

Liberty League Weekly Athletic Director Meeting Summaries

July 13, 2021 – January 4, 2022

January 4, 2022

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Updates / Institutional Updates: Athletic directors shared campus updates, including return-to-campus plans and spectator policies. A number of institutions will be requiring COVID booster shots for eligible individuals on campus. Some institutions reported positive tests among winter sport student-athletes returning to campus after winter break. Liberty League basketball games scheduled for January 7-8 could potentially be impacted.

2. COVID-Related Cancellations: The league's COVID-19 cancellation policy was reviewed. When the policy was originally adopted in September, it was determined that any games cancelled because of COVID-19 issues would not be rescheduled. The non-impacted team would be awarded a league win while the impacted team would be assessed a league loss. Given the recent increase in cases due to the Omicron variant, breakthrough cases are becoming more common, even among fully vaccinated teams. In Division I women's basketball, more than 260 games have been postponed or cancelled with the majority of those occurring since mid-December. It was agreed that schools would attempt to reschedule any postponed games, but if it wasn't feasible, those games would be cancelled and ruled no-contests. The league would review the minimum number of games needed to qualify for postseason play.

3. Winter Championships: Do COVID conditions will be monitored over the coming weeks to determine potential impact on the Liberty League winter championships, including the three single-site championships: Squash (February 5-6 at Vassar & Bard); Swimming & Diving (February 16-19 at Ithaca); and Indoor Track & Field (February 25-26 at Ithaca). Institutional and local health department policies may guide decisions on spectators.

Action Items:

- Update COVID Cancellation Policy, distribute to athletic directors and post on the Liberty League website.
- Review minimum contest standards for postseason qualification.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (Cummings-Danson, Durocher) to amend the Liberty League's COVID-19 cancellation policy as stated below, **PASSED 7-1-1.**

COVID-RELATED CANCELLATIONS: If a team is unable to compete due to COVID-19 issues, the contest may be rescheduled if it is feasible to do so. The rescheduled contest will count toward league standings. If the contest is unable to be rescheduled, it will be cancelled and will be considered a no-contest. Standings for Liberty League championship competition will be determined by league winning percentage. The rescheduling of Liberty League contests takes precedence over previously scheduled non-league contests. While there is no minimum number of student-athletes required for a contest to be played, athletic directors will assist in determining whether contests can or cannot be played.

December 7, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Miller (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Updates / Institutional Updates:

- **Booster Requirements:** Do institutions have plans to mandate booster shots for campus community or athletics/activities participation? Institutions have not mandated booster shots at this time, but discussions are ongoing on many campuses. Schools are also formulating return-to-campus policies for the spring semester.
- **COVID-Related Cancellations:** In September the league agreed on the COVID-19 cancellation policy below for league contests that were cancelled. With cases rising and the Omicron variant emerging, it's reasonable to expect a spike in cases when students return to campus in January. While the league was able to navigate the fall with no COVID-related cancellations, it might be more challenging to get through the league schedule with no issues this winter. Does the league wish to revisit its cancellation/forfeit policy?
 - (From September) - COVID-RELATED CANCELLATIONS: If a team is unable to compete due to COVID-19 issues, the opposing team will be awarded a win for conference-standing purposes only. The win will not change the team's overall record and will not be recognized by the NCAA, but will be utilized to seed teams for Liberty League championship participation. If the teams agree to reschedule the contest, it would be considered a non-league contest and would not change wins/points previously awarded.

It was agreed that contests could be rescheduled and they would count toward the league standings if the schools are able to do so. Any games that are unable to be rescheduled would be counted as wins/losses in the league standings.

- **Postgame handshakes:** A women's basketball coach asked if the league had a league-wide policy regarding postgame handshakes (there is no such policy in place). It was agreed that there would be no postgame handshakes until further notice.

2. SAAC Associate Member: As discussed during our November meeting, we need to appoint a new SAAC Associate Member to serve on the National SAAC. Three individuals have expressed interest. We can appoint an individual to represent the Liberty League.

- Lauren Zeglen – RIT Women's Soccer: Has 1 more year of eligibility. This is her 4th year in SAAC; been an executive board Member for the last 3; currently RIT SAAC president.
- Audrey Camacho – William Smith Tennis: Junior (transfer student). First year with William Smith SAAC; previously was SAAC board member at Bryn Mawr for 1.5 years.
- Brooke Jarvis – William Smith Basketball; Sophomore. First year with SAAC.

It was agreed unanimously that Lauren Zeglen would represent the Liberty League as the associate member on the Division III National SAAC.

3. NCAA Constitutional Revisions: The NCAA is scheduled to release a revised draft constitution December 6 or 7. A significant number of commissioners (approximately half) would like to see Division III vote against the revised constitution due to the NCAA revenue allocations. Others believe that it is unlikely the revenue allocations will change and Division III could stand to lose

revenue if it pursues this path. Liberty League multi-divisional members have expressed concerns over the language related to multi-divisional classification and would like to see it clarified/updated.

