

**DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL WHITE PAPER
PREPARED FOR THE NCAA**

**BY
VAL ACKERMAN**

JUNE 15, 2013

INTRODUCTION

This report is a summary of information I have gathered over the past six months concerning the state of NCAA Division I women's basketball, together with my recommendations about steps that could be taken by the NCAA, conferences, institutions and other key stakeholders to better position the sport for continued growth in the future. The report was compiled on the basis of: historical data; interviews I conducted with people knowledgeable about women's college basketball, women's basketball or basketball in general; observations I made in connection with games and related events I either attended or watched on television; information culled from press reports; feedback I received during various meetings I attended with NCAA staff and/or other stakeholders; and my prior experiences with women's basketball (including the WNBA, USA Basketball and FIBA) and other women's sports. A list of my interviewees as of the date of this report is attached as Exhibit 1.

I have divided this report into two sections. The first provides an assessment of the current state of NCAA Division I women's basketball, including a summary of comments made by my interviewees. This section also contains my analysis of the strengths and weakness of Division I women's basketball and, in my opinion, the areas that should be addressed as the sport looks to build on its existing foundation and embark on a new growth phase.

The second section of the report contains potential actions and/or changes that I believe the leaders in Division I women's basketball should consider as part of the management of the sport over the next 5-7 years (i.e., through the 2019-20 academic year). I have entitled this section of the report "Vision 2020."

Many of the points contained in this report relate to the commercial challenges and opportunities now before women's college basketball. While I am aware that the creep of "professionalism" in intercollegiate athletics is cause for concern for some, I believe that a better commercial position for women's basketball is not only compatible with the NCAA's educational mission, but can enhance it, and that a more aggressive approach to revenue growth and the "business of women's college basketball" should be undertaken to this end.

Per discussions with NCAA staff, this report does not contain a detailed analysis of the following subjects:

- Division II or Division III women's basketball. Due to the volume of issues surrounding Division I women's basketball, I have limited the scope of my report to that division only. Given the large number of Division II and III programs, however, the NCAA should consider undertaking a focused study of those programs as a separate "Phase 2" exercise.

- **Officiating.** It is my understanding that others within the NCAA governance structure (specifically, the WCBO Board of Managers and its Mechanics Committee) are currently involved in reviewing and assessing this area. However, because a substantial number of interviewees identified the quality of officiating as an ongoing priority for the sport, I have included selected observations in my analysis.
- **Student-athlete welfare issues.** Although I received some comments (principally from coaches) concerning the experience of women's basketball student-athletes, I did not undertake an in-depth analysis of key topics in this area (e.g., graduation rates, injury trends and transfer issues). These subjects may also lend themselves to further review or to a separate study to the extent not currently addressed by others within the NCAA membership.

SECTION 1

ASSESSMENT OF DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

I. PROGRESSION OVER PAST 30 YEARS

Women's college basketball has made tremendous strides since the sport was added to the NCAA championship program for the 1981-82 school year. In 1982, 9,000 student-athletes competed on women's basketball teams at the intercollegiate level; in 2013, more than 15,000 women participated in the sport across the NCAA's three divisions. Attendance and media interest in women's college basketball is now well established, as Division I regular season and NCAA tournament games attract more fans and viewers than any other women's intercollegiate sport. This year alone, the Women's Final Four championship game was seen by more than 2.3 million domestic viewers, broadcast on over 250 radio stations, distributed to television outlets in nearly 200 countries, and covered by more than 600 credentialed media members.

Despite these and other accomplishments, women's college basketball's overall growth as a spectator sport has slowed over the last decade. Attendance and rating figures reveal respectable levels of fan support compared with many other sports properties, but there has been an absence of improvement (and in some cases declines) in recent years in important measures of interest during both the regular season and the tournament. In addition, while the number of student-athletes playing the game has increased significantly over the past 30 years, the number of programs achieving competitive success on a national scale remains relatively small. Since 1982, only 25 of the now 343 DI schools have made one or more WFF appearances, and 7 schools have 40 combined appearances among them. Historical statistical trends also show long-term declines in shooting and scoring, which may have implications for future spectator appeal.

Summaries of key data in the areas described above appear below.

A. Regular season attendance for top-drawing programs since 1999-2000

During the 1999-2000 NCAA season, which was the first season for which the NCAA reported cumulative attendance for women's basketball programs, four Division I schools averaged more than 10,000 fans per game (Tennessee at 15,341; Texas Tech at 12,741; Connecticut at 11,632; and Iowa State at 11,184). Twenty-seven additional schools averaged between 3,000 and 10,000 fans per game, the bulk of them (18) in the 3-5,000 range.

Between the 2000-01 and 2006-07 seasons, women's college basketball saw modest but clear fan growth: four or five DI schools per year during that period

averaged more than 10,000 fans per game, and roughly 30-35 additional programs per year had attendance averages between 3,000 and 10,000. Between 2007-08 and 2011-12, the top-drawing programs saw declines, as only two schools per year averaged more than 10,000 per game during that time period. However, the number of schools averaging between 3,000 and 10,000 fans per game remained fairly constant, with a high of 38 schools in this range in 2007-08.

During the 2012-13 NCAA season, only one DI school averaged more than 10,000 fans per game (Tennessee at 11,390). This figure was more than 3,000 fans per game fewer than Tennessee's average the year before and represented the lowest average for the top-drawing school since the NCAA's reporting began. Sixteen additional schools averaged more than 5,000 fans per game (two fewer than the preceding season), and another 19 schools averaged more than 3,000 fans (one fewer than 2011-12), for a total of 35 schools in the 3-10,000 range. Given these trends, the task of re-stimulating attendance growth and increasing the pool of programs at both the 10,000+ and 5,000+ levels is a clear priority for the sport.

At the other end of the spectrum, 205 schools finished the 2012-13 regular season with an average of fewer than 1,000 fans per game, and 90 programs averaged less than 500. Accordingly, room for growth appears to exist at all program tiers.

The Big 12 conference has consistently led the NCAA in attendance over the past several years, averaging in the neighborhood of 5,000 fans per game per school. The Big 10 and SEC schools have generally averaged in the range of 4,000 fans per game, followed by the "old" Big East (around 3,000); the ACC (around 2,500); and the Mountain West and Pac-12 (around 2,000).

With respect to audience composition, the NCAA commissioned Taylor Research in 2011 to conduct a fan study that included an assessment of the in-arena demographics for women's college basketball games. Based on the sampling used, the study established the following demographic profile:

- Females outnumber males 56% to 44%
- 53% are 50 and older (of this number, 30% are 60 and older)
- 71% are Caucasian
- 53% have completed college or graduate school
- 70% earn less than \$75,000/year

Summaries of the year-by-year attendance figures for the past five seasons and other demographic highlights from the Taylor study are attached as Exhibit 2.

B. NCAA tournament attendance since 1982

During the 2013 DI women's tournament, an average of 4,850 fans attended games in the first and second rounds. Although this figure represented an increase of 957 fans per session over the 2012 tournament, it was only the 12th highest first and second round session average since the tournament began in 1982. The highest drawing years for the first and second rounds were as follows:

2004: 6,697	2008: 5,851
2002: 6,655	2005: 5,650
2001: 6,525	1998: 5,544
2003: 6,382	1996: 5,415
1999: 6,246	1997: 4,952
2000: 6,244	2013: 4,850

During the 2013 tournament regional round, an average of 7,100 fans attended each of the eight sessions. Although this figure represented an increase of 956 fans per session over the 2012 tournament, it was only the 10th highest regional average since the tournament began. The highest drawing years for the regional round were as follows:

2003: 9,224	1999: 8,144
1998: 9,007	1993: 7,986
2001: 8,770	2006: 7,695
2011: 8,503	1995: 7,436
2004: 8,494	2013: 7,100

In addition, two second round games in the 2013 tournament drew less than 1,500 fans (1,358 in Columbus and 1,114 in Queens). In general, declining attendance at first/second games and regional games has become a primary concern for NCAA stakeholders.

