it comes to difficult last-second officiating decisions and accurate time-keeping, he said, "you want to get it right."

Fresno State athletic director Thomas Boeh explained these and other WAC council actions to the Fresno State Athletic Corp. board on Thursday morning.

Boeh said Fresno State's expense to implement the three recommendations would be minimal, but didn't mention an estimate. He said the Save Mart Center, home court for the Bulldogs men and women, already has much of the necessary technology for play-review.

But, Boeh added, "there are schools in the league that don't have that capacity right now. It's going to cost them tens of thousands of dollars just in start-up costs."

He didn't identify the schools.

In a telephone interview Thursday afternoon, WAC commissioner Karl Benson said the wireless whistle-clock system should eliminate claims that the official timer stopped the clock too soon or let it run too long at tense moments in a game.

The referees will wear a wireless electronic device that, when triggered by the whistle, stops the clock. Benson said the device has a button that the official pushes to start the clock.

With so much at stake on the outcome of college basketball games -- rankings, tournament berths and coaching careers, to name but a few -- it pays to "use technology to keep a mistake from happening," Benson said.

The WAC council also recommended two scheduling policies for men's and women's basketball that carry stiff penalties for non-compliance, Benson said.

Men's teams must schedule at least half of their non-conference games (excluding neutral-court games) at home against Division I opponents. Each school must have at least five home games; a school faces a \$30,000 per-game fine for each game below the five-home-game minimum.

Women's teams also must schedule at least half of their non-conference games (excluding neutral-court games) at home against Division I opponents. A \$15,000 per game fine kicks in for each game below this 50% threshold.

The fines would go into a WAC general fund, Benson said.

These scheduling recommendations, if approved next month by the WAC board, would be effective in the 2008-2009 season.

Benson said the WAC strategic plan emphasizes the importance of more home non-conference games against Division I opponents.

But, as Boeh told the Athletic Corp. board, it's one thing to mandate an ideal home schedule and something else to actually get quality non-conference Division I schools to come to the WAC's home courts.

Said Boeh: "We'll be OK ... But there will be teams in our league that will struggle with this."
The reporter can be reached at ghostetter@fresnobee.com or (559) 441-6272.

Search Archives, or

Search News

SEARCH



[News](#) [Sports](#) [Business](#) [Life](#) [Entertainment](#) [Calendar](#) [Blogs](#) [Opinion](#) [Obits](#) [Classifieds](#) [Cars](#) [Homes](#) [Jobs](#) [Shopping](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [Text Only](#) | [Site Map](#) | [RSS](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Advertise](#)

[FresnoBee.com](#) | [ClovisIndependent.com](#) | [VidaEnElValle.com](#) | [SierraStar.com](#) | [FresnoFamous.com](#)

© Copyright 2007 The Fresno Bee | [Help](#) | [Your Privacy](#) | [User Agreement](#) | [Child Protection](#)



Advertisement

You read **INSIDE HIGHER ED**...
and so do 350,000+ forward-looking professionals.
Tell our readers about your open jobs for just \$150



May 11

Revisiting Title IX Policy

It's been more than two years since the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights released a [letter](#) clarifying that one way in which [colleges can show they are in compliance with Title IX](#) is by using a survey meant to gauge female students' interest in athletics.

Controversial from the time of its release, the department's directive has been both praised as much-needed guidance and blasted as a loophole that allows colleges to avoid giving more opportunities to female athletes. The [ensuing debate](#) has covered just about every angle of Title IX, the federal law that bars gender discrimination by institutions that receive federal funds.

And it's clear that the department's 2005 "model survey" is still a major point of contention. A day before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights takes up Title IX and how the information obtained through the survey can be useful, critics of the policy guidelines held a conference call to argue once again that the department is chipping away at the integrity of the 1972 legislation.

First, a brief review. In 1979, the Education Department issued an interpretation of Title IX saying that colleges could show compliance with the law's requirements related to athletic participation by meeting any one of three tests:

- Having the percentages of male and female athletes substantially proportionate to the percentage of male and female students enrolled at the college.
- Having a history and continuing practice of expanding participation opportunities for the underrepresented sex (nearly always women).
- "Fully and effectively" accommodating the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex.

With female undergraduates outnumbering men at many colleges and with football teams requiring large numbers of male players, satisfying the first test has become increasingly difficult for institutions unless they add women's teams or cut men's squads (usually in Olympic or so-called nonrevenue sports like wrestling, gymnastics, etc.). Many colleges remain wary of the second test because it is vague and open to interpretation by the courts and by the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights, which is charged with enforcing Title IX.

That leaves the third test. The OCR has long said that if a college can show that it is accommodating the "interests and abilities" of current and potential female athletes — commonly referred to as "prong three" of the participation requirement — it can comply with the law without having a ratio of female to male athletes similar to that of its student body. Prior to the department's directive, colleges generally thought of this test as being hard to prove.

Included in the department's 2005 letter was a model survey that showed how institutions could demonstrate

compliance with the third test. Critics have repeatedly pointed to what they consider a major flaw of the survey — that non-responses count as an answer of “no interest.”

Gerald A. Reynolds, chairman of the Commission on Civil Rights, said in a phone interview Thursday that the model survey has served an important purpose.

“Colleges had been asking the department for assistance in measuring interest and ability for years,” Reynolds said. “The department finally got around to responding to the complaint. We use surveys to measure interest every day, so the real question is how it is working. The burden is on individuals to make the argument that it is inappropriate.”

During Thursday’s briefing, organized by members of the [National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education](#), plenty of people were ready to make that claim. Myles Brand, president of the NCAA, which soon after the 2005 clarification [advised](#) its members not to solely rely on the survey, said it is skewed. If a female recruit wants to play a sport that isn’t offered at a given institution, she probably won’t attend that college. To then go back and ask students who are enrolled at the institution if there is any interest creates a faulty sample, Brand said.