Action Items:

- Update Liberty League cancellation policy on league website.
- Submit Lauren Zeglen's National SAAC nomination to the NCAA.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (Cummings-Danson, McLaughlin) to amend the Liberty League's COVID-19 cancellation policy that if a contest was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns with a particular institution, the contest could be rescheduled and would count toward the league standings. If the contest is unable to be rescheduled, the non-impacted team will be awarded a win for conference-standing purposes only, **PASSED 11-0-0**.
- **MOTION** (Cummings-Danson, McLaughlin) to establish a consistent league position of no postgame handshakes during Liberty League contests until further notice, **PASSED 7-4-0**.

November 16, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward, Miller (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. NCAA Constitutional Convention Discussion: Athletic directors offered feedback on the Nov. 15 NCAA Constitutional Convention and draft constitution. Consensus was that Division III is not fundamentally broken and is not in need of major change. The current draft is a skeleton document and seems to lack substance. Institutions are being asked to support the new constitution without knowing what will occur within the Division III structure after January. As the conference with the largest number of multi-divisional institutions, it is unclear how the Liberty League and these institutions could be impacted by divisional changes. While Division III currently receives 3.18 percent of NCAA revenue, league members expressed concerns with the potential loss of the CBS/Turner basketball contract and how it could impact the division in the future.

2. Deb Steward Recognition: Lee McElroy offered congratulatory remarks to Hobart and William Smith associate vice president and director of athletics, Deb Steward, who is retiring from her role at the colleges on Friday, Nov. 19. Steward will continue to serve in a consulting role through January and will work to transition her duties as Liberty League treasurer. The league will plan on honoring Steward at a later time.

Action Items:

- Schedule follow-up Zoom meeting and calendar invitation for Dec. 7.

Voting Items:

- None.

November 9, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward, Miller (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Updates / Institutional Updates: Spectator policies for winter/indoor sports were discussed. Institutional policies currently listed on the Liberty League website should be reviewed for potential changes and updates.

2. Volleyball Proposed Schedule: Based on the scheduling model adopted on Oct. 19, the volleyball coaches discussed the six weekends that would be utilized for Liberty League play. Options were either weekends 3 through 8 or 4 through 9. The coaches agreed that weekends 4 through 9 would allow teams to participate in early-season tournaments the first three weekends. The coaches also discussed a six-team tournament format with first-round matches at higher seeds on Wednesday followed by semifinals on Saturday and the championship match on Sunday, all at the top seed.

A general discussion of tournament formats followed. Athletic directors considered revisiting formats to permit higher-seeded teams to host in each round rather than having the top seed host both the semifinals and championship. Tournament formats will be discussed at a future meeting.

3. Liberty League Website Redesign: SIDEARM has offered a discounted rate of \$1,000 to do a redesign of the Liberty League website. The quoted rate in the current agreement is \$1,250. The website was last redesigned in 2017 with the previous contract that expired in 2021. SIDEARM had previously offered clients a free redesign when new contracts were signed, but there is now a fee for the service since SIDEARM moved under the Learfield umbrella. NCAA Grant Tier 3 funds could be utilized for a redesign. The athletic directors supported a redesign at the discounted rate.

4. SAAC Associate Member: The Liberty League will need to appoint an associate member to the Division III National SAAC. The league's National SAAC representative has withdrawn from school for personal reasons. Since the Liberty League has had two individuals serve as National SAAC representatives in the last two years, the primary SAAC representative now shifts to the league's partner conference, the UAA. Nominations will be sought from campus SAAC groups and an individual will be selected to serve as associate member on the National SAAC.

5. NCAA Constitutional Convention: The NCAA release a draft of the new constitution Nov. 8. The Constitutional Convention is next Monday, Nov. 15. There is no change to the revenue allocation for Division III (still 3.18%). Athletic directors shared initial thoughts on the draft constitution.

6. Officiating/Assigning Review: The process for selecting officials for league championships was discussed. The current process varies by sport with the league assigner selecting officials in most cases. In some cases, coaches make recommendations on preferred officials. It was agreed that the assignment of officials for championships should be discussed further at a future meeting.

Action Items:

- Update COVID-19 policies on Liberty League website.
- Solicit nominations for D3 National SAAC associate member.
- Post and disseminate approved Liberty League volleyball schedule.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (Steward, Cummings-Danson) to approve the proposed 2022-2027 Liberty League volleyball schedule as proposed, **PASSED 9-0-2**.

October 19, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Updates / Institutional Updates: For Liberty League fall championships hosted on member campuses, it was confirmed that visiting teams will follow COVID-19 policies of the host institution if those policies (masking, spectators, etc.) are more stringent than Liberty League policies are NCAA guidelines. Any individual testing positive for COVID-19 at a Liberty League championship site must immediately be placed into isolation and return to her/his home campus. Appropriate contact tracing will be conducted.

2. Volleyball Scheduling Models: Two scheduling models were reviewed. With Model A, teams play league matches on THREE weekends with two matches scheduled by mutual agreement. All teams in Model A would have three home matches, three away matches and two neutral site matches. All teams would also have one Saturday in which they play two league matches. With Model B, teams play league matches on FOUR weekends with two matches scheduled by mutual agreement. All teams in Model B would have four home matches and four away matches with no neutral-site matches. No teams would play multiple matches in a given day in Model B. Six coaches expressed a preference for Model B as their preference was one league match per day. The athletic directors supported Model B.