The 2013 Women's Final Four averaged 17,545 fans per session. Although technically a sell-out, some seats during each session were unoccupied, and the average represented the second-lowest championship session average since 1999. However, because the WFF has been played periodically in domed stadiums, resulting in session attendance averages in the 28-29,000 range on those occasions, it is difficult to draw comparisons to averages in years in which the championship is played in an NBA-sized arena, as was the case in 2013.

Although the Women's Final Four is considered a marquee event, the event did not sell out in 2011 in Indianapolis (where a conventional arena was used), and the need for periodic adjustments with respect to pricing, the size of team ticket

blocks, the sale of single session tickets, the extent of community group distributions and other strategies is ongoing.

The total session average for all rounds of the 2013 tournament was 5,466, which was the 17th highest overall session average since the tournament began. The tournament's record average session high was 7,996 in 2003 (the WFF that year was played in the Georgia Dome).

A summary of the tournament's attendance history is attached as Exhibit 3.

C. Growth in number of televised games

During the 2012-13 NCAA regular season, 797 women's college basketball games were broadcast over national cable outlets (including ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU, Fox Sports Network and CBS Sports Network); regional sports networks; conference networks (including BTN and Pac-12 Network); and web-based networks (including ESPN3, horizonleague.com and btn.com). ESPN's overall regular season coverage this year encompassed a record-high 130 games, including games on ESPN (1 game); ESPN2 (35 games, a record high); and ESPNU (26 games). In addition, 98 games were made available through ESPN3, tripling the number of games shown on that medium a year ago.

ESPN also offers programming across its networks for the women's conference tournaments (a total of 44 games on ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU and ESPN3) and the NCAA tournament selection announcement. It also provides features, analysis and other content on espnw.com throughout the season.

For the NCAA tournament, ESPN has aired all 63 games on ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPN3 for the past 10 years. ESPN3 offers first and second round coverage only. Beginning with the regional semi-finals, all tournament games have telecast windows on either ESPN or ESPN2. The coverage the ESPN networks provide for women's college basketball is significantly more than that offered for most other intercollegiate sports, men's or women's.

A complete summary of the cumulative 2013-13 regular season television and web coverage of NCAA women's basketball is attached as Exhibit 4, together with further details of ESPN's coverage.

D. Progression of regular season ratings on ESPN/ESPN2

The regular season ratings for women's college basketball on ESPN have been inconsistent. Only a handful of games have aired on this network

over the past ten years, so conclusions are difficult to draw. The progression since 2003-04 has been as follows:

2003-04 (2 games): 0.19
2004-05 (2 games): 0.28
2005-06: No regular season games aired
2006-07 (2 games): 0.56
2007-08 (2 games): 0.28
2008-09 (3 games): 0.40
2009-10 (1 game): 0.49
2010-11 (1 game): 0.30
2011-12 (4 games): 0.53
2012-13 (1 game): 0.44

On ESPN2, the ratings numbers are steadier but have hit low points the last two seasons. The progression since 2004-05 has been as follows:

2004-05 (22 games): 0.28
2005-06 (25 games): 0.30
2006-07 (24 games): 0.27
2007-08 (27 games): 0.31
2008-09 (30 games): 0.32
2009-10 (30 games): 0.25
2010-11 (28 games): 0.34
2011-12 (25 games): 0.22
2012-13 (29 games): 0.23

For the past four seasons, male viewers have represented roughly 62% of the viewer base for games shown on ESPN2. On both ESPN and ESPN2, the strongest regular season television demographic group is consistently men 55 years of age and older.

E. NCAA tournament ratings since 2004

NCAA women's tournament viewership averages have been relatively consistent since 2004, with variances in the Women's Final Four numbers depending for the most part on the competing teams. ESPN's average tournament rating for all games (including the semi-final and championship games) has ranged from a low of 1.04 (for 14 games in 2007) to a high of 1.46 (for 17 games in 2004). ESPN2's tournament average has ranged from a low of 0.40 (for 16 games in 2011) to a high of 0.58 (for 16 games in 2008). The numbers for the 2013 tournament were 1.22 for ESPN (11 games) and 0.44 for ESPN2 (16 games).

For the Women's Final Four championship game, which is shown on ESPN, the ratings progression since 2004 has been as follows:

2004 (Connecticut vs. Tennessee):	4.28
2005 (Baylor vs. Michigan State):	2.64
2006 (Maryland vs. Duke):	3.05
2007 (Tennessee vs. Rutgers):	2.30
2008 (Tennessee vs. Stanford):	2.98
2009 (Louisville vs. Connecticut):	2.09
2010 (Stanford vs. Connecticut):	2.67
2011 (Notre Dame vs. Texas A&M):	2.80
2012 (Baylor vs. Notre Dame):	3.17
2013 (Connecticut vs. Louisville):	2.36

By way of comparison, the ratings for the 2012 NCAA championship games for women's soccer and women's volleyball, and for the deciding game in women's softball, were significantly lower, as follows:

Softball:	0.65 (ESPN)
Volleyball:	0.54 (ESPN2)
Soccer:	0.04 (ESPNU)

Summaries of historical regular season and tournament ratings on ESPN and ESPN2 are attached as Exhibit 5.

F. Regular season shooting percentages (2PT, 3PT and FT) since 1981-82

Although women's basketball is often lauded for its display of fundamentally sound skill levels, shooting and scoring in NCAA Division I women's basketball have, in fact, progressively deteriorated since the sport came under the NCAA umbrella in 1981-82. The average field goal percentage was 43.4% in 1981-82 and reached an all-time high of 44.2% in 1985-86 before beginning a downward progression through the 90's and 00's. During the 2012-13 regular season, the average field goal percentage hit an all-time low of 38.9%, a full 4.5 percentage points lower than the 1981-82 figure.

Three-point shooting has also deteriorated since the inception of the 3-point line in women's college basketball in 1987-88. DI programs shot an average of 33.6% from 3-point range that season; this past season, that number had fallen to 30.57%, an all-time low. Scoring is also down, as the points per game average per team fell to 62.12 in 2012-13, nearly eight points fewer than in 1981-82 and another all-time low. Foul shooting, in contrast, has improved from an average low of 64.7% in 1981-82 to 68.98% this past season. Turnovers have also decreased from 18.86 per team per game in 2001-02 (the first season this statistic was compiled) to 16.92 in 2012-13.

A summary of historical basketball statistical trends for DI women's basketball since 1981-82 is attached as Exhibit 6.

II. CURRENT GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Various entities are currently involved in the governance and management of women's college basketball. In some cases, the responsibilities of these entities are not clearly defined or appear to overlap with the roles of other groups. In addition, there does not appear to be a mechanism to ensure that the various NCAA women's basketball committees communicate fully or regularly with each other. Finally, certain subjects that may be of increasing importance to the future of women's college basketball (such as marketing and revenue generation) do not appear to be addressed in a concerted way by any entity or committee.

The current women's basketball governance entities include the following:

A. Division I Women's Basketball Committee

Per NCAA by-laws, this committee has the authority to "establish championship selection criteria."

Comprised of 10 members (six FBS and four FCS or DI subdivision), each serving five-year staggered terms.

B. Division I Women's Basketball Issues Committee

Per NCAA by-laws, this committee "shall ensure appropriate oversight of women's basketball is maintained, with emphasis on recruiting activities, enhance the development and public perception of the sport and make recommendations on policy issues unrelated to legislative and playing rules changes."

Comprised of 16 voting members (eight FBS; six FCS or DI subdivision; and two student-athletes, one each from FBS and FCS/DI). One FBS slot and one FCS/DI slot must go to coaches. One Women's Basketball Committee member serves ex officio.

C. Women's Basketball Rules Committee

Per NCAA by-laws, "subject to the final authority of the Playing Rules Oversight panel," this committee "shall establish and maintain rules of

play in its sport consistent with the sound traditions of the sport and of such character as to ensure good sportsmanship and safe participation by the competitors. These rules shall be common for all divisions of the Association, and differences among the divisions shall not be permitted, except for the division-specific playing regulations developed to address significant financial impact and approved by the divisions and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel. Playing rules committees shall have the authority to permit rules experimentation in the nontraditional/nonchampionship season with Playing Rules Oversight Panel approval. Experimentation in the regular season shall be subject to Playing Rules Oversight Panel review.”