Added Nancy Hogshead-Makar, a professor at Florida Coastal School of Law and a former Olympic swimmer: “Measuring inherent interest would freeze the level of competition into place.”

No college has reported using the survey to measure student interest, which Brand said he hoped was a sign that institutions have taken the NCAA’s advice to heart, and Jessica Gavora, a vice president with the College Sports Council, said is a combination of the association’s advocacy and the threat of lawsuits.

So, if there’s no evidence that the survey changed the Title IX landscape, why the concern over today’s meeting of the federal panel, which has no legal authority?

“Our fear is that the intention is to create a public record to be used by the Department of Education to say that there is support by the commission of the 2005 clarification,” said Donna A. Lopiano, chief executive of the Women’s Sports Foundation. “It’s a weakening of the spirit of the law. When athletics directors can say, ‘Let me wait and see, maybe I’ll get some relief,’ that’s the situation that has the potential to stop progress in its tracks.”

Lopiano and others continue to argue that the three-part test is lawful and does not need any clarification. (Supporters of the 2005 guidelines argue that the department didn’t change its policy). Women’s sports supporters cite research showing that women continue to be underrepresented in college athletics, and that lax Title IX enforcement by federal officials has led to stunted progress for female players.

Lopiano said the coalition is strongly urging the department and institutions to abide by a 1996 clarification that says surveys should not be used as the sole method of determining prong three compliance — similar to the message sent by the NCAA.

Gavora of the College Sports Council criticized Brand for participating in the briefing, saying that the NCAA should represent all athletes, including males, many of whom she said suffer because of how Title IX is enforced.

While Gavora said there is some merit to Brand’s complaints about what the survey is measuring, she said it is but one tool out of many available to measure women’s interests and men’s — something, Gavora adds, that is often left out of the conversation.

“For so long there have been these subjective measures that schools are supposed to rely on, and now there’s some clarity,” she said. “I expect all the same arguments to be leveled [during today’s hearing] — that it’s not responsible to measure interest but that it’s fine to create interest. That’s one premise, but it’s not what the law says or what it was intended to do.”

**Mississippi State University****clarionledger.com****The Clarion-Ledger ■ REAL MISSISSIPPI**[Local News](#)[Nation / World](#)[Sports](#)[Business](#)[Entertainment](#)[Features](#)[Opinion](#)[Obituaries](#)[HealthScene](#)[Travel](#)

Local Search:

All



Go

[Advanced Search](#)**Find what you need with our New Search!**

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISEMENT

**The new
MOTORAZR 3G****More Music
More Video
More Features**

cingular is now

The new

at&t

ENTER YOUR ZIPCODE

FIND A STORE NEAR YOU!

May 10, 2007

College Baseball: MSU, UM eye NCAA host roles

By **Kyle Veazey**kyle.veazey@clarionledger.com

STARKVILLE — While Mississippi State's baseball team was 300 miles away in Clarksville, Tenn., Tuesday night, every light was on at Dudy Noble Field back home.

It wasn't an errant switch-flip, a waste of cash for the electric bill. It was a test, one the NCAA is asking potential baseball regional sites to conduct to find out if they have enough lighting for ESPN's television cameras.

It's just another part of the bid process for the regionals, which will be played at 16 home sites across the country June 1-4. Eight Super Regionals will be played the next weekend.

The deadline to submit bids to host is May 18. Ole Miss has submitted a bid; State plans to submit one soon.

For MSU, it would be its 12th regional, but its first since 2003. For Ole Miss, it would be the fourth straight year to host at Oxford-University Stadium.

For both, it's a serious financial venture.

Minimum bids for regionals are \$75,000; Super Regionals are \$50,000. Successful bids could be for much more.

MSU and UM officials would not disclose the amount of their bids. MSU athletic director Larry Templeton said only that his school's bid would be "attractive."

Lynette Johnson, an Ole Miss senior associate athletic director, said the school bid about \$140,000 for last year's regional and roughly \$100,000 for the Super Regional, and that Ole Miss has increased its bid every year.

Regardless, it's an event the schools covet hosting for the competition advantage and the prestige - not the profit.

"You make a little bit, but by the time you cover the extra expenses you're not going to make much," Templeton said. "Even if you exceed the guarantee, the majority of the percentage goes to the NCAA."

Athletic director Pete Boone said Ole Miss netted "a little bit" from its recent regionals, but that's not the goal. For a school that had never hosted until 2004, the publicity has been priceless, he said.

"Hosting the last several years has really helped elevate Ole Miss baseball, not only nationally, with national attention, but locally," Boone said. "I'm talking about Mississippi attention. It's just the biggest game in town for those dates and it draws a lot of attention, media attention and fan attention. Those kind of things are priceless when it comes to promoting baseball."

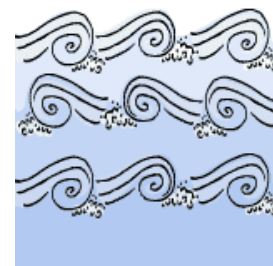
BY THE NUMBERS

Facts and figures in the NCAA baseball regional bid process:

- May 18: Deadline for bids; Ole Miss has already submitted, MSU says it will do so soon.
- 16: Regional sites, pared to 8 Super Regionals.
- \$75,000: Minimum bid for regional sites, \$50,000 for Super Regionals. Winning bids could be much higher.
- \$140,000: Ole Miss' bid for last year's regional. The school bid \$100,000 for the Super Regional.