3. Overnight Recruiting Visits (Durocher): Athletic directors shared campus policies regarding overnight recruiting visits. Some campuses are not permitting overnight recruiting visits and/or are not permitting visitors into residence halls. For campuses that are permitting overnight recruiting visits, both the host student and recruit must be vaccinated.

4. Women's Golf Update: Turning Stone has agreed to host the Liberty League women's golf championship on the Kaluhyat Course on the same weekend that the men's tournament will be conducted on the Shenendoah Course. Both genders will have a comparable experience. It is unknown whether Turning Stone would be willing to host either or both genders in the future.

5. Future Meetings:

- **NCAA Convention (January):** Four athletic directors indicated that they plan to take advantage of the NCAA's virtual participation and voting option. For the league meeting, it was agreed that a virtual meeting should be held prior to the Convention rather than trying to hold an in-person meeting when a number of individuals will not be present.
- **Liberty League Spring Meeting:** Options for an in-person spring meeting were discussed. Potential sites include Otesaga, Turning Stone, Capital Region/Schenectady, Syracuse (conference center). King will solicit potential options to present at the next meeting.

Action Items:

- Convene volleyball coaches to confirm league dates and tournament format.
- Send calendar invite for Liberty League winter meeting (TBD).

- Solicit sites for spring meeting.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (McLaughlin, Smalling) to adopt Option B (4 weekends, 2 midweek dates) as the format for the 9-team Liberty League volleyball schedule, **PASSED 8-0-3**.

October 5, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Updates / Institutional Updates: Fall season is proceeding with no interruptions to league schedule thus far. The following campus issues were discussed:

- **Winter/Spring Trips:** Most schools are moving forward with plans for spring training trips, which are an important component of baseball and softball schedules. Some schools report moving ahead while also seeking refundable deposits in the event that travel is interrupted by COVID.
- **Travel & Budgeting:** Most schools reported have reported an increase in travel-related costs for the fall season due to busing shortages and increased hotel costs.

2. Schedule Development:

- **Softball Draft Schedule (2023-2025):** Due to the NCAA changing the start date of the Division III softball tournament to a week later to align with the baseball tournament, the league adjusted the softball schedule to start a week later. While the final weekend may push some teams into final exams, the end date for softball aligns with the end date for Liberty League baseball.
- **Volleyball Schedule (2022-2024):** Two coaches are working on alternate model to the draft schedule shared at last Tuesday's fall meeting. Athletic directors have requested to receive volleyball scheduling proposals by Friday, Oct. 15, for an anticipated vote on Tuesday, Oct. 19.
- **Baseball Schedule:** Coaches met last Thursday to discuss options for an 11-team schedule. Two divisional models are being developed. Models that do not require forced makeups are a priority. Coaches will reconvene in late October to review draft schedules.
- **Basketball Schedule:** A 5-person committee has been reviewing options to improve league travel. Options discussed include: playing men's and women's basketball at opposite sites (for example, if the Vassar men are playing at Ithaca, the Ithaca women are playing at Vassar), playing a 13-game divisional model, playing additional midweek games against teams closer geographically. Are any of these models worth exploring further? Should any be ruled out? Would the league consider using a scheduling consultant to assist in developing models? Consensus was that any models that lead to an increase in costs would likely not be considered. Midweek travel against local teams as well as the use of additional weekends for league play would be considered.

3. Softball Assigning: Kathie Graf has agreed to a one-year extension to her agreement, which extends through the 2022 season. Given the challenges of the pandemic, it was agreed that assigners should be evaluated based on normal circumstances. Coaches evaluations of umpires

should be part of the evaluation process. The assigner should contact athletic directors if coaches are not completing evaluations.

4. NCAA/National:

- **NCAA Championship Hosting:** Any rapid COVID test (antigen, PCR, NAAT) can be utilized to test symptomatic individuals on site. Concerns were expressed regarding the possible testing of symptomatic individuals by members of the athletic training staff. Schools would not want to expose staff members to individuals who may potentially be COVID-positive.

Action Items:

- Distribute approved softball schedule to coaches and administrators.
- Confirm volleyball scheduling timeline with volleyball scheduling committee.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (McLaughlin, Durocher) to approve the proposed Liberty League softball schedule with the revised start/end dates for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 seasons, **PASSED 8-0-3.**

September 21, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Updates / Institutional Updates:

- Some institutions (athletic trainers) have requested other league members to complete COVID attestation forms. League members agreed prior to the start of the fall season to follow NCAA guidelines for vaccinated/unvaccinated individuals during competition. Attestation forms are not required of league members. An email clarification will be sent to athletic trainers.