Comprised of 13 members (six DI; three DII; three DIII; and one non-voting secretary-rules editor).

D. Women’s College Basketball Officiating, LLC (WCBO) Board of Managers

This committee (which has a counterpart on the men’s side) was established in 2010 as part of a collaborative effort between the CCA and NCAA. The stated purpose is to “improve college basketball officiating, increase the level of accountability and enhance the level of consistency during the regular season and post-season competition.”

Comprised of 14 voting managers and four ex officio managers, each serving four-year terms.

E. WCBO Mechanics Committee

This committee was established in 2010 as a subcommittee of the WCBO Board of Managers. Its “primary function” is to “review and revise, on an annual basis, the officiating mechanics (e.g., officials’ coverage areas, officials’ positioning, officiating procedures, etc.) and update the [CCA] Women’s Basketball Officiating Manual. “

Comprised of 7 members (four DI, one DII, one DIII and one national coordinator).

F. WCBO Competition Committee

This committee is a second subcommittee of the WCBO Board of Managers. Its “primary function” is to “serve in an advisory role to the NCAA Women’s Basketball Rules Committee.” It may also “submit recommendations” to “other groups in the NCAA governance structure” and “shall be guided by the principle of increasing the

relevancy of the game and its interest to fans. The committee shall provide diverse and strategic perspectives relative to the game of collegiate women's basketball, including collaborative efforts with professional and international playing rules initiatives. The committee shall engage in strategic discussions regarding the game, 'what the game shall look like' in the short term and long term and how the playing rules can influence the strategic vision of the game. These strategic playing rules concepts shall serve as a significant growth catalyst for the game."

The Competition Committee has established three working groups of its own to address the following areas: (1) flow of the game and managing physicality; (2) image and respect for the game/marketing and branding; and (3) youth development/key fundamentals.

Comprised of 12 members (four at-large, three WCBO managers, and five ex officio from other committees).

G. Committee on Women's Athletics

Per NCAA by-laws, this committee provides "leadership and assistance to the membership of the NCAA in its efforts to provide equitable opportunities, fair treatment and respect for all women in all aspects of intercollegiate athletics." Goals of the committee include "increas[ing] opportunities for female student-athletes, coaches and administration;" "assist[ing] the Association in achieving gender equity and complying with Title IX;" and "increas[ing] "marketing, licensing, and promotions/public relations and opportunities for women (sic)." The regularity with which this Committee deals with issues specific to women's basketball is unclear.

Comprised of 18 members (six DI, six DII and six DIII).

H. Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA)

The WBCA was established in 1981. Per its website, its mission is "to promote women's basketball by unifying coaches at all levels to develop a reputable identity for the sport of women's basketball and to foster and promote the development of the game of basketball as a sport for women and girls." To this end, the WBCA provides "education, networking opportunities, information and news, legislative updates and [serves] as the voice of the membership to the NCAA."

Membership extends to “collegiate, high school, junior high school, club, youth, national, international and Olympic coaches,” as well as “former players, members of the media, sports information directors, officials and fans of the sport.” In 2013, 2,300 registrants attended the WBCA’s annual convention, which is staged at the Women’s Final Four.

The WNBA is governed by a 26-person Board of Directors (including a six-person executive committee) and has committees to address the following areas: awards selection; voting for the Top 25 poll; assistant coach concerns; male coach concerns; and ethics.

I. NCAA national office

The NCAA’s national staff is responsible for managing the logistical details of the tournament, including: interfacing with the local organizing committee; assisting with tournament promotions executed by NCAA corporate partners; credentialing and managing media representatives; and assigning referees for each tournament game. The national staff also provides research services and assists the various women’s basketball committees in the fulfillment of their respective responsibilities.

J. Conference offices

Each Division I conference office is responsible for overseeing regular season scheduling, the assignment of referees, and the administration of the post-season conference tournament for the women’s basketball programs of its member schools. Conference offices may also assist their member schools in other areas (such as ticket sales and promotional strategies) on a case-by-case basis.

Summaries of the composition of the various membership committees described above are attached as Exhibit 7.

III. PRIOR NCAA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL STUDIES

During my inquiry, I was advised that circa 2000, the Women’s Basketball Issues Committee at that time had undertaken a comprehensive study of issues pertaining to the growth of women’s basketball. Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of NCAA staff, a copy of the committee’s report could not be located.

In an effort to stimulate the visibility of women's college basketball and improve attendance at games, the NCAA national office conducted a separate branding study between 2004 and 2006. The study sought to more clearly define the sport's fan base and determine what motivates fans to come to games. Following this exercise, a marketing and promotional campaign was developed in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of the NCAA women's basketball tournament in 2006. The campaign, which coincided with the start of the 2006-07 season, was short-lived, but considerable work was done to identify brand attributes that are specific to women's college basketball, to develop tools and resources to assist institutions with their local marketing and promotion efforts, and to develop a national marketing initiative for use by the NCAA, conferences and schools (the tagline chosen was "All Day. Every Day. Our Game.").

As referenced earlier in this report, the NCAA commissioned Taylor Research to conduct a study in 2011 as part of an additional effort to increase the fan base for D1 women's basketball. The study explored barriers to fan avidity and suggested methods to both attract new fans to the sport and recapture lapsed fans.

Copies of materials relating to both the 2006 and 2011 studies are attached to this report as Exhibit 8.

IV. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM INTERVIEWEES

A significant portion my inquiry consisted of interviews with individuals who work (or previously worked) in women's college basketball as a coach or administrator, together with other individuals whom I thought would bring a relevant and/or provocative perspective to my analysis. The interviewees included NCAA staff; commissioners from both BCS and mid-major conferences; other conference officials (including those with principal responsibility for their conference's women's basketball programs); athletic directors and other senior athletic officials at NCAA institutions; television executives and announcers; representatives from the print media; representatives from other basketball organizations; and representatives from other organizations in the sports industry.

I also participated in three in-person meetings of the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee; one in-person meeting of the WCBO Board of Managers; four conference calls of the WCBO Competition Committee, on which I have served since 2010 as an at-large member; one conference call and one in-person meeting of ACC women's basketball coaches; an in-person meeting of the WBCA Board of Directors; an in-person meeting of the WBCA conference captains; a conference call of the Women's Basketball

Issue Committee; a conference call of the Big 12 women's basketball task force; and four one-hour, regional conference calls arranged by NCAA staff and reaching a total of approximately 240 representatives of NCAA conferences and institutions across the U.S. I also participated in a series of calls and/or meetings with representatives from ESPNW, a leading outlet with respect to coverage of women's sports and on whose Advisory Panel I have served since 2012.

My interviews routinely touched on a wide range of subjects, and the feedback I received was universally thoughtful, passionate and detailed. My principal observation from the interviews is that there is a tremendous appetite for change in the way Division I women's basketball is played, marketed and managed. In many cases, the comments I received were tinged with frustration, as it was noted that some of the ideas now being discussed have been "kicking around for years," demonstrating the difficulty of making change within the NCAA system. No one I spoke with advocated a laissez-fair or "wait and see" approach to women's basketball; the overriding sentiment was that changes of some kind were clearly in order and that the time for action is now.

The feedback I received can be grouped into five primary categories:

- A. A desire for a clear vision and a consensus about priorities as women's college basketball is managed going forward;
- B. A desire to review, and potentially reform, the overall governance and management structure of the sport so that the roles of the stakeholders are clarified and the process of generating ideas, sharing information, gaining consensus and making decisions is streamlined;
- C. A concern about the quality of the women's college game, which at times suffers from excessive physicality, low scoring and wide gaps in parity, as well as the overall image of the sport, which some perceive as increasingly negative;
- D. A desire for increased game attendance and revenues so that the student-athlete experience is enhanced, the appearance of televised games is improved, and a better financial return can be produced at the national and institutional levels; and
- E. A desire to ensure that the overall experience of the student-athletes is optimized and the demands of the sport are in line with other educational priorities.