ADVERTISEMENT

**Your community.
Your schools.
Your life.**

Now with more community news**The Clarion-Ledger**[clarionledger.com](#) ■ **REAL MISSISSIPPI**

Ole Miss netted \$31,000 from last year's regional and \$17,000 from the Super Regional. Johnson said that money helps pay for other costs associated with hosting NCAA events.

"There's some confusion that you're thinking, how can you not be making a ton of money, there's 9,000 people?" said Johnson, who handles NCAA bids for all sports. "Well, it's an NCAA event. Not an Ole Miss event."

But the teams have to get there first.

Before pairings and host sites are announced on May 28, MSU (31-14, 13-9 SEC) has league series remaining with Georgia and Alabama. Ole Miss (32-18, 13-11) plays Kentucky and Arkansas.

Barring a collapse, both will qualify for the SEC Tournament, which starts May 23 at Regions Park in Hoover, Ala.

After that, a pair of Internet projections, SEBaseball.com and Rivals.com, place regionals at MSU and Ole Miss. But they don't give either a national seed, which guarantees that a team will host a Super Regional if it wins its regional.

The Ratings Percentage Index, a tool used by the NCAA to seed and select teams, has Mississippi State No. 8 in the country. Ole Miss is No. 14.

"They're probably in that 10 to 14 range, both of them are, nationally," said Mark Etheridge, who runs SEBaseball.com. "I guess the good side of that is there's a chance to move into the top eight which would mean hosting both rounds. But the reverse side of that could mean a couple of bad weekends and they could fall out of hosting."

Ultimately, it's up to the NCAA Baseball Committee.

Templeton is in his second year of chairing that group, which selects teams, seeds them and awards host sites.

Templeton said there is a desire among the committee to spread regionals throughout the country, which makes the competition among traditionally strong Southeastern schools more fierce.

"As the chair, I will tell you that financial is probably less than a third in the decision," Templeton said. "As AD at Mississippi State, the financial bid in our conference will be very important because what we will end up doing is there will be six or seven of us bidding for three or four sites."

"When you throw Florida State, Georgia Tech and Clemson in that mix, as examples, the competition in this part of the country is a lot stronger."

Staff writer Robbie Neiswanger contributed to this story.

 [Send this link to a friend.](#) |  [Join our forums.](#) |  [Send a letter to the editor.](#)

 [Subscribe to The Clarion-Ledger.](#)

[Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) - [Cars: Cars.com](#) - [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) - [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#)

Use of this site signifies your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#)
and [Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Rights](#), updated March 6, 2007.

©2007 The Clarion-Ledger





Posted on Thu, May. 10, 2007

Forum goes off topic

By JASON WHITLOCK
Columnist

It started with Spike Lee holding up a duplication of the *USA Today* sports cover story about NFL athletes and their problems with law enforcement. The story included 41 mug shots of NFL players who had been arrested in 2006 — 39 of those players were African-American.

Spike Lee began the panel discussion — The Black Athlete Forum at Atlanta's historic Morehouse College, which featured Jim Brown, Vivian Stringer, William Rhoden, Stephen A. Smith, yours truly and others — by asking Alonzo Mourning and two other professional athletes to explain whether the image was fair or unfair to black athletes.

After some initial words about athletes needing to take responsibility for their actions, Mourning and fellow NBA-er Etan Thomas somewhat blamed the media for not presenting a fair-and-balanced view of athletes. When the athletes finished talking, I jumped in and made the point I've been making for the last several years:

The problems that black professional athletes are experiencing are a direct reflection of a pervasive problem within black youth hip-hop/prison culture, and that we as black folks need to awake from our denial and confront the negative aspects of this deadly culture before it does any more damage.

By my estimate, half of the more than 300 spectators grumbled about what I had to say, which is pretty much what I expected.

Shortly after I spoke, Jim Brown, the former NFL great and longtime social activist, chimed in and co-signed for what I had to say.

The Black Athlete Forum — something that Spike Lee came up with while we were having lunch and debating my position on the Don Imus controversy in late April — kicked off just the way we'd envisioned it at Virgil's Real BBQ in Times Square.

It was a lively debate on an important topic.

Unfortunately, the debate lost much of its importance rather quickly. The Forum turned into "The Jason Whitlock Roast," a discussion of out-of-context snippets of things I'd written about NBA All-Star weekend, Vivian Stringer and Imus.

Etan Thomas and Atlanta sportswriter Curtis Bunn appeared to come with prepared notes for this portion of the forum. Veteran Philadelphia sportswriter/editor Claire Smith spoke from her heart when questioning me about questioning Stringer's motives during the Imus affair. And, of course, Stringer spoke for what felt like 15 straight minutes on me. I could never do justice to her entire speech, and I wasn't taking notes, so I'll just mention one of the highlights.

"We need to step on each other's heads to get the little piece of the American dream. It became green. It was power. You (Whitlock) understand that. That's the reason why you chose these few minutes to get your one moment of (fame). Because other than that, who knows Jason Whitlock?"

I lifted that quote from Gene Wojciechowski's column at ESPN.com. He was there sitting in the front row taking notes while ESPN taped the event. Wojciechowski called Stringer's sermon "invasive verbal surgery without anesthesia" and "goosebump stuff" and "the most charged moment" of the evening. A column headline said it was "something special to see." Wojciechowski reported that "Whitlock got the worst of it" and that the Forum was "real, healthy and instructive."

Of course, I disagree with Wojciechowski's take. But I don't blame him for reaching those conclusions given his employer and acknowledged limited insight into the black community. The event was highly entertaining. But I wasn't there for a comedy show or a fight.

I was there to discuss a real crisis in the black community. I was there to debate solutions. People here know I'm quite comfortable holding "Jason Whitlock roasts." I sat on radio for years here and absorbed far worse and far more accurate insults and accusations than were hurled at me Monday night.