2. Fall Meeting Discussion Items: Potential agenda items for next week's (Sept. 28) fall meeting with athletic administrators were discussed. Agenda items will include

- Softball Assigner
- Tennis Protest Policy
- Proposed Volleyball Schedule
- Basketball Technology in Bench Area
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

3. NCAA/National:

- **D3 Softball Championship:** The Division III Championships Committee has agreed to align the championship dates for baseball and softball beginning in 2023. Softball will be moved back one week to align with baseball. The league schedule will need to be pushed back a week.
- **NCAA Convention / Constitutional Convention:** Delegates to the Nov. 15 NCAA Special Convention and the January 2022 Annual Convention will register for the events starting in October. The anticipated Sept. 14 registration opening for the Annual Convention was postponed in order to develop an efficient and combined appointment of delegates platform

for the two events. Regarding virtual voting, per NCAA, it is still being discussed and will be communicated before the registration opens.

4. Golf Championship Sites: McElroy inquired as to an update on the status of the Liberty League women's golf championship site (discussed Sept. 7). Rochester men's golf coach Dan Wesley, who has served as the league's primary contact with Turning Stone, was going to inquire with the course as to whether the Kaluhyat Course could be utilized for the women's championship. King will contact Wesley for an update.

Action Items:

- Email athletic trainers – attestation forms not needed from league members.
- Update league softball schedule.
- Confirm Turning Stone decision on women's golf championship.

Voting Items:

- None.

September 14, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy, Beattie (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Guidelines/Policies for Fall Sports

- League Policy for Cancelled Contests due to COVID-19: The three-person scheduling committee (King, McLaughlin, Steward) recommended that if a team has to cancel a contest DUE TO COVID-19 (not a weather-related cancellation), the opposing team will be awarded a win for conference-standing purposes only. The win would not change the team's overall record and will not be recognized by the NCAA, but will be utilized to seed teams for Liberty League championship participation. A total of 28 other Division III conferences responded to the league's survey on COVID-19 cancellations with responses generally falling into one of three categories:
 - **14 Responses:** If a team is unable to compete, the contest will be rescheduled; if the contest is unable to be rescheduled, it will be ruled a 'no-contest.'
 - **5 Responses:** If a team is unable to compete, the contest will be rescheduled; if the contest is unable to be rescheduled, it will be ruled a forfeit and conference records will be adjusted accordingly.
 - **9 Responses:** If a team is unable to compete, the contest will be ruled a forfeit; the team that is unable to play will be assessed a loss for conference-standing purposes while the opposing team will be awarded a win.

2. Liberty League Awards: The league voted in June to award medals to the top eight individual finishers (an increase from the top three) in indoor and outdoor track and field. Swimming and diving has also awarded medals to the top three finishers. It was agreed to award medals to the top eight in swimming and diving.

3. Institutional Updates: Updates regarding COVID-19 were shared. Reports were generally positive.

4. NCAA/National: NCAA Convention Registration is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. today (Sept. 14).

5. Other / Open Discussion:

- McLaughlin polled golf-playing institutions on methods of transportation (vans vs. buses). Space becomes limited in vans when teams need to transport players' push carts. Most institutions reported traveling in vans for golf competition.

Action Items:

- Update COVID-19 policy document on league website.
- Order additional medals for league championships.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (Steward, Cummings-Danson) to approve the following policy if a Liberty League contest is cancelled due to COVID-19 issues, **PASSED 11-0:**

If a team is unable to compete due to COVID-19 issues, the opposing team will be awarded a win for conference-standing purposes only. The win will not change the team's overall record and will not be recognized by the NCAA, but will be utilized to seed teams for Liberty League championship participation. If the teams agree to reschedule the contest, it would be considered a non-league contest and would not change wins/points previously awarded.

September 7, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), Shanley (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Guidelines/Policies for Fall Sports

- **League Website:** Administrators were asked to review institutional spectator policies listed on the Liberty League website to ensure their accuracy.
- **League Policy for Cancelled Contests due to COVID:** The three-person scheduling committee (McLaughlin, Steward, King) recommended that if a team has to cancel a contest DUE TO COVID-19 (not a weather-related cancellation), the opposing team would be awarded a win for conference-standing purposes only. The win would not change the team's overall record and will not be recognized by the NCAA, but will be utilized to seed teams for Liberty League championship participation. There can be unintended consequences of both cancelling games and awarding wins, but this proposal might eliminate gamesmanship that comes with rescheduling decisions. A cancellation proposal for league play will be presented for a vote on Sept. 14.
- **Vaccinated close contacts to someone who tests positive:** Athletic directors shared institutional policies for vaccinated individuals who are identified as close contacts to an individual who tests positive for COVID-19. Most athletic departments follow college policy and/or NCAA guidelines for testing of vaccinated close contacts. Some institutions will test close contacts before they are permitted to return to participation and competition.

2. Golf Equity Review Committee:

- A seven-person committee (three coaches, three administrators, commissioner) met Wednesday, Sept. 1, to discuss equity concerns with the league's men's and women's golf

championships. The conversation focused on potential options for a neutral site course for the women's championship, comparable to what is provided for the men. Options discussed included Turning Stone's Kaluhyat Course and Seven Oaks at Colgate University (approximately 25 miles from Turning Stone). Both courses have been contacted to determine availability. The athletic directors discussed whether both championships should be conducted over 54 holes (the format of the men's championship) rather than leaving the decision up to each sport group. No action was taken.