The following is a sampling of comments from the interviews, which provide additional context for each of the points above:

A. Clear vision

- Need “more energy” around the sport; sport has hit a “plateau;” sport is “flat,” “stuck,” “at a standstill,” “going backwards”
- “Everyone is doing their own thing without an overall strategy;” need to develop a “sense of solidarity,” a “shared vision,” an “envisioned future,” a “unity of purpose”
- “We have to get away from doing things just because the men do them;” women’s basketball is a distinct sport that “needs its own identity separate and apart from the men”
- “What’s right for the men isn’t necessarily what’s right for the women”
- “Best way to be equitable is to treat people differently”
- “No one would stay committed to the sport without Title IX”
- Sport needs to be viewed as a “product, not a cause;” need to move from an “administrative mindset” to a “growth direction” mindset
- Sport is a “marquee sport but prematurely mature;” has “a penthouse without a ground floor”
- “Piecemeal approach to the sport is doing no good”
- Need to come up with “a few bold things – a Woodstock;” “easier to market a thunderstorm than a drizzle;” “working at the margins not the answer;” need changes designed to “get people talking”
- Need to “blow up and turn loose;” “clear the canvas”
- Sport is at a “fork in the road moment;” “status quo is not an option;” need a “call to action” and “bold, innovative action”
- Women’s basketball community needs to “step up and demonstrate initiative and lay out what they’re prepared to do” and “not just ask what’s going to be done for them”
- “Trajectory just has to be up;” “anything above flat would be good”

- Sport needs to look at the “longer horizon;” “today will take care of itself, so thinking has to be about tomorrow”
- “How do we evolve to the next phase?”
- “No easy answers;” “no cut and dried formulas, no guarantees”
- Sport “needs to become fun again”
- “Bring us back to why we fell in love with this sport 30 years ago”

B. Governance and management

- “Who’s in charge?”
- Sport “needs one voice;” “benevolent dictator might help”
- “Somebody decide something and let’s go with it”
- Management structure needs to be “squared away first” before other things can be addressed
- “Too many people are involved in running the sport;” “too much difficulty moving an idea through the system;” “by the time an idea gets flushed through the system, it’s watered down and the moment has passed”
- Sport has “too many silos,” “lots of committees that operate independently”
- Need to “de-bureaucratize” the governance structure
- No sense of “pushing or coordination when it comes to making changes”
- “We’ve created a subspecies of compliance, governance and committees that paralyzes us;” “our membership is a frightful truth but we won’t let it go”
- Need to “engage broader membership;” “top-down approach won’t work”
- SWA’s often “play the gender equity card” instead of doing hard work needed to build the base

C. Quality of the game

- “Need to focus on the product – if it’s good, people will want to watch”
- Need to “make the product more compelling so it’s a better TV sport;” marketing is only “lipstick on a pig” unless the game is changed
- Game is “too physical,” “too rough;” “players can’t finish shots;” “need to clean the game up;” “excessive contact is hurting the game”
- Need to “get scoring up,” “open up the game,” “speed up the game,” “free up the point guards,” “protect the shooters,” “allow guards to show their skills”
- Women’s basketball is “beautiful, fluid;” game at its best is “pure,” features “comradery, sportsmanship, passion for the game, role models;” need to bring back the emphasis on “ball handling, passing and shooting”
- Focus on skill level, since “what we can’t do doesn’t de-value what we can do”
- “Strength training coach is the most important person on the staff”
- “Embarrassing how few teams legitimately compete at a high level;” “need broader competitiveness;” “physicality is inhibiting parity”
- Male practice players make women’s players “try to play like guys, so they practice physical basketball,” which is hurting the game
- Consider additional playing rules changes “even if not adopted by the men”
- “Shortage of qualified coaches;” “Who’s developing the coaches?”
- Officiating “hasn’t kept up with the playing”
- Officiating is “too inconsistent”
- Officials “call too many games,” so by the end of the year “they’re exhausted and let too many things go”
- “Baggy shorts and tattoos turn fans off”
- Uniforms need to be “fashionable, hip, cool”

- Volleyball seen as a “growing threat” for young players and athletic department dollars; may be prospering “because not laboring under comparisons with men”
- Poor coaching and too many games at grassroots level means players “get hurt more often and don’t develop fundamentals”
- “Need to re-claim basketball as first option for young girls;” “experience is overwhelming at the youth level because they play too many games”
- Need to “address big things first” and start with changes to the tournament
- Improvements to tournament will have “trickle-down” effect on rest of sport; “Women’s Final Four needs to be sold like a bowl game;” tournament is the “bell cow” which “buoys everything else;” “make it more valuable and everything else will follow”

D. Attendance and revenues

- Athletic directors are “under siege” and concerned because sport “is not generating enough bang for the buck;” “resource battles are getting worse, not better”
- Women’s basketball community would “do a service if we could carry our own weight”
- Coaches have become “overentitled;” contracts “are not supported by the revenues”
- Fact that sport doesn’t generate revenue “relegates it to lesser status”
- “Women’s basketball is still an afterthought to most people in positions of authority in the NCAA and it shows”
- Coaches are “critical” to the sales effort; “they need to spend time in the communities building the fan base;” coaches have to “take responsibility;” “it’s their responsibility to get people in the arenas”
- “Backbone of enthusiasm” in local markets is “fondness for coaches,” since “players come and go”
- Coaches need to be “cheerleaders, not introverts;” “vacuum” with Pat Summitt gone; new coaches need to “capture the imagination of fans”

- Selling women's basketball is a "grassroots deal"
- "Can't expect any short cuts;" need to "create a party around every game"
- Need more special events; should bring games to "other places" and "off the wall venues" (like Carrier Classic); "need some hooks"
- Increase in television "takes away from attendance;" "there may be too many games on TV;" now have "proliferation of bad basketball on too many networks"
- "Need to look at days and times games are played"
- Games on TV are "too hard to find for the casual fan"
- "Little things that are public-facing need to be addressed first;" need to "make it easy for fans to support the sport"
- Need more "high caliber sports business people" involved
- Sponsors "won't spend incrementally" on women's basketball; "need to engage them without asking them to spend more"
- Need to "educate students about the big picture" so they understand their role in the sales effort
- WFF scheduling means NCAA sponsors "bypass the event altogether" in favor of the men's tournament; need to figure out "how to get them to activate around the tournament"
- Need "organized, institutional fund-raising programs" for women's basketball and all women's sports; need former women's basketball players to "give back" to their programs
- Need more national media coverage: "the more the national media talks about a sport in general, the better it is for all the schools"
- "Have to promote personalities and stories"
- NCAA website is "awful"
- In order to attract fans, programs need to "win, win, win or be an underdog people can't resist"

- “More students need to be fans;” need to “reach out to schools” in communities to attract fans
- “Not enough collaboration” between college programs and WNBA teams in the same cities

E. Student-athlete experience

- Student-athletes showing “generational differences;” “want it all;” “want less practice time, more time away from coaches and basketball;” want to be “regular students”
- “High levels of depression” because of stress
- Concerns about injuries (including stress fractures and ACL tears) due to “non-stop” playing
- Top players need more media and speaking training so they can “better handle the spotlight”

In response to my request for input with this study, the Division I Women’s Basketball Committee prepared a memorandum detailing suggested priorities, performance metrics and potential solutions relating to the ongoing management of the sport. Many of the points included in the Committee’s report were in line with the comments listed above. A copy of the Committee’s memo is attached as Exhibit 9.

V. PRINCIPAL STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. Overall position of the sport

- Basketball is, by nearly all measures, the most well positioned team sport for girls and women in the United States. No other sport matches basketball in terms of grassroots participation, the number of programs and participants at the high school level, the scope and visibility of the sport at the intercollegiate level, the success of the sport at the professional and national team levels, and the extent to which the sport is embraced by girls and women around the globe. Because of the overall reach of the sport, there may be untapped opportunities for collaboration and cross-promotion with other women’s basketball organizations that could benefit the NCAA and the women’s game as a whole.