I'm not going to change my column style to make a coach — black, white, male or female — more comfortable. I'm not going to change my column style to make the National Association of Black Journalists happy.

Vivian Stringer was wrong for conducting an hourlong press conference/pity party in reaction to Imus' comments. Wallowing in victimhood might help an individual get a fat book contract and coaching salary that equals the football coach's, but it does not elevate anyone else.

After having a rational discussion with her away from the TV cameras Monday night, I believe she thought she was doing the right

thing at the time. She thought she could defend her players and promote women's basketball without putting her kids in harm's way. Naïve but plausible.

She never envisioned the kids on her team becoming bigger targets of harassment and ridicule on a national level. Well, that predictable, sad reality is beginning to settle in now.

Just last week, popular black comedian DL Hughley appeared on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno" and completely trashed the Rutgers women's players. Hughley called them "nappy headed" and "ugly" among other things. "The Tonight Show" has far more reach than Imus' old radio/TV show. Hughley resonates with black kids far more than Imus.

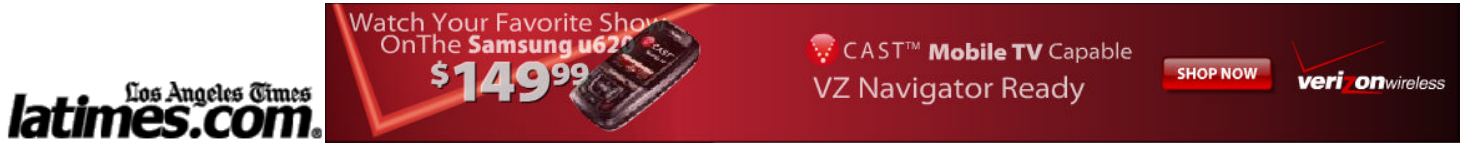
I pointed all this out at The Forum. I sarcastically asked when we were going to protest DL Hughley. No one said a word.

I talked about how America's "war on drugs" and sentencing guidelines were creating a hopelessness among poor people, especially black men, and that that hopelessness was fueling this lethal youth culture that is producing Pacman Jones and others. Again, silence.

What others viewed as a night of terrific drama, I viewed as a blown opportunity and another indication of how committed we are to remaining in denial.

To reach Jason Whitlock, call (816) 234-4869 or send e-mail to jwhitlock@kcstar.com. For previous columns, go to [KansasCity.com](http://www.kansascity.com).

© 2007 Kansas City Star and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved. <http://www.kansascity.com>



Los Angeles Times
latimes.com

Watch Your Favorite Shows
On The **Samsung u620**
\$149.99

CAST™ Mobile TV Capable
VZ Navigator Ready

SHOP NOW

verizon wireless

<http://www.latimes.com/services/site/premium/access-registered.intercept>

COMMENTARY

Basketball academy not best for prodigies

Management company chief says the creation of such a high school is an ill-conceived idea, and that developing youths into productive members of society, not just productive members of a team, should

By Arn Tellem
Special to The Times

May 8, 2007

In the wake of reports that high school basketball prospects are padding their grades at diploma mills to earn college scholarships, NBA Commissioner David Stern, to his credit, is addressing this problem. One idea that has found traction is to establish a national basketball academy. The school would train future pros and Olympians in academics as well as the fundamentals of the game.

It is commonly believed that a lack of fundamentals was responsible for the disappointing performance of USA Basketball, the national team, at last year's world championships in Japan. The team, with such NBA stars as LeBron James, Carmelo Anthony and Dwyane Wade, was beaten by Greece in the semifinals and finished third. The assumption is that the struggles at the top levels of the sport can be traced to a lack of organization at the lower levels, where elite high school-age players are exploited by business interests.

In the main proposal under consideration, the basketball academy would be modeled along the lines of the Bollettieri Tennis Academy in Florida, which produced Andre Agassi, Anna Kournikova and Venus and Serena Williams. A selection committee would invite several dozen underclassmen, who would sleep, eat and train at a dedicated basketball facility.

Every morning, they would be bused to a local high school to complete their course work. Every afternoon, they would return to the academy to complete their court work. The academy would field two teams and each would play a national schedule during the traditional hoops season. Tuition and player expenses would be funded by individuals and corporate sponsors.

Well, as grand an idea as a basketball academy sounds, to my mind, it's as ill-conceived as it is ill-advised.

The creation of such a high school for jocks is opposed by no less an authority than Myles Brand, president of the NCAA. Brand says the idea "focuses too narrowly on the elite players and doesn't address the needs of hundreds of others who fill our rosters in Division I and Division II."

I agree. The emphasis of this sort of program should not be on winning a gold medal with 20 or 30 kids, but on getting a first-class education for thousands. The objective should not only be to groom them to be better NBA players, but to prepare them to be better citizens if, like nearly every teen phenom before them, they don't end up playing pro ball.

A well-rounded education involves more than just getting kids ready to do well on standardized tests; the purpose should be what one prominent educator has called the "cultivation of human powers."

To that end, students must learn something substantial about science, history and contemporary civilizations so they can apply that knowledge to the challenges of the future.

A well-rounded life involves more than just perfection in sport. Instead of training these prodigies to be great floor leaders and make vast sums of money, we should encourage them to be great leaders of their communities and make a positive impact on society.

In trying to develop the next Michael Jordan, we should also be trying to nurture the next Barack Obama. The Illinois senator and presidential hopeful played forward at the Punahou School in his home state, Hawaii. In his senior year, 1979, he helped the Buffanblu win the state championship.

Gifted young athletes would be better served by a national program that funneled them to preparatory schools such as Punahou, the North Hollywood Harvard-Westlake School in Los Angeles (where I have two children) and Penn Charter in Philadelphia.