3. Institutional Updates:

- Verifying the vaccination status of officials was discussed. Contest administrators needed to confirm with officials prior to contests whether they had been vaccinated. Would it be possible to have assigners provide a list of vaccinated officials?

4. NCAA/National:

- It was confirmed that the NCAA's Constitutional Convention will be conducted virtually on Monday, November 15.

Action Items:

- Solicit information on conference cancellation policies.
- Confirm fall meeting date of Tuesday, Sept. 28., at 8 a.m. with league administrators.
- Contact officiating coordinators to determine if lists of vaccinated officials can be provided.

Voting Items:

- None.

August 31, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Grembowicz (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Guidelines/Policies for Fall Sports

- [League Website](#): The league document has been added to the Liberty League website as a PDF. A web page has been created with links to school websites. The main purpose is to serve as a central source for fans and spectators attending sporting events at league institutions. Athletic directors shared institutional spectator policies, which will be added to the league website.

2. Golf Equity Review Committee: A committee consisting of three golf coaches, two sport liaisons and an AD will meet Wednesday to discuss equity concerns with the golf championships. With the women's golf coaches voting to hold their championship at a neutral site, the committee will discuss potential options. A report will be provided at the next meeting.

3. Institutional Updates: Athletic directors shared campus updates as athletic competition for fall sports is scheduled to resume Sept. 1. Some institutions noted an increase in COVID breakthrough cases (positive cases among vaccinated individuals). As a result, some campuses will increase COVID testing.

4. NCAA/National:

- NCAA Legislation Discussion: Liberty League proposal has received co-sponsorship (SUNYAC and Empire 8) and will be on the slate of Division III proposals at the NCAA Convention in January.
- Constitutional Convention Survey: Due by Sept. 1. As of Monday, approximately 25 individuals from Liberty League institutions have participated. Walsh provided a brief overview of Management Council discussions regarding the Constitution Convention, NIL and the NCAA's Gender Equity Review.
- Triathlon: Tim Yount from USA Triathlon inquired as to interest among the Liberty League in receiving a brief presentation on the sport. There is no interest at the current time.

5. COVID Fall Competition Issues: The COVID Scheduling Committee (McLaughlin, Steward, King) agreed to convene to discuss potential issues with fall competition, including cancelled games and standings, championship qualification, postponements and rescheduling. The committee will report back at the next meeting.

Action Items:

- Add institutional spectator policies to Liberty League website.
- Convene Scheduling Committee to discuss cancelled games policy.

Voting Items:

- None.

August 24, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (RPI), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League Fall 2021 COVID-19 Policies & Guidelines

- **Attestation Form:** It was agreed that a form will not be necessary for game-by-game COVID attestation. By agreeing to the Liberty League Fall 2021 COVID-19 Policies & Guidelines, institutions are attesting that they will follow all policies outlined, including testing of unvaccinated Tier 1 individuals along with institutional host policies.
- **Officials:** It will be the responsibility of the officials to provide either proof of vaccination or a negative test result prior to a contest. Some institutions may have limited capabilities to test officials as they did during the spring. Institutions that will only permit vaccinated officials to work must convey that to the assignor of that sport. A contest may be played with fewer than the scheduled number of officials as permitted by the sport rules.
- **Forfeit/No Contest Policy:** Consistent with the league's approach during the spring, forfeits will not be imposed for contests that are cancelled due to COVID concerns. League policy for determining tournament teams will need to be reviewed and established. Concerns with gamesmanship over cancellations and rescheduling during the spring season were expressed. Any rescheduling of contests must be confirmed by the administrators of the competing institutions.
- **Other Conference Policies:** COVID policies for the Empire 8 and SUNYAC appear to be consistent with the Liberty League policies.

2. Institutional Updates:

- Rensselaer has announced that it will not permit outside spectators (only students, faculty and staff) at home athletic events, consistent with its institutional visitor policy. Schools should share the policy with teams traveling to the campus.
- Ithaca is requiring also campus visitors, including spectators at athletic events, to wear face coverings.

3. NCAA/National:

- **Constitutional Convention Survey:** The NCAA emailed a survey from Constitution Committee chair Robert Gates on Aug. 23 to all NCAA member schools. It was requested that surveys be completed and submitted by Sept. 1.
- **NCAA Legislation Discussion:** Union and RIT are seeking a co-sponsor for their legislative proposal that would permit multi-divisional institutions to apply all Division I rules, including financial aid, to their Division I programs. Because the proposal impacts a small number of Division III institutions, other conferences do not have a vested interest in co-sponsoring it. The Empire 8, which has a proposal (redshirting) that also needs a co-sponsor, inquired as to the possibility of the two conferences serving as co-sponsors in order to move both proposals forward for a Convention vote. Institutions that do not support the redshirting proposal would not be obligated to vote in support of it at the Convention. In order to co-sponsor the Empire 8 legislation a vote of 2/3 of the entire membership (presidents) would be needed. Athletic directors present were supportive of the concept. McLaughlin and Nicholson will work in conjunction with their presidents on an email to other presidents. A response will be requested by Aug. 27.