- At the youth level, nearly 7.1 million girls between the ages of 8 and 17 played the sport of basketball in 2011-12, which ranked the sport ahead of soccer (7.026 MM), volleyball (6.541 MM), and softball (5.772 MM). At the high school level, girls' basketball is the top-ranked sport for girls, with 17,768 registered high school programs representing 435,885 participants during the 2011-12 school year. Basketball was followed by outdoor track and field (16,143 programs), volleyball (15,569), softball (14,142), cross country (13,970) and soccer (11,127). The youth and high school outlets assure a large and continuing pipeline of players to all divisions at the college level.

A summary of the participation levels for all girls' high school sports for the 2011-12 school year (including a state-by-state breakdown) is attached as Exhibit 10.

- Women's basketball is the only team sport in the U.S. with an established professional outlet for the elite players. The WNBA, which was launched in 1996, will play its 17th season in the summer of 2013. Because the best women's college players have a pro league to aspire to, they have an incentive to hone their skills and can bring a sense of professional purpose to their intercollegiate playing careers. In addition, because the WNBA's collective bargaining agreement with the Women's National Basketball Players Association does not allow for early entry into the WNBA (the agreement contains a minimum age requirement of 22), women's college programs are effectively able to retain their student-athletes for four years, which allows for program continuity, a better educational experience for the student-athletes and greater visibility for the college stars.
- The USA Basketball women's national team program is the best in the world. The U.S. is currently the defending world champion at every major level of international competition, including the Olympics, World Championships, U/19 World Championships, U/17 World Championships, World University Games, and FIBA's newly created 3x3 World Championships. The opportunity for the top college players to represent the U.S. in international competitions allows them to further develop their games and acquire important life skills, which enhances their ability to compete at a high level in the NCAA.
- Post-collegiate professional opportunities remain plentiful for American women's players in other countries, with established leagues in Europe, Australia and Asia. These opportunities create additional incentives for the best players and reinforce the attractiveness of women's basketball as a participatory sport.

B. Positive perceptions about the women's game

- Many fans continue to think of women's basketball as a purer form of the game which showcases the sport "the way it's supposed to be played," i.e., with an emphasis on shooting, ball handling, defense, hustle, teamwork and sportsmanship. Some fans also see women's basketball as a more desirable alternative to the more physical style of play seen in the NBA and men's college basketball.
- Women's college basketball players and coaches continue to benefit from the perception that they are fan-friendly, accessible and willing to participate in community events, which is an asset in selling the sport and attracting fans.

C. Overall popularity of the sport of basketball

- As a mature sport at the intercollegiate level, basketball programs are known commodities and remain easy to organize, particularly when compared to sports with larger rosters (like soccer and lacrosse) or more extensive equipment and facility requirements (like ice hockey).
- The popularity of basketball as a spectator sport in the U.S. provides women's basketball with commercial potential and advantages over sports with less established fan followings. Among women's college sports, women's basketball remains the biggest revenue producer, with the largest crowds and the most widespread media exposure. No other women's college sport is better positioned in the near term to generate revenues or, potentially, profits.

D. Strength of historical foundation

- As one of the first sports to benefit from the participatory opportunities afforded by Title IX, women's basketball enjoys a long history, and significant equity exists in its top programs and its most successful coaches and players. This equity has allowed women's college basketball to establish a clear identity and a strong niche within the overall U.S. sports and cultural landscape. By any measure, women's basketball is regarded as the unqualified leader in the women's college sports space, one which other sports see as a model and try to emulate.

- The Women’s Final Four has evolved into one of the top annual women’s sports events in the U.S., if not the world. The event’s visibility is an asset that can be capitalized upon and, with some new thinking, might support brand extensions and additional on-site activities.
- Women’s college basketball programs have the benefit of association with the well-known and powerful brand names of NCAA member institutions, offering built-in fan bases nationally (where alumni are dispersed) and in school markets.

E. Television opportunities and relationship with ESPN

- Women’s college basketball remains an appealing television property, and the continued expansion of broadcast outlets (including national sports cable, conference and web-based networks) and the corresponding desire for sports programming ensures that a high level of television exposure for the sport can be maintained.
- As the NCAA’s women’s basketball broadcast partner through 2024, ESPN plays (and will continue to play) an essential role in creating exposure for, and shaping the image of, the women’s college game. ESPN appears committed to helping women’s college basketball continue to grow, and there may be room for expanded collaboration with respect to telecasts, coverage on espnw.com and other initiatives.
- Because ESPN is also the rights holder for the WNBA through 2022, further opportunities may exist to cross-promote the two properties.

VI. PRINCIPAL WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES

A. Comparisons with men’s basketball

Although women’s college basketball benefits from the overall popularity the sport enjoys in the U.S., the women’s game suffers from perceptions that the “below the rim” style of play is not as exciting as the play in men’s basketball. This perception may be contributing to challenges in attracting casual fans.

B. Effects of scheduling conflicts

- The head-to-head nature of the schedules for men's and women's college basketball, together with competition from college and pro football (in November, December and January) and the NBA (throughout the season), creates added difficulties for women's basketball in attracting fan and media interest.
- While the NCAA women's tournament has benefited in many ways from inclusion under the March Madness umbrella, some argue that scheduling the men's and women's tournaments at the same time has siphoned fans, media and sponsors away from the women's side and has prevented the women's tournament from becoming a more visible, robust and commercially successful event.

C. Absence of broad competitive parity

- As discussed earlier in this report, although the number of players in women's college basketball has increased dramatically over the past 30 years, the number of programs that have a legitimate chance of winning the national championship in any given year remains limited (some put the figure at 5 or 6 teams). The gap in parity has contributed to lopsided games during the regular season and the tournament, which has hurt the sport's overall fan appeal.
- The factors contributing to an absence of parity are thought to include: more scholarships available to women's basketball than are needed to field competitive teams, which keeps the top players concentrated in a smaller number of programs; lack of depth in the quality of coaches; too much physicality in the sport, which favors programs with bigger players; and an overall decline in the skill level of incoming college players, which some attribute to the lack of adequate development at the pre-collegiate level.

D. Escalating cost structures

- The rising costs of Division I women's college programs are a subject of increasing concern among conference and institutional officials. Much of the escalation is attributable to coaches' compensation (which routinely includes base salaries and performance bonuses) and increased costs associated with travel and recruiting. In addition, the revenue base in women's college basketball is generally limited to ticket sales, which are typically priced at low levels, further weakening the bottom line.

According to a story published by Bloomberg News in 2011, women's basketball programs at 53 public schools in the six largest conferences posted an average operating deficit in 2010 of \$2.07 million on average operating revenue of slightly more than \$800,000. One institutional representative I spoke with, whose women's basketball program's net operating loss was on par with the Bloomberg figure, described the economics of women's college basketball as "unsustainable" in the long term. A copy of the Bloomberg article is attached as Exhibit 11.

- Many of the interviewees reported that concerns about complying with gender equity mandates have contributed to an escalation of costs in women's basketball programs, even though their revenues represent only a fraction of those generated on the men's side.
- The increase in coaching compensation at the DI level is of particular concern for administrators. One institutional representative I spoke with reported that women's basketball coaching compensation accounts for 60% of the sport's revenue at that school, that women's basketball assistant coaches there make more than the head coaches in most other sports, and that women's basketball is losing more money than any of the school's other athletic programs.
- According to some officials, women's basketball may be approaching a "Catch 22" crossroads, where additional spending by athletic departments (e.g., on staffing and marketing) may be needed to generate incremental revenues (e.g., through increased ticket sales and expanded corporate partnerships), but may be resisted without evidence of a more immediate prospect of return.

E. Broadening the fan demographics

- The fans that attend women's college basketball games include a significant number of senior citizens, as well as families. The likelihood that senior citizens are living on fixed incomes is cited as a potential obstacle to increased ticket prices for women's college games, which in turn limits the potential revenue streams for the sport.
- The question of how to diversify the fan base for women's college basketball, including how to attract more students and casual fans to games, is an ongoing concern.
- The television audiences for women's college basketball games on ESPN and ESPN2 are principally male (the percentage of male viewers over the past five seasons has ranged from approximately 60-67%). This

suggests the need for a separate marketing strategy apart from the approach needed to attract fans to arenas.