All of these schools boast diverse student populations, offer scholarships to financially disadvantaged youth and have the financial clout to help. And every one provides tutors to assist student-athletes in need of remedial work.

During the summer months, players who hold their own academically could be brought together in an intensive basketball camp, where they could hone their skills with top coaches. The hundreds of prospects could be divided into dozens of teams that could tour the world as goodwill ambassadors. Scrimmaging against teams from other countries would also season these players to international competition.

Funding is, of course, critical, and happily, both the NCAA and USA Basketball have a considerable largesse. The former receives millions of

dollars annually from CBS; the latter is bankrolled in no small part by the NBA. Either outfit could handily subsidize a program to place teens at select private schools nationwide.

Ideally, all children should have the opportunity to receive a high-quality education — be it public or private — but that is still a long way off. Perhaps the participation of the NCAA and USA Basketball would spur athletic organizations to follow suit in other sports. No doubt an academy could teach our best young players to compete with the best anywhere.

Still, it's far more critical that they be taught to lead meaningful, fulfilling lives. Yes, these talented but raw teens need to be shaped into superb players, but it's far more vital that they be developed into superb contributing citizens with the ambition, drive and social skills to succeed.

High school should not just act as a farm system for college and the pros, but be an entryway into a better life beyond basketball.

--

Arn Tellem is the president of WMG Management.

Copyright 2007 Los Angeles Times | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)
[Home Delivery](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Archives](#) | [Contact](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Help](#)

PARTNERS:



commercialappeal.com - Memphis, TN

To print this page, select **File** then **Print** from your browser

URL: http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/other_sports/article/0,1426,MCA_1757_5529361,00.html

Vols pole vaulter aims for SEC outdoor title

By Ron Higgins

[Contact](#)

May 10, 2007

Yes, that is a rib that sits on Michael Hogue's dresser in his apartment in Knoxville.

Not a barbecued rib from a takeout meal, but a human rib.

No, this isn't "CSI Knoxville." It also isn't something that Hogue, a nursing major at the University of Tennessee, needs for one of his classes.

"It's my rib," Hogue said with a laugh. "It was mine to begin with, so I figured I'd hang on to it."

The rib, removed from Hogue in December 2005 when he was diagnosed with a blood clot in his right arm that threatened his life and vaulting career, is a reminder that every day is a gift to be opened and enjoyed.

And right now, life is pretty good. Hogue, a former state pole vault champ from Houston High, is a two-time Southeastern Conference indoor champion going after his elusive first outdoor title this weekend during the league championships in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Blessed with his healthiest year to date in college ("Knock on wood," he said) and a new pole vault coach that pays attention to detail, Hogue, a fourth-year junior, is enjoying the finest season of what had been an already impressive career.

On Tuesday, he was named the SEC's Field Athlete of the Week after he finished his outdoor regular season undefeated with five straight wins. The indoor all-American leads the conference outdoors by almost four inches with his season-best height of 17-41/2. He has cleared at least 17 feet in eight straight competitions, dating back to the SEC Indoor Championships on Feb. 25.

But after finishing second in the conference outdoor championship as a freshman and tied for third last season as a sophomore, winning an SEC outdoor title and getting a shot at outdoor all-American status are two of the immediate frontiers Hogue wants to conquer.

"If I pull that off, I can't imagine the year being any better," Hogue said. "Even if it doesn't happen, I've had a great year. I've already had way more than I should've, with the stuff I've been through."

"I'm not satisfied, but it's like (singer) Jimmy Buffett sang, "If it suddenly ended tomorrow, I could somehow adjust to the fall."

Love at first vault

You'd figure a pole vaulter would quote a Buffett song titled "Changes in Attitudes, Changes in Latitudes." Most pole vaulters have a little bit of crazy in them to do what they do.

Dave Hogue remembered the first time he saw his son vault. His boys, Michael and Will, had always been football and baseball players as kids. So when Houston High track coach George Gibson convinced Michael to try track as a freshman and then told him he'd be a great pole vaulter, ol' Dad was naturally skeptical.

"I knew nothing about pole vaulting, which is why Michael probably liked it, because I didn't know enough to screw him up," said Dave, who lives in Germantown. "Michael used to ride unicycles when he was a kid, and he has never been afraid to do anything up high. But pole vaulting seemed to be a really good way to get hurt."

Gipson spotted Michael in one of his physical education classes. Hogue had played football that fall, but was trying to decide in the spring whether to play baseball or run track. He chose track, figuring the running would keep him in shape for football and improve his speed.

But when Gipson determined Michael wasn't fast enough to become a sprinter, he put a pole in his hand and introduced him to the event.

"In four years with us, he never missed a practice, a weight workout or summer workout," Gibson said. "He never missed anything."

http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/cda/article_print/0,1983,MCA_1757_5529361_ARTICLE-DET... 5/10/2007



Photos courtesy of the University of Tennessee

Tennessee pole vaulter Michael Hogue got his start in track and field at Houston High, where he became a state champion.

Even though his first two meets ended with injuries – he got stitches for cleating himself in his first meet, then for biting through his lower lip in his second – Hogue was convinced he had found his sport.

"When Coach Gibson came up to me one day and said out of the blue, 'Hey Hogue, you need to run track ... I'm going to make you a pole vaulter,'" Hogue said, "I kind of took it as a sign. I went out to practice, and it was fun.

"By the end of my freshman year, I was fairly confident in my ability to control it and know where I was going to land. But you've got to be a little bit crazy to run as fast as you can, stick a stick in the ground and see how high you can go."

Hogue won the state championship as a junior and set a state record at a meet on the Tennessee campus, where Vols' coaches saw him. They never backed off him, even during his senior season, when he tore a hamstring and failed to qualify for the state meet.

