

4-14-2008 Restructuring DIII?

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2 JOSH CENTOR: Welcome to "Mondays With Myles".

3 Here on the program we have spoken about, in the past,
4 Division III's burgeoning membership and the possibility of
5 restructuring.

6 We have seen survey results, Dr. Brand. And more than
7 eight of ten Division III institutions supported keeping the
8 division as it currently exists. Can you give us some
9 background on the survey results?

10 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, the discussions have been
11 going on for about a year now with Division III for several
12 reasons, including growth, as you pointed out, was considering
13 either breaking into subdivisions or potentially even breaking
14 into two divisions. That discussion took place at our
15 convention, in earnest, with the presidents and others as
16 well. And there were large forums. Even before that time, we
17 had agreed that we really need to hear from the members.

18 The NCAA is a membership organization -- a
19 membership-driven organization, and you will only act in ways
20 that your members want you to do that. So we sent out a very
21 comprehensive survey. And you're right, Josh, it came back
22 and said the large majority, over 80 percent of the members,
23 were comfortable in the current situation and felt that the
24 pattern of growth and the differences in perspective did not
25 warrant any splits in terms of subdivisions or even a

1 division. So as far as I'm concerned, it's off the table for
2 now.

3 JOSH CENTOR: Why do you think that Division III
4 institutions are so happy with the way things are? I mean,
5 there are almost 440-some institutions right now, and growing.
6 It could present some sorts of problems.

7 DR. MYLES BRAND: It will present problems over time.

8 This was a chance to anticipate the problems and see
9 if, in a systematic way, you can make the groups smaller,
10 which meant more access to championships, for example.

11 I think most of those that spoke up say, well, they do
12 understand there may be some problems in terms of growth and
13 size down the road. At the present time, they're comfortable
14 in the arrangement, even if it means in some cases, for some
15 sports, changing the ratio of participation opportunities for
16 different schools in those championships.

17 They felt that the course, the difficulties in
18 creating subdivisions or a new division did not warrant that
19 split, even if there were some reasons -- and not everyone
20 agreed there were any reasons -- but to the extent there were
21 some reasons, they didn't feel that those were overpowering.

22 JOSH CENTOR: Do you think that there's a difference
23 in the philosophy of some Division III institutions? Maybe
24 some institutions aren't necessarily concerned with access to
25 those championships, while others are.

1 DR. MYLES BRAND: I think that's part of it. Some are
2 comfortable with their competitive environment. A lot of
3 Division III schools look more towards conference play than
4 they do to national championship play.

5 There are differences in philosophy, as represented by
6 the difference in voting that's taken place over the last
7 several years. But they felt the similarities amongst
8 Division III, the nonscholarship division, and the coherence
9 of that division, overwhelmed any differences that they might
10 have and that there might be other ways to work through those
11 difference.

12 JOSH CENTOR: Do you think it's naive of the
13 membership to chose maybe a reactive approach 10, 15 years
14 down the road, as opposed to a proactive approach that we were
15 looking at here before the survey results came back?

16 DR. MYLES BRAND: I wouldn't describe it that way. I
17 would think that they are comfortable where they are right
18 now, and they will look within the context of where we are
19 right now to solve whatever issues there are in terms of the
20 size and differences of point of view of the members of the
21 division.

22 They like the idea of being a Division III. They feel
23 good about Division III. You know, this is a positive. This
24 says, We like Division III. We like who we are and where we
25 are. One might not interpret, not this negatively, but

1 positively. And I think that's the best interpretation of
2 what happened -- the appropriate interpretation that they are
3 comfortable in the division; they like being associated with
4 the schools that are in the division; they like the conference
5 cohesion they have; they like the competitive opportunities;
6 they like the branding and marketing, if you let me put it
7 that way.

8 So they don't see any compelling reason to change, for
9 the most part, despite some other differences that may arise
10 between groups and members.

11 JOSH CENTOR: You said off the table. Does that mean
12 these conversations are done, over, as of right now?

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: We had two committees, one from
14 Division III itself and one an Executive Committee, looking at
15 these issues. We have a sunset of both committees. Both
16 committees are no longer functioning, because the issue is
17 closed.

18 What happens at 5, 10, 15 years from now when the
19 membership in Division III feels that, well, maybe the issues
20 have become more demanding than they have been in the past,
21 and they need to be addressed at that time. Whenever the
22 members tell us that they're ready to do that, we will. We
23 won't do it without the membership actually asking us to do
24 it.

25 In these kinds of major decisions, it really is

1 membership led. And unless there is strong movement by the
2 members to do it, there is no reason for the national office
3 to continue to press on this.

4 JOSH CENTOR: You know, Dr. Brand, that gets me
5 thinking. We had more than 8 out of 10 schools that weren't
6 in favor of the restructuring. What about those that were in
7 favor? What do those 80 to 90 schools do?

8 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, there's interesting diversity
9 of opinion within a small group as well. Some want to see a
10 much more restrictive -- some want to see a less restrictive
11 approach. It isn't that group is uniform, in itself. And
12 there are other opportunities for some of those schools if
13 they so wish.

14 For example, some may wish to move into Division II,
15 which is a limited scholarship division. Some people
16 understand and argue that Division II's limited scholarship
17 approach is a very good enrollment management tool and is very
18 attractive to some students who like to play sports. And most
19 of the private institutions, for example, will give some
20 discount to their tuition, so discounting has relative
21 similarities to scholarships to some degree. So there may be
22 some opportunities for a few of them to move into Division II.
23 Not all of them obviously. But I think in this case the large
24 majority does control.

25 JOSH CENTOR: Well, it will be interesting to keep our

1 eyes on potential movement.

2 Dr. Brand, thanks for the background information.

3 DR. MYLES BRAND: It's a pleasure.

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