Action Items:

- Contact assignors to convey league policy for officials.
- Revise and disseminate COVID-19 Guidelines & Policies for Fall Sports.
- Review policy for determining Liberty League tournament teams if seasons are impacted by cancelled games.

Voting Items:

- **MOTION** (McLaughlin, Nicholson) to approve the Liberty League COVID-19 Guidelines/Policies for Fall Sports, **PASSED 11-0**.

August 17, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Bari (St. Lawrence), Tiffany (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Liberty League COVID-19 Guidelines/Policies for Fall Sports: League COVID policies for fall sports were discussed. A draft document was reviewed.

- **Attestation & Testing:** Institutions will attest prior to the season that all unvaccinated Tier 1 individuals will be tested in accordance with NCAA guidelines. Attestation would be for all teams, not separately for each team. The consensus was that visiting teams will not be required to disclose whether a visiting team has unvaccinated individuals.

- **Host Institution Policies:** In the event that an institution has policies that are more stringent than Liberty League policies (e.g., requiring face coverings), then visiting teams will adhere to the policies of the host institution.
- **Face Coverings:** NCAA guidelines do not recommend the use of face coverings during training and competition. Institutions may choose to implement masking policies. If an institution has a masking policy, a team traveling to that institution may be required to wear face coverings. If a host institution does not have a masking policy, its teams would not be required to wear masks when hosting other teams.
- **Travel:** Institutions should work with bus companies on any school-specific transportation policies.
- **Spectators:** State and local guidelines, along with institutional policies, will guide decisions on spectators. Some institutions may require proof of vaccination or face coverings for spectators, consistent with institutional policy.
- **Officials:** Officials working Liberty League contests will have to show proof of vaccination or a negative test result. Some institutions may only permit vaccinated officials to work contests on their campuses. For those schools that will permit unvaccinated officials to work, some may be able to test unvaccinated officials. A fee of \$100, deducted from the game fee, would be charged to officials that need to be tested.

2. Institutional Updates: Bassett shared that all visitors to Ithaca College, including spectators, will be required to wear face coverings at all times. Masking is also required indoors, but not during training and competition. Other institutions have also recently implemented indoor masking policies.

3. NCAA/National: Membership-sponsored Division III legislative proposals were recently announced. There are currently eight membership-sponsored proposals with four of those still in need of co-sponsors in order to be moved forward for a vote at the NCAA Convention in January. Key proposals include:

- Reducing the number of teams needed for an automatic bid (AQ) from 7 to 6.
- Redshirting – season of eligibility triggered by competition, not participation (needs co-sponsor).
- Defining playing season by days (needs co-sponsor).
- Acclimatization for fall sports (needs co-sponsor).
- Equestrian as an emerging sport.
- Applying all D1 rules (LL proposal – needs co-sponsor).

Action Items:

- Contact Empire 8 and SUNYAC to inquire as to conference COVID policies for non-conference competition.
- Review COVID-19 Policies & Guidelines document with Liberty League athletic trainers.

Voting Items:

- None.

August 10, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett (Ithaca), McElroy (Rensselaer), Shanley (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson

(Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin, Tiffany (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. NCAA COVID-19 Guidance for Fall Sports

- **Do institutions plan on following NCAA guidance, at a minimum? Can we establish a minimum league standard?:** Institutions plan on following some of the NCAA guidance (i.e., testing of unvaccinated Tier 1 individuals), but not other parts (i.e., masking).
- **Institutional/League Testing Plans for Unvaccinated Students and Staff.** Campus testing plans for unvaccinated individuals vary. Some institutions plan on weekly testing through the health center while others plan to implement weekly pool testing.
- **Institutional Requirements for Opposing Teams (do they need to be vaccinated and/or tested?):** Plans are still being determined, but as long as opposing teams plan on testing unvaccinated individuals per NCAA guidelines, institutions expect to be able to compete against them.
- **Attestation: Will/should we again require institutions to attest that teams are cleared to play (24 hours prior to competition)? Seek recommendation from Athletic Trainers?** Consensus is that attestation prior to every contest or event is not necessary. Rather, institutions should attest prior to the start of the season that they will test unvaccinated individuals per NCAA guidelines and withhold any individuals that may test positive.
- **Officials: Will we test unvaccinated officials?** Some institutions have policies requiring students, faculty and staff to get vaccinated. Thus these institutions will not permit unvaccinated individuals to work their games. While the SUNYAC is requiring assignors to collect information, it is unclear whether the assignors are being compensated to do so. King will contact SUNYAC for clarification.

2. Institutional Updates: No additional campus updates unrelated to COVID.

3. Liberty League Women's Golf Championship: Turning Stone is unable/unwilling to accommodate our request to hold our women's championship at the course next spring. They've committed to hosting the men's fall preview and spring championship, which they have hosted for the past three years. Do we seek a comparable neutral site course for the women? Continue with host rotation? Get a recommendation from the women's golf committee?

- Championship experience for men's and women's golf should be equitable, but doesn't need to be identical. It was recommended that a committee be formed to address equity issues with men's and women's golf.

