



MINUTES
ATLANTIC 10 CONFERENCE
2016-17 BASEBALL SPORT COMMITTEE MEETING
THE WESTIN CRYSTAL CITY – ARLINGTON, VA
DECEMBER 8, 2016

Those in attendance were:

DAVIDSON	Dick Cooke
DAYTON	Tony Vittorio
FORDHAM	Kevin Leighton
GEORGE MASON	Bill Brown
GEORGE WASHINGTON	Gregg Ritchie
LA SALLE	Mike Lake
MASSACHUSETTS	Mike Stone
RHODE ISLAND	Raphael Cerrato, <i>co-chair</i>
RICHMOND	Tracy Woodson
ST. BONAVENTURE	Larry Sudbrook
SAINT JOSEPH'S	Fritz Hamburg; Jim Brown, <i>co-chair</i>
SAINT LOUIS	Darin Hendrickson
VCU	Steve Hay
COORDINATOR OF UMPIRES	Tony Thompson
ATLANTIC 10	Lucas Feller

1. Welcome

Lucas Feller welcomed the group to the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Raphael Cerrato was introduced as the new coach co-chair of the A-10 Baseball Committee; Jim Brown was recognized as the standing administrative co-chair of the committee. The Conference's governance process for policy recommendation was reviewed. The group was encouraged to work with their program administrator and sport committee chairs on any A-10 policy items throughout the season.

2. Officiating

A-10 Coordinator of Umpires Tony Thompson addressed the group. New NCAA rules and points of emphasis for the 2017 season were reviewed. Coaches were reminded they must watch the 2017 NCAA Baseball Rules video prior to the start of the season. The A-10 office will distribute a link to the online video to the coaches in January.

Team schedules and umpire assignments for the 2017 season will be posted on ArbiterSports by mid-December. Game fees will be entered by January 1. Fees have increased \$100 per umpire to \$1,100 (all-inclusive) for the 2017 season. The crew chief for each conference series will contact the home institution at least 72 hours prior to the series to confirm the location, dates, game times, and other event details.

A-10 Baseball policy 12.05 was referenced regarding appropriate locker room facilities, security, transportation and hospitality for umpires. The coaches were encouraged to submit evaluations for umpires to Tony Thompson through ArbiterSports or by e-mail or phone after each series.

3. Conference Schedule

a. 2017 Schedule

The 2017 A-10 baseball schedule was briefly reviewed. The group was asked to notify the Conference office of any requests for changes to the schedule due to Easter, exams, or graduation per A-10 policy 7.06, 7.07 and 7.08. Any requests for changes must be submitted by the home institution's program administrator.

b. 2018 Schedule

The 2018 A-10 baseball schedule was briefly reviewed. The schedule was previously distributed in December 2015. Any requests for changes to the schedule due to Easter, exams, or graduation must be submitted to the Conference office by the home institution's program administrator by September 1, 2017.

c. 2019 Schedule

The 2019 A-10 baseball schedule was distributed to the coaches. The 2019 schedule is similar in format to the 2017 and 2018 schedules with regional opponent scheduling. Schools not on a team's schedule in 2018 are back on their schedules in 2019. Four other schools rotate off for one year.

d. Schedule Format

Discussion took place on regional opponent assignments and the need for a more equitable and consistent schedule. The group also discussed adding more conference games to avoid missing several A-10 opponents each year. An 11-week (10 series) schedule was discussed increasing the number of conference games from 24 to 30. It was noted adding more conference games could help create more separation in the league standings and help with tie-breaker scenarios during A-10 Championship seeding. Weather conditions in early to mid-March could pose a challenge for certain schools, especially those in the Northeast, forcing them to play their first several series on the road. No action was taken on revising the conference schedule format.

4. A-10 Championship

a. 2017 Championship

The 2017 A-10 Championship will be held May 24-27. Saint Louis will serve as the host school. The coaches agreed to reduce each team's practice time on Tuesday from two hours to 90 minutes.

b. 2018 Championship

The 2018 A-10 Championship will be held May 23-26. George Washington is the next school scheduled to host in the rotation.

c. Championship Format

The current format of the A-10 Baseball Championship was reviewed. Discussion took place on potentially moving back to a 6-team tournament. The group proposed adding an additional team to the Championship (8 teams) while still maintaining a 4-day championship (Wednesday-Saturday). Seeds #5-#8 would play a single-elimination game on Wednesday morning/afternoon with the winners playing a second game Wednesday evening. A second proposal was presented for a 7-team championship with a play-in game on Tuesday (#6 vs. #7 seed) and a 6-team double-elimination

championship Wednesday-Saturday. The group agreed to eliminate the Tuesday practice day if approved.

It was MOVED to:

“Restructure the A-10 Baseball Championship to include a 4-team single-elimination and 6-team double-elimination tournament consisting of 8 teams beginning with the 2018 Championship.”

(Passed 13-0)

d. Future Championship Sites

The group discussed moving the A-10 Baseball Championship to a neutral site location, preferably a minor league ballpark centrally located within the A-10’s geographical footprint, to provide a better championship experience for the student-athletes. The coaches noted current flaws of hosting the Championship on campus, including quality and amenities of on-campus facilities, current low spectator attendance and travel drawbacks to select campuses. Several minor league ballparks were mentioned specifically as recommendations.

It was MOVED to:

“Move the A-10 Baseball Championship to a neutral site location centrally located within the A-10 geographical footprint beginning with the 2018 Championship.”

(Passed 13-0)

5. Sport Committee Items

a. Communication

The group was asked to be proactive in communicating changes to a game/series schedule due to weather or other unforeseen scenarios well in advance and prior to the visiting team leaving their campus whenever possible.

b. Inclement Weather Policy

The A-10 office will conduct a conference call with the baseball program administrators prior to the start of the 2017 Conference season to review A-10 inclement weather policies. Coaches are welcome and encouraged to participate on the conference call. Any requests for changes to the master schedule due to weather-related field conditions must be submitted to the Conference office by the home institution’s program administrator. Tony Thompson and the game umpires should be contacted in advance of a potential change. Changes to the original schedule are not permitted without Conference office approval.

c. Rawlings Contract

The 2017 season is the third and final year of the current 3-year agreement with Rawlings as the official baseball of the A-10. Terms of the agreement were reviewed, including each institution’s complimentary merchandise credit, equipment and discounts on Rawlings products. The Conference office will work with Rawlings on a new proposal to extend the sponsorship agreement through the 2021 season, which is the term year of the NCAA sponsorship agreement with Rawlings.

- d. A-10 Policy Manual
The 2016-17 A-10 Baseball Policy Manual was re-distributed to the group. The group was reminded of the Conference's uniform policy that went into effect with the 2016 season. All uniforms should comply with the logo policy. The A-10 Code of Conduct was also distributed to the coaches and briefly reviewed.

6. NCAA Governance and Compliance
Five (5) current NCAA legislative proposals were highlighted. The group was asked to speak with their on-campus compliance office prior to January to discuss the legislative items in more detail. The Conference office will vote on the proposals on behalf of the A-10 membership at the NCAA meetings in January.

7. Sport Committee Meeting Schedule
The 2017-18 A-10 Baseball Sport Committee meeting will be conducted via a conference call. The group preferred the call be conducted in early to mid-December prior to the 2018 ABCA Convention. The 2018-19 sport committee meeting will be conducted in person at a location to be determined at a later time.

8. Axon Sports
Justin Ridgell from Axon Sports will be reaching out to the coaches interested in learning more about Axon Sports' products and services.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Feller.

Minutes distributed to the A-10 Baseball Sport Committee on February 7, 2017.