Hogue spent a redshirt year at UT as a true freshman in 2003-04. By the end of his first year of competition in '04-05, he had improved his lifetime best by five inches.

It seemed all his work in the weight room was paying off. He opened his sophomore indoor season in December 2005 with a vault of 17-03/4 in a meet at Clemson, but on the ride back to Knoxville noticed his arm swelling. It happened to him a few days earlier after a weight workout.

The next day, after he showed it to a UT trainer, he was immediately taken to the UT Medical Center and diagnosed with thoracic outlet syndrome (TOS), a painful disorder affecting the nerves that pass from the neck into the arm and armpit. When someone suffers from TOS, the arm continues to swell. Left untreated, the disorder could become so severe that a person might lose his arm or hand.

Before Hogue knew it, he was having three surgeries in four days. He had bulked up so much that muscles had constricted blood flow in his right shoulder and arm. The problem was alleviated when Dr. David Cassada, a vascular surgeon at UT Medical Center's Heart Lung Vascular Institute, removed one of Hogue's ribs and some of his shoulder muscle.

For the Hagues, the nightmare grew even more complicated. Younger son Will, who is a right fielder for Austin Peay in Clarksville, had driven to Knoxville to check on Michael coming out of surgery, then drove back to Clarksville.

Before he got back to school, his car was hit by an 18-wheeler on Interstate 40 and flipped over five times. Unbelievably, Will walked away with just a few cuts that needed stitches.

"We went from euphoria to almost not having any children," Dave Hogue said. "It was horrible. It was the hardest, then the greatest week of my life. God protected us. That's all we can say about it."

But there was another miracle yet to come.

What goes up again, must come down again

Doc Cassada told Michael that his injuries would take six months to a year to heal, and that there were no guarantees he'd ever vault again.

"All of it crosses through your mind," Hogue said. "I consider myself a religious guy. I don't necessarily fear the idea of dying. I thought, I hope I make it and I hope this isn't the end, because I really thought I could do a lot more with this track stuff."

Stunningly, he did. About two months after his surgery, after constant consultation with Doc Cassada, Hogue picked up a short pole at practice one day, held his breath and vaulted.

But he also made sure he did it with none of the coaching staff in sight.

"Some of my teammates were out there, and some of the volunteer coaches were out there," Hogue said. "But (head) Coach (Bill) Webb wasn't there because I was afraid he would be mad at me.

"I kept it a secret until I was confident that I was able to do it. Then, I did it in front of Coach Webb."

When Hogue cleared 16-6 3/4 in his first competition to finish second at the Tennessee Indoor Classic in mid-February '06, Webb cleared him to compete nine days later in the SEC Indoor Championships in Gainesville.

Even now, Webb admits he didn't expect much out of Hogue that day.

"I was really, really scared," Webb said. "I know Michael talked to the doctors and they'd said it was OK. I just wanted him to have a regular, normal life, and he's out vaulting. I was holding my breath."

The Hogues flew to Gainesville with just one hope – their son rolling out of the pole vault pit in one piece.

"We're thinking, 'Man, if this injury flares up again, we've got big problems,'" Dave Hogue said. "We were nervous, but it's what Michael wanted to do. We had to trust him to make his own choices."

But then ...

"I still haven't figured out how I pulled off winning it ... everybody gets lucky," said Michael, who cleared 17 feet to give Tennessee its first indoor SEC champion in the pole vault since Rocky Danners in 2002.

In the stands as their son climbed on the victory platform, Hogue's parents stood with tears streaming, marveling at their son's indomitable spirit.

"He's a driven, most determined kid I've ever seen," Dave Hogue said. "Sometimes, it's a good thing and sometimes it's not very smart. In this case, I don't know if it was very smart.

"We were just there (in Gainesville) praising the Lord that he was jumping. Then for that to happen, for him to win, it was just too sweet."

Added Webb, "That day when Michael won ranks up very, very high of the amazing things I've seen in my career. I still get a little emotional thinking about it."

Icing on the cake

From that point, all the Hogues – Michael, Will, Dave and his wife, Sheri – agreed that any athletic success is a mere bonus.

"The opportunity is the gift," Dave said. "We learned that it can be taken away at the snap of the finger. So you take what you've got and enjoy it."

Michael has enjoyed this season. It's his first with no major injuries, and he's been helped considerably by new volunteer vault coach and former UT great Russ Johnson.

And of course, if there's something that Michael can't figure out, Coach Gibson back in Memphis is just a phone call away.

"I have my regular Dad who I love and look up to more than anyone in the world," Michael said. "But if I had a second Dad, it would be Coach Gibson. He mentored me, he worked with me one-on-one, he stayed late after practice with me.

"He's the reason I'm doing what I'm doing now. When I now have trouble that I can't figure out on my own, if my vault coach hasn't encountered it, I give Coach Gibson a call."

Regardless of what happens this weekend or the rest of the season for Hogue, Gipson is sticking by something he told Hogue one day in his junior season at Houston.

"I said, I'm going to ask one thing of you ... when you go to the Olympics, I want tickets," Gipson said. "I still believe that. I know he's going."

No bones – or one less rib – about it.

– Ron Higgins: 529-2525

SEC Track and field championships

When: Today through Sunday

Where: Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Copyright 2007, commercialappeal.com - Memphis, TN. All Rights Reserved.

Advertisement



Powered by Clickability

Vols lead SEC ascension as softball powerhouse

By Andy Gardiner, USA TODAY

Six years ago Ralph Weekly thought he had his dream job. After building successful softball programs at Pacific Lutheran and Chattanooga, and serving as the hitting coach on two USA Olympic gold medal teams, he had become director of USA Softball.