Action Items:

- Draft COVID-19 policy document for fall sports, which will include: testing and vaccinations; masking, spectators, officials.
- Form committee to review golf equity issues.

Voting Items:

- None.

August 3, 2021

Participants: Presidents, Athletics Direct Reports (ADRs) and Athletic Directors from Liberty League member institutions.

Agenda:

1. Fall Planning: King provided a brief presentation to the meeting attendees. The Liberty League's plan is to resume a regular competition schedule this fall while following local (institution, county), state and national (CDC, NCAA) mandates.

- **Review of Spring Season:** All 11 institutions participated this past spring and approximately 87 percent of scheduled contests were completed. No team that chose to participate was forced to cancel its season. King reported that there was only one COVID-related cancellation after April 17. As more teams and individuals were able to get vaccinated, there were fewer interruptions.
- **Campus Vaccination and Testing Plans:** All Liberty League institutions are either requiring all students to get vaccinated or are requiring vaccinations for college-related travel, which would include athletics. Some exemptions for medical and religious reasons are likely, but a high percentage of student-athletes will likely be vaccinated.
- **Delta Variant Concerns:** The Delta variant is now the dominant strain in the U.S. and has been determined to be 50 percent more contagious than the alpha variant. Vaccines have still demonstrated that they are effective against the variant.
- **Supporting Institutional Decisions/Plans:** Institutions have the autonomy to make decisions regarding their athletics programs and may choose to adopt policies that are more stringent than Liberty League or NCAA policies. The league and its members will support those decisions.

2. NCAA Guidance: The NCAA has not released guidance for fall sports as of Aug. 3. The NCAA's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Brian Hainline, stated on July 21 that guidance was expected to be released in two weeks. Dr. Hainline has shared a general framework that is based on community risk since many parts of the country vary considerably.

- **Sport Risk Classifications:** Unlike this past year, the NCAA is unlikely to classify sports according to risk (high, moderate, low) because there has been little evidence of COVID transmission between competing teams.
- **Localized Rather than National Approach:** Different regions of the country vary in terms of COVID infection rates. Guidance may focus on local conditions.
- **Conference/Institutional Plans:** As of Aug. 3, no institutions or conferences have cancelled fall sports competition due to COVID-19 concerns.

Action Items:

- Provide update to Presidents and ADRs following the release of any NCAA guidance for fall sports.

Voting Items:

- None.

July 27, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), McElroy (Rensselaer), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Aug. 3 Joint Meeting with Presidents/ADRs/ADs: The message will be that the league is planning on a regular league schedule for fall sports. Student-athlete population is highly vaccinated as a result of institutional mandates. Ten league members are requiring students to be vaccinated while one institution is requiring vaccinations for institutional travel. It should be noted on the call that the league had a successful spring season in which all 11 institutions participated and nearly 87 percent of scheduled games were completed. The league and member institutions are awaiting NCAA guidance for fall sports and will discuss how to implement the recommendations when they are issued. How the league and institutions plan to handle vaccinated vs. unvaccinated individuals may emerge as a topic.

2. COVID-19 Updates: Vaccination of game officials was discussed. Is this something the league will require? King will survey assignors to get a sense of how many officials are vaccinated. Could officials still be tested prior to games? Should they be required to wear masks? NCAA guidance may provide additional recommendations.

Masking of unvaccinated individuals on campus was also discussed. Some institutions intend to use an honor system while others plan to encourage masking and/or foster a culture of masking. Institutions may also require masks indoors.

3. NCAA/National Updates:

- **NCAA Grant Reimbursements:** Each institution will receive approximately \$5,300 in NCAA Conference Grant reimbursements. King plans on sending out checks by the end of the week.
- **NCAA COVID-19 Guidance:** NCAA's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Brian Hainline indicated on July 21, that NCAA guidance for fall sports is expected to be released in two weeks, which would be by Aug. 4.
- **Management Council Updates:** Walsh provided an update on the recent Management Council meetings. In response to questions from the league's compliance officers regarding the permissibility of Barstool Sports as an NIL supporter, there is nothing that would prohibit student-athletes from affiliating with Barstool sports as long as they are not engaging in gambling activities. The NCAA Board of Governors will be meeting next week. Topics that it will likely address include the NCAA's Gender Equity Review Report and transgender student-athlete participation.
- **Basketball Technology in Bench Area:** Does the league have any interest in participating in a pilot program to allow coaches to utilize technology (i.e., iPads and tablets) in the bench area? The league would have to submit a request by Oct. 1 to do so. This can be revisited at a later time.

4. Athletic Training Assistance: Lindholm noted that Bard will likely have two openings for athletic trainers in the fall as staff members are leaving to enter graduate school. Recommendations are welcome.

5. United Educators COVID-19 Coverage: Cummings-Danson noted that United Educations (UE), which provides liability insurance coverage to many colleges and universities, is no longer planning on providing coverage for COVID-19.

Action Items:

- Compile and send meeting agenda for Aug. 3 meeting to participants.
- Survey assignors to determine level of vaccination among officials.

Voting Items:

- None.