F. Establishing the next generation of rivalries and “celebrity coaches”

- The rivalry between Connecticut and Tennessee has been instrumental in creating mainstream interest in women’s college basketball, and it remains unclear whether (1) that rivalry will continue; and (2) which future rivalries will emerge and be compelling enough to boost the sport’s visibility in a meaningful way.
- With the retirement of Pat Summitt, many wonder who will follow her and Geno Auriemma and become part of (and lead) the next generation of women’s college basketball coaching icons.

G. Creating a business mindset within the sport

- Historically, women’s basketball administrators have focused more on competitive success than on business strategies designed to boost awareness of women’s basketball, attract fans and generate meaningful revenue streams. Many interviewees cited a need for greater “professionalism” and a heightened understanding of commercial realities as priorities for the people involved in the management of the sport.
- The role of coaches in the marketing of their programs and in cultivating fan support in their communities was universally described as a necessity.

H. Increasing game attendance

- Increasing the number of fans who attend women’s college games is universally described as a priority, with sparse crowds in the early and regional rounds of the NCAA tournament cited as a particular concern. Many interviewees pointed out that attendance depends on many factors (including winning), that programs are not created equal when it comes to resources, and that success rates will always vary from school to school and conference to conference. Accordingly, while the prospects of devising a national approach to ticket sales may be worth exploring, some believe that schools might be better served by focusing on strategies specific to their particular markets and circumstances.

- The effects of potential changes to the dates of both the regular season and the tournament may be important variables with respect to both attendance and ratings.

I. Streamlining the governance structure

- The fragmented governance structure of Division I women's basketball is often cited as an obstacle to growing the sport; making changes with respect to playing and administrative rules; sharing information; ensuring that the broader membership is engaged with respect to key issues; and introducing innovative actions.
- Notwithstanding the above, the recent history of adverse reaction by NCAA membership to proposed changes in other areas of NCAA administration suggests that enacting substantial governance reform in even a single sport may be a tall order.

J. Need for better skills instruction for pre-collegiate girls

- Many coaches are concerned about the lack of organization and standards surrounding girls' basketball and see a need for a unified and better-managed approach to pre-collegiate skills instruction, so that the quality of fundamentals at the intercollegiate level can in turn be raised.
- The integration of ihoops into USA Basketball is considered a good start, but questions remain about the pace at which meaningful change can or will happen on the girls' side.

K. Television issues

- Although the wide availability of women's college basketball games on television during the regular season and the tournament has been instrumental in elevating the visibility of the sport, there is concern that many games reflect badly on the women's college basketball brand due to either lopsided results, overly physical play or a scarcity of fans in the stands.
- The tonnage of women's games on television (e.g., as many as 15 on any given regular season weekend date), together with head-to-head scheduling against NBA and men's college games, often means that the women's games are lost in the shuffle and the most appealing match-ups are overlooked by fans. (In a 2010 research study commissioned by the NCAA and conducted by Performance Research, nearly a third of the fans

surveyed described the availability of information about women's basketball television broadcast schedules as "fair" or "poor"). The oversaturation of games may also account for stagnancy in the ratings.

- Because women's college games are so widely televised, fans may be less inclined to come to games in person, which makes the job of increasing attendance even more difficult.

L. Marketing and sponsorship issues

- There does not appear to be a unified, national strategic approach to the marketing of women's college basketball. The NCAA does not sell stand-alone national sponsorships to women's basketball, and existing NCAA corporate sponsors appear to be focused primarily on activation around the men's basketball tournament. At the conference and institutional levels, sponsors also generally sign "all-sports" deals leveraged off football and men's basketball, leading to an absence of activation around most other sports, including women's basketball.
- Some of the marketers interviewed characterized women's college basketball sponsorship as a "very hard sell," noting that the sport is an "inefficient way to reach women" because of the heavy male television viewing audience. The male viewing base, in turn, is not as attractive to traditional sports marketing companies as the audiences for the NBA, men's college basketball or other men's sports. Even footwear companies, who admit a strong desire to reach female consumers and invest heavily in the outfitting of women's college teams (Nike alone has relationships with 285 schools), do not spend incrementally to promote the tournament or the top programs.
- While the Play 4Kay breast cancer awareness program promoted by the WBCA and other stakeholders is universally lauded, some have suggested creating an additional cause marketing campaign with a more upbeat theme to help reach a younger demographic. Examples of potential themes include empowerment/leadership, fitness/obesity and a "Moms" campaign (mirroring the advertising campaign Proctor and Gamble conducted during the 2012 London Olympics). Some interviewees also suggested that a broader NCAA cause marketing campaign be created in conjunction with other women's college sports.

SECTION 2

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN (“VISION 2020”)

The plan of action I recommend for the NCAA contains five strategic components: (1) vision, values and priorities; (2) governance and management; (3) the game; (4) the tournament; and (5) the business of women’s basketball. The summary below includes an overall goal for each component, together with suggested tactics in support of each. Time frames for implementation of the tactics and associated costs will be developed in consultation with the appropriate stakeholders and/or NCAA staff.

A. VISION, VALUES AND PRIORITIES

GOAL: To establish a common vision for the short- and long-term future of women’s college basketball that can be clearly and effectively communicated to key stakeholders and can serve as a framework for future decision-making about the management and growth of the sport. This vision, while inspired by commercial and image concerns, is intended to be fully consistent with the NCAA’s educational mission and its broader objective of preparing women’s basketball student-athletes for their post-collegiate pursuits.

- I recommend that the re-positioning of women’s college basketball proceed on two parallel tracks between now and 2016 (i.e., through the next three Women’s Final Fours, which have been awarded to Nashville, Tampa and Indianapolis, respectively). The first track (the “Heritage Track”) will look to establish women’s college basketball as an improved version of what it is now, so that it can better withstand comparisons to the brand of basketball played in men’s college basketball and the NBA. As part of this track, efforts will be made to improve the quality of play and to enhance (or restore) the perception that women’s basketball, while below the rim, is well-played and fundamentally sound. In addition, this track will emphasize the fan-friendliness of women’s basketball players and coaches and the leadership position of women’s basketball within intercollegiate athletics.

The Heritage Track will pick up on the NCAA branding initiative developed in 2006 and referenced earlier in this report, which identified five attributes specific to women’s college basketball: fundamentals; high quality of play; role models; family-oriented; and sportsmanship. As an updated version of this effort, the NCAA should consider promoting the sport using core values expressed by the following three verbs:

EXCEL in shooting and ball handling

ENGAGE with fans

LEAD women's college sports

These “key words” (Excel, Engage, Lead) would be crafted into a mission statement and used by the NCAA, the conferences and the institutions whenever possible to describe the values of women's college basketball, so that student-athletes, coaches, administrators, business partners, the media and fans have a common understanding of the sport's identity.

In addition, the sport should begin to move on a second track (the “Innovation Track”), which will focus on distinguishing women's basketball from the men's game in ways that will be exciting to coaches, players, sponsors, the media and fans and signal that the sport is on the move. These points of distinction could encompass playing rules, uniforms, game presentation, scheduling, timing and format of the tournament, broadcast look, current and former student-athlete activities, and off-court events and programs, among other areas. The process of exploring playing rules innovations, in particular, would be done through a brainstorming and on-court experimentation process that would be open to all stakeholders, as well as others in the larger basketball community.

The overarching goal of the Innovation Track is to reinvigorate women's college basketball and jump-start a new period of growth in attendance, ratings, digital measures of fan interest, and revenues. At the heart of the track will be a slate of changes that would take effect over a period of years, with a focus on rollout during the 2017-2020 time period.