Weekly spearheaded the building of the national team's state-of-the-art training facility in California. He was involved with the players who would win a third Olympic gold in 2004.

ACROSS THE SEC: [Grad student propels Georgia](#)

But he jumped when the University of Tennessee asked Weekly to revive a program that had become an also-ran in the Southeastern Conference.

"Tennessee said it would give us the resources to compete for the SEC title and the national championship on a regular basis," Weekly says. "That's what they wanted and that's the challenge Karen (his wife and co-coach) and I wanted."

The Volunteers begin play today in the SEC tournament as the No. 1 team in the country in the USA TODAY/NFCA Top 25 poll. Led by All-American pitcher Monica Abbott, the Volunteers along with second-ranked Alabama and No. 3 LSU make the SEC a national power. The league has never won a national championship but is challenging the Pacific 10 and Big 12 conferences, who have dominated the sport.

"We have three teams capable of playing with anyone in the country," says Karen Weekly. "The Pac-10 still has climate, top coaches and an abundance of athletes. But the balance of power is beginning to shift."

The SEC's ascension has been fueled by increased financial commitments and boosted by an influx of talented coaches and national recruits.

Tennessee and Alabama each earned their first No. 1 national ranking this year and the SEC had three schools ranked in the top five for the first time. UT and LSU rank 1-2 nationally in earned-run average and the Vols are second in stolen bases and fielding percentage. Alabama is the Division I leader in batting average, slugging percentage and stolen bases.

"If the SEC is going to do something, they're going to do it right. It was just a matter of time before they developed and began to contend (for national titles)," says coach Mike Candrea, who has won seven titles at Arizona and an Olympic gold medal with the U.S. national team in 2004. "The days of West Coast dominance may not be gone, but I think you're going to see more first-time winners. This could be the SEC's year."

Putting money where the bats are

Advertisement

Save time.
Ship with FedEx.

Flip

FedEx
Relax, it's FedEx.®

▶▶▶ Click for total shipping solutions.

UCLA, the benchmark for softball excellence with 11 titles, says it has an annual budget of more than \$1 million. Arizona commits \$750,000 to its program.

Alabama coach Patrick Murphy remembers when his program rotated its home games around city parks and drew "maybe 50 people and a couple dogs." Now the Tide enjoy a \$2.2 million clubhouse and a budget of just less than \$1 million.

Tennessee will christen a \$7 million stadium next season and school officials say they have a softball budget of \$850,000 this year. LSU also budgets around \$850,000 and is planning a \$6 million-\$10 million complex.

"These are athletic departments and institutions that play for real," says LSU coach Yvette Girouard.

Alabama has reached the College World Series four times, LSU and Tennessee twice. The Vols finished third in both 2005 and 2006.

The Weeklys turned a 24-35 team into a 35-25-1 winner their first season and have never won fewer than 45 games since. Seven players on this year's roster are Tennessee natives but eight come from California and two from Hawaii. In addition, Florida high schools, with their huge pool of potential players, began playing fast pitch in 1994 and that talent is beginning to surface in the conference.

"Softball is all about recruiting," Ralph says. "But you have to develop your talent as well."

Senior India Chiles was a right-handed-hitting second baseman from Louisville when she arrived at UT. Now she is a left-handed-hitting outfielder who is hitting .476 and has stolen 40 bases. California native Lindsay Schutzler wasn't heavily recruited but has become UT's career leader in hits, runs and stolen bases.

But it is Abbott who lifts Tennessee to championship contender. She passed former Texas Longhorn Cat Osterman last weekend to become the Division I career strikeouts leader with 2,276 and is also tops in games (239), wins (179) and solo shutouts (104). "The minute Tennessee got Monica Abbott they became a national player overnight," LSU's Girouard said. "She's that good."

Ralph Weekly thought it would take six or seven years to make Tennessee a top-10 program. He cut that estimate in half when Abbott arrived in 2004.

"We offered Monica the chance to put a program on the map," he says. "That's what she wanted and that's what she's done. Tennessee is not the Monica Abbott show, but she is the straw that stirs the drink."

Abbott a strikeout machine

Abbott and Schutzler were high school rivals in Salinas, Calif. Abbott averaged more than 300 strikeouts a season, threw seven perfect games as a senior and was on every top program's wish list.

"I liked the tradition of the school and its teams," she says of Tennessee. "It was a developing program and I wanted to be a part of something like that."

At 6-3, Abbott has the size to generate a 70 mph fastball, comparable to a 96 mph fastball in baseball.

In her four years in Knoxville she has gone 45-10, 50-9, 44-10 and 40-2. She has added a changeup, a riseball and a curve. Her 560 strikeouts this season are 69 more than any *team* in the SEC. And on Wednesday, she was named SEC player of the year.

"Monica's development has been tremendous," says Candrea, who sees her as a candidate for the 2008 Olympic team. "She always had the talent; now she has more composure and a better idea of knowing how to pitch instead of just being a hard thrower."

Abbott had wins against China, New Zealand and Japan last summer and considers her time with the national team as a huge advantage. "Their approach and attitude toward the game is so professional — they bring it every day," Abbott says. "The bar is already high and they make you raise it higher."

But before Olympic dreams Abbott is focused on leading Tennessee to its first NCAA title. The stumbling block for the Vols in the CWS has been falling into the losers' bracket after winning openers.

"At the World Series you simply can't afford a bad game," she says. "It's been frustrating and humbling for us the last two years but our karma this year has been so strong. I think we're a special team and we'll show that in Oklahoma City."

Advertisement



Powered by Clickability

Enforcement of Title IX survey scrutinized

By Erik Brady, USA TODAY

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will hold a meeting Friday in Washington to examine the model survey that schools can — but apparently don't — use to comply with the participation requirements of Title IX, the law banning sex discrimination at schools receiving federal funds.