July 20, 2021

Participants: Lindholm, Glass (Bard), Smalling, McGaheran (Clarkson), Steward, Miller (Hobart and William Smith), Bassett, Roberts (Ithaca), McElroy, Paradise (Rensselaer), VanderZwaag, Wylam (Rochester), Nicholson, Marren (RIT), Cummings-Danson, Hallenbeck (Skidmore), Durocher, LaBrake, Atkins (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin, Little (Union), Walsh, Leach (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Name-Image-Likeness (NIL) Discussion: The league's 11 compliance coordinators joined the meeting for a discussion on NIL.

- **NYS Law / Institutional Policies:** Since New York State does not have a law governing NIL, each institution will have to develop its own policies, which may include permissible and prohibited activities as well as trademark use and use of institutional facilities. General counsel may assist in crafting and reviewing policies.
- **Impermissible Activities:** In terms of impermissible activities, NCAA bylaws prohibit student-athletes from accepting compensation for the following: compensation that is contingent on enrollment at a particular institution; compensation that is tied to athletic performance or achievement; compensation for work not performed.
- **Tracking / Forms:** The NCAA's interim NIL policy does not require institutions to track student-athlete activity, but institutions are required to report violations. Some institutions plan to track NIL activity by having student-athletes complete forms along with other compliance paperwork.
- **Barstool Sports – is it permissible?:** Barstool Sports, which has a large social media presence, has had thousands of student-athletes sign up to be ambassadors. The company said it will send them t-shirts. Barstool Sports also has a gambling website. Does this make it impermissible?

National SAAC has discussed the importance of receiving education on NIL. There are concerns with the potential for predatory contacts as well as how it may impact team dynamics if some players are being compensated and others are not.

2. Institutional COVID-19 Updates: Vaccination mandates for faculty and staff were discussed. Currently, Clarkson and RPI are mandating vaccines for faculty and staff. Some institutions have not mandated vaccinations because they would require agreements with unions. These schools still anticipate a high vaccination rate among faculty and staff.

3. Overnight Recruiting Visits: McLaughlin surveyed the group to determine if institutions plan on allowing vaccinated prospects to stay overnight on visits. Some institutions are leaning toward permitting overnight visits while others are not allowing them yet. A survey question can be added to the recent Google sheet on fall planning.

4. Presidents Meeting: King surveyed the group on whether the league should convene the presidents to discuss fall sports. The presidents were involved in key league decisions during the 2020-21 academic year. The consensus was that a joint meeting of presidents, athletics direct reports and athletic directors should be organized to ensure that key constituents are on the same page.

Action Items:

- Send out Doodle to set up date for joint meeting with Presidents, Athletics Direct Reports (ADRs) and Athletic Directors.
- Update Fall Planning Chart to add question of overnight recruiting visits.

Voting Items:

- None.

July 13, 2021

Participants: Lindholm (Bard), Smalling (Clarkson), Steward (Hobart and William Smith), Rothermel (Ithaca), McElroy (Rensselaer), VanderZwaag (Rochester), Nicholson (RIT), Cummings-Danson (Skidmore), Durocher (St. Lawrence), McLaughlin (Union), Walsh (Vassar), King (Liberty League).

Agenda:

1. Welcome/Introductions: King welcomed new RIT athletic director Jackie Nicholson to the Liberty League. The athletic directors introduced themselves.

2. Future Meeting Schedule: Consensus is that Tuesday mornings at 8 a.m. continue to be the best time slot for weekly meetings. King will circulate a Zoom calendar invitation for Tuesday mornings in July and August

3. Institutional COVID-19 Updates: The athletic directors shared COVID-19 updates from their respective campuses, including plans for vaccinations, testing, masking, travel and campus visitation policies. While plans continue to be developed for the fall, most institutions are requiring vaccinations for students and are strongly encouraging vaccinations for faculty and staff. Testing on many campuses is expected to be scaled back significantly from the spring and may include testing of only unvaccinated and symptomatic individuals. Plans for athletics competition also continue to be developed, but at the present time, no institutions are restricting overnight travel. The league will continue to track on policies and developments that could impact league competition including overnight travel, masking and spectator/visitor policies.

4. NCAA COVID-19 Guidance: King reported that NCAA Chief Medical Officer Dr. Brian Hainline indicated on his July 7 webinar that the NCAA is delaying the release of fall guidelines due to uncertainty with the Delta variant. According to Hainline, any guidance released for the fall will likely not include a transmission risk classification by sport. Considerations would be guided by infection rates in local communities.

5. Name-Image-Likeness: The NCAA's new Name-Image-Likeness interim policy was discussed. Since New York State does not currently have any laws in effect, institutions must craft their own policies. It was suggested that institutional forms could be shared among league members. It was agreed to include each school's NCAA compliance officer on the next call to share best practices and questions. Any potential questions or discussion items for the Division III Management Council can be provided to Walsh prior to next Monday's meeting.

6. Executive Session – Evaluation of Liberty League Staff: The athletic directors conducted an executive session to evaluate the performance of the Liberty League staff.

Action Items:

- Send Zoom invite for weekly summer meetings; include compliance officers on July 20 meeting to discuss NIL.

Voting Items:

- None.