- In addition to re-establishing the positioning and brand identity of women's college basketball, the NCAA's women's basketball decision-makers should agree on, and communicate, the top three priorities for the sport beginning with the 2013-14 season and devise corresponding metrics. I recommend the following as priorities:
 - (1) Approve and initiate a package of innovative and progressive changes in various aspects of the sport in an effort to capture (or re-capture) the imagination of fans, sponsors and the media;
 - (2) Increase attendance during the regular season and at first/second and regional round NCAA tournament games; and
 - (3) Reduce operating losses for the NCAA tournament.

Metrics in support of the above are described at the end of this section.

- The NCAA should also establish mechanisms to achieve and maintain buy-in of the vision, priorities and metrics among key stakeholders. The following should be considered: (1) presentations at upcoming and future meetings of conference commissioners and other key administrators; (2) presentations at a newly constituted annual convention for key stakeholders (ideally, this convention should be conducted as part of the Women's Final Four); and (3) web-based "WBB Talks" for student-athletes, coaches and administrators, to be implemented on the NCAA website or in conjunction with ESPNW or another on-line partner, beginning with the start of the 2013-14 season.

B. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

GOAL: To create a revised governance and management structure that allows for broad-based participation by key Division I women's basketball stakeholders in strategic, operational, academic and marketing matters while permitting a more efficient and streamlined decision-making process.

- As discussed earlier in this report, the management of women's college basketball has become highly fragmented, and the roles of the sport's many entities and committees do not always appear to be clearly defined or synchronized. In addition, strategy development in certain areas critical to the future growth of the sport (such as revenue generation) does not appear to be owned by any of the entities involved.

To improve communication and ensure quality of expertise and focus, I propose that the Women's Basketball Issues Committee be re-named the "Planning Committee" (or "PC") and be re-constituted as follows:

- (1) The PC would be expanded to include 20-25 individuals (versus the current 16). The composition would include at least three current or former coaches, as well as the chairs of the Basketball Committee, the Rules Committee and the WCBO Board of Managers (or their successor committees, as proposed below).
- (2) The PC's areas of focus would be broadened to include (a) legislative matters; (b) finances and long-term planning; (c) marketing and communications; and (d) executive development (with an emphasis on bringing individuals with business backgrounds into the management of the sport).

(3) To facilitate the effectiveness of the PC, subcommittees would also be formed to address specifics in each of the three areas described above. Each subcommittee would consist of no more than ten individuals, of which no fewer than three shall also serve as members of the PC. The chair of each subcommittee would also be a member of the PC. At least two coaches must serve on the marketing and communications subcommittee.

(4) The PC would meet at least quarterly.

- I propose the following two additional changes to the existing committee structure:
 - (1) Rename the Basketball Committee the “Tournament Committee.”
 - (2) Consolidate the WCBO Board of Managers, the WCBO Competition Committee, the Mechanics Committee and the Rules Committee so that they together comprise a re-constituted “Competition Committee” that has oversight over all basketball matters, including playing rules, officiating, youth basketball development and other sport-related matters. This committee would include coaches and representatives from the officiating community and have subcommittees to better address the areas described in the preceding sentence.
- In addition to the committee modifications described above, create a separate advisory panel made up of individuals outside the NCAA governance structure (including representatives from ESPN/ESPNW, NCAA corporate partners and former student-athletes) to provide additional ideas about the future growth of women’s college basketball.
- Create a business services unit at the NCAA national office to: (1) collect and manage business-oriented data relating to women’s basketball (including ticket sales, television and financial information); (2) collect best practices relating to the promotion of the sport and regularly provide women’s basketball marketing ideas and strategies to the conferences/schools; and (3) assist the PC’s finance/long-term planning and marketing/communications subcommittees in the fulfillment of their roles.
- Conduct a monthly call, to be hosted jointly by the Chair of the PC and the NCAA VP for Women’s Basketball, to update representatives from each of the country’s four regions on current matters relating to the sport.

- In conjunction with WBCA leadership, devise a multi-year strategic plan for the WBCA that sets out clear priorities and potential areas of collaboration with the NCAA. Examples of the latter could be a future expansion of the Center for Coaching Excellence program and an enhanced initiative to attract more female coaches to the game.
- Assess current schedule of meetings of key NCAA administrator groups (including CCA, NACDA, NACMA, NACWAA and CoSIDA) and determine how updates about women's basketball can be more effectively shared in these settings.
- Create an annual college basketball forum to facilitate dialogue between men's and women's college basketball representatives on competition and playing rules issues and other areas of common concern.
- Create annual women-specific forums to address concerns which pertain to: (1) women's basketball specifically (e.g., through an annual or bi-annual women's basketball summit with the NFHS, WNBA, USAB and FIBA); and (2) other women's college sports.

C. THE GAME

GOAL: To enhance the entertainment value of women's college basketball through changes and/or improvements in the style of play, competitive parity, coaching philosophy, player skill, uniform fit and/or design, in-game entertainment, and scheduling, all with an eye to increasing fan and media interest.

1. On the court

- Over the next three years, as part of the Heritage Track, make additional modifications to the playing rules that have the effect of speeding up the women's game, reducing physicality and making it easier for teams to score. Examples include the following: (a) adoption of a 24-second shot clock (now used in WNBA and FIBA); (b) adoption of a 16' lane (now used in WNBA and FIBA); (c) adoption of four 10-minute quarters in place of two 20-minute halves (now used in WNBA and FIBA); (d) adoption of a larger restricted area underneath the basket (now used in WNBA and FIBA); (e) allowing teams to advance the ball to the 28' hash mark in the last two minutes of the game (would allow for more exciting plays at the end of games); and (f) modifying hand-checking rules to increase restrictions on contact with the dribbler .

- As part of the Innovation Track, establish a “rules laboratory” to permit testing of more radical playing rules suggestions. Examples include the following: (a) use of lower rim height (such as 9’6” or 9’8”); (b) adoption of a new scoring system that would add points for teams which win the half or quarter (previously attempted in men’s minor league basketball); and (c) adoption of new illegal defense guidelines which would ban defense outside the 3-point line at selected times during the game. The laboratory setting could include summer play or trials in Divisions II or III or in selected conferences.
- In an effort to enhance shooting accuracy, partner with the WBCA to create an annual national award to reward the coach or program which achieves the highest team shooting percentage over the course of the regular season (could include separate categories for 2PT, 3PT and FT shooting).
- Partner with the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame to create an annual national player award recognizing the Division I women’s player who has achieved the best regular season shooting percentage over the course of the regular season. (The Hall currently presents an annual award, known as the Bob Cousy Award, to the nation’s top male collegiate point guard).
- To address the absence of broad competitive parity within the women’s game, reduce the number of women’s basketball scholarships from 15 to 13 per institution, so that the best players are distributed among a wider range of schools (subject to whatever adjustments may be required to comply with gender equity mandates).
- Devise procedures to be followed by the appropriate institutional personnel (e.g., coaches, trainers or other athletic department officials) to ensure that player uniforms are correctly sized and fit properly. If necessary, enact fit guidelines and create a monitoring system at the conference level.
- In conjunction with uniform manufacturers (e.g., Nike, Adidas and/or Under Armour), host a fashion forum prior to the start of the 2013-14 season to explore options with respect to a new uniform style.
- Many of the people I spoke with voiced concerns about the proliferation of tattoos in women’s college basketball, which they described as a potential turn-off for fans. Because an increasing number of student-athletes appear to enter college with pre-existing tattoos, some suggest that coaches consider adopting a “no new tattoos” or a “no new visible tattoos” policy once players join their programs.

2. Regular season and conference tournaments

- Shorten the regular season by at least two games to minimize the wear and tear on the student-athletes and allow them to have a more balanced educational experience. Should this change be implemented, this could in turn facilitate a later start to the regular season, e.g., during the lull period between the end of college football's regular season and the start of bowl games, which would allow women's college basketball to open with a bigger bang.
- The post-season women's conference tournaments tend to draw small crowds and are generally run at losses, which has caused many officials to question their value and to advocate their elimination. However, some officials, particularly those at the mid-major level, believe the tournaments represent an important experience for student-athletes, especially those at schools that have little hope of making it to the NCAA tournament, and favor maintaining them. In addition, a few tournaments have successfully established equity in their host cities (most notably, the ACC women's tournament in Greensboro and the "old Big East tournament in Hartford), resulting in overall benefits for those conferences.

On balance, I recommend that the conferences either eliminate their tournaments or, as a middle ground, shrink them by conducting them only for the top four or eight regular season finishers.

- Several individuals I spoke with advocated conducting women's basketball as a one-semester sport. In most cases, the more precise suggestion was to shift the bulk of the season to the spring semester (i.e., begin practices in late November and conduct the regular season and playoffs between December and April). The stated rationale for the shift would be to lessen competition with football and men's basketball in the November/December time frame and to allow the NCAA women's tournament to be conducted during its own window later in the spring, so as not to be overshadowed by the men's tournament. This option (the "Spring Option") could also be coupled with a shortening of the regular season, as described above.

An alternative option mentioned by some stakeholders (the "Fall Option") was to move up the women's basketball calendar so that the regular season would be played principally during the months of October through January (with practices starting in late August or early September) and the post-season would be played during the month of February. Because February is a quieter month, particularly after the Super Bowl and the NBA and NHL All-Star Games are concluded, a shift

of this nature would allow the women's tournament to avoid competing with the men's post-season in its entirety and might enable women's college basketball to end with a bigger bang. In fact, no NCAA championships of any kind are conducted in either January or February, creating an opportunity for a sport to own this time frame.

However, the back-end benefits of the Fall Option could be negated by the more direct conflicts created at the front end of the season with football and, to a lesser degree, with fall women's college sports, including soccer and volleyball (scheduling against volleyball, in particular, could result in facility conflicts at certain schools and potential competition for fan support).

On balance, I favor the Spring Option should a seasonal shift be pursued.

- A growing number of Division I programs play national schedules during the regular season, which in turn has resulted in an overall increase in air travel, overnight accommodations and related costs. With recent developments in conference re-alignment and the expanding geographic distance among teams in the same conference, these costs are likely to escalate for certain schools in the future. Because travel costs make up a sizable portion of women's college basketball budgets, the NCAA national office should conduct a review of these costs and determine whether any guidance may be appropriate, particularly with respect to the scheduling of non-conference games and the payment of guarantees to visiting teams.

3. Girls' basketball and youth skills development

- Create a task force of women's college coaches to identify issues relating to basketball development for girls and to assist USA Basketball in plotting out an overall girls' basketball development strategy.
- Host a national summit (potentially at the Women's Final Four) to vet issues relating specifically to non-scholastic, pre-collegiate basketball for girls (to my knowledge, no gathering of this kind has ever been conducted). Proposed attendees would include youth coaches, representatives from AAU and other non-scholastic youth basketball organizations, parents, former players, representatives from NFHS and USAB, officials from top high school basketball programs and representatives from sneaker companies.

- Continue work already in progress by some stakeholders to establish a national coaching certification mechanism for girls' basketball coaches at the youth level.

4. Officiating

- Intensify WCBO efforts to develop long-term plan to improve officiating during regular season and tournament.
- Create regular, national forums for coaches and referees to discuss rules and rules interpretations.
- Review manner in which referees are recruited into the NCAA pipeline and establish better and more visible strategies to educate former players about the attractiveness of an officiating career.
- Create a centralized national training program for all NCAA women's basketball referees and consider establishing an ongoing mentorship program for junior officials, using veteran staff as mentors.
- Assess process by which referees are assigned, promoted and paid to determine whether changes may be warranted.
- Collaborate with other women's college team sports to identify common officiating concerns and explore efficiencies regarding recruitment and training.
- Ensure that members of the officiating community have appropriate representation on NCAA committees.

D. NCAA TOURNAMENT

During my interviews, a significant amount of discussion was devoted to the NCAA tournament and to the pros and cons of making potential changes. Several noted that the perception of the tournament was a bellwether for the health of women's college basketball as a whole, and that to the extent the metrics of the tournament (including attendance, ratings and quality of the competitive performances) could be improved in a meaningful way, other aspects of women's college basketball would benefit in turn. Nearly everyone I spoke with believed that some level of change to the tournament was desirable (or even necessary), either to achieve better financial results, enhance the experience of the student-athletes, or improve the overall perception of the sport.

1. A baseline question relating to the tournament is whether it should remain in its current time frame and continue to be conducted side-by-side with the men's tournament, or whether it should shift to avoid competing with the men and acquire more of a stand-alone identity. Because the Women's Final Four has already been awarded (with fixed dates) for the next three years (i.e., through 2016), it appears that any date shift, if approved by the membership, would have to take effect beginning in 2017 at the earliest.

Even without a date shift, I recommend that the following changes be made to the 2014, 2015 and 2016 tournaments:

- Beginning in 2014, switch the day format of the Women's Final Four from Sunday/Tuesday to Friday/Sunday. While the Tuesday night championship window may have advantages for television, many interviewees noted that the Sunday/Tuesday format creates a less desirable on-site event because it encompasses two weekdays rather than two weekend days, and that a shift would create a better "championship feel" (as point of fact, even most coaches routinely leave the WFF after the semi-final games on Sunday).
- For the 2014 tournament, eliminate pre-determined sites in the 1st and 2nd rounds and allow the top 16 seeds to host these games. Even coaches, who have resisted this change in recent years for competitive reasons, seem to have come around to the view that the top 16 teams have earned the right to play at home, and that the prospect of improved attendance in the tournament's early rounds due to the established fan support for the top programs represents a greater good for the sport that outweighs the perceived fairness of playing on neutral courts.
- For the 2015 tournament, experiment with the first and second round format by playing all 1st and 2nd round games on the home court of the higher seed. Women's college soccer uses this format for its post-season tournament, and it may offer significant benefits to women's basketball in terms of crowd support and travel cost savings (e.g., if implemented, this approach would reduce the number of teams traveling in the first round from 48 to 32, or 30%). If this approach is pursued, a more informed decision can be made about the appropriate first and second round format for 2016 and beyond.
- Beginning with the 2014 tournament, consolidate the regionals from four sites of four teams each to two super-regional sites of eight teams each. This would allow for an enhanced championship setting in those two markets and could result in both improved attendance and

reduced costs. To allow for continuity and efficiencies at the local organizing level, consider awarding the same two cities hosting rights for all three years.

- For 2016, explore the feasibility of conducting the DII and DIII women's championship games at the DI WFF site (mirroring the decision made to combine the championship games for all three divisions on the men's side this past year in Atlanta). Because 2016 will also be an Olympic year, activities and/or a game involving the USA national team might also be incorporated into the event format. This would enable the WFF weekend to take on the feel of a bigger women's basketball "festival" and perhaps lead to championship efficiencies and cost savings for the NCAA.
 - To reduce the operating deficit for the women's tournament, the following cost-cutting proposals should be considered: (a) reduce the size of team traveling parties and/or restrict the types of institutional personnel allowed to fly on the team charter; (b) scale back or eliminate the NCAA social receptions conducted before and after the semi-final and championship sessions; (c) scale back the Salute Dinner so that the event is shortened to no more than 90 minutes and food is not served; and (d) review other on-site protocols throughout the tournament and eliminate if benefits cannot be substantiated (e.g., pipe and drape set-ups, etc.). In addition, while I recommend that some version of Tourney Town be continued due to the positive fan environment it creates, other formats should be explored in an effort to either lower costs (e.g., through down-sizing) or create revenue (e.g., though a modest entry fee).
 - Work with the WBCA to re-assess the content of the convention, with an eye to converting the event into an expanded business conference involving all key stakeholders in DI women's college basketball, beginning in 2014.
2. During my inquiry, some individuals advocated a reduction in the number of NCAA tournament teams (to 48 or 52), citing the gap in program quality between the top and bottom halves of the championship bracket and the prevalence of lopsided games in the early rounds. (According to one researcher I communicated with, the chance that a #16 seed will advance in the women's tournament is currently less than 1 in 10,000; based on historical results, the odds of the #10-15 seeds advancing are also overwhelming low). Due to the high number of automatic qualifiers (