The U.S. Department of Education made the model survey available in 2005. It can be done by e-mail, and non-response can be considered non-interest. The Women's Sports Foundation condemns it as a Title IX loophole, and the NCAA Executive Council passed a resolution in 2005 asking schools not to use it.

"Almost no one has," according to an advance copy of testimony that Judith M. Sweet plans to give Friday. She is an NCAA consultant and former NCAA executive.

A school must pass one of these Title IX tests: Its male and female athletes are proportionate to enrollment; it has a history and continuing practice of expanding opportunities for women; it can demonstrate that the interests and abilities of female students are fully and effectively accommodated.

Schools long had been required to look at a range of factors under the third test, which could include surveys, but which also could include examining club sports played by women and sports played by girls in high schools from which a college draws. The model survey, by contrast, can be used alone.

"I think it's clear that the intent of the commission is to create a public record that can be used by the Department of Education to say that there is support by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights for" the model survey, Women's Sports Foundation CEO Donna Lopiano said Thursday on a teleconference.

"The Department of Education is not seeking our imprimatur or approval," commission chair Gerald A. Reynolds said. "The clarification on the model survey is law. We want to look to see if it's working and whether it can be improved."

The commission is a fact-finding body that does not have enforcement powers. Reynolds is a former assistant secretary for the Office for Civil Rights, which enforces Title IX.

NCAA President Myles Brand, who was on the teleconference, said he is "disappointed ... with the lack of activity on the part of OCR" in enforcing the law.

"OCR is committed to the vigorous enforcement of Title IX," said Katherine McLane, press secretary at the Department of Education.

Advertisement

CHASE



SWITCH
FROM CASH
T
BAC

Find this article at:

http://www.usatoday.com/sports/college/2007-05-10-title-ix_N.htm

Advertisement

EARN UP TO 3 FREE NIGHTS WITH 1ST PURCHASE.
 THE STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST® CREDIT CARD FROM AMERICAN EXPRESS



> APPLY NOW
 FIRST YEAR FEE-FREE.



PRINT THIS

Powered by Clickability

Security concerns at college stadiums take center stage

By Jack Carey, USA TODAY

PHILADELPHIA — With security concerns at sports venues on the minds of athletic administrators in the post-9/11 world, representatives of 38 colleges from across the nation met Wednesday at Temple University for the first intercollegiate athletics sport security and safety workshop.

The workshop was presented by ADT Security Services and coordinated by the Center for Spectator Sports Security Management at the University of Southern Mississippi and the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. The gathering represented a chance for a formal meeting about security concerns and an opportunity for administrators to exchange ideas.

"This is one of the things that keeps us up at night as athletic administrators," said Temple athletics director Bill Bradshaw, who pointed out there are more than 1,700 major stadiums and arenas across the nation, and the majority of athletic administrators responsible for venue security have had little or no formal training or certification.

"The threats are here; it's real," said John Guest, a Department of Homeland Security protective security adviser for the mid-Atlantic region, who addressed the gathering and told the attendees the department provides security and vulnerability assessments for stadiums and arenas.

One fairly easy way of facilitating the security process, said Guest, is to start screening fans further from the stadium. "Make them show tickets (before they get to the gate)," he said.

Michael Jackson, from Temple's sports and recreation management department, moderated a discussion that gave attendees a list of concerns many might not have thought about.

Among the topics discussed:

- Are there background checks for venue employees, including ticket and service personnel?
- What kind of security is present on non-event days, and is there a 24-hour lockdown of the facilities before game time?
- Are there controls for checking delivery people, television crews and service personnel who might be at the venues many hours before the game?
- Are parking lots monitored, and how close to a stadium is tailgating allowed?
- Are fans patted down or wanded as they enter the venue?
- Are there safeguards against food contamination and air contamination at the venue?

Advertisement

EQUIFAX



► Find out more

EQUIFAX

- Is mail handling and distribution at venues monitored?

"I know this is hard to stomach, but no one is beyond suspicion," said Jackson. "Look yourself in the mirror and say, 'Am I ready? Can I provide a safe and protected environment for fans to come and teams to play?'"

On the minds of many attendees was the arrest this week of six men who allegedly planned to kill armed services personnel by infiltrating nearby Fort Dix, N.J.

Court papers said one of the arrested, in a monitored phone conversation, rued a missed opportunity to strike at the Army-Navy football game at Lincoln Financial Field, only a few miles from the site of Wednesday's meeting.

"Hopefully they decided it's too hard of a target so we're not going to try it," said Leonard Bonacci, director of event services for the Philadelphia Eagles and who helps oversee security at the stadium.

The Army-Navy game has a very large deployment of security personnel, but Bonacci emphasized the importance of rigorous staff training in security measures for all events, regardless of cost.

"Somebody might say, 'What if I train this guy and he leaves?'" Bonacci said. "But what if you don't train him and he stays?"

Some cash-strapped college athletic departments are just beginning to address the topic.

Find this article at:

http://www.usatoday.com/sports/college/2007-05-09-security-workshop_N.htm



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

Copyright 2007 USA TODAY, a division of Gannett Co. Inc.

**Sponsored Links****Mortgage Rates at 3.0% - Save Thousands**

\$150,000 loan for \$391/month - refinance, home equity and purchase.
refinance.leadsteps.com

AARP & The Hartford Auto Insurance

Over 50? Save up to \$303 on auto insurance from AARP & The Hartford.
aarp.thehartford.com

Savings, Credit Cards, Loans

Capital One No Hassle financial services. Select One - apply now!
www.capitalone.com

[Get listed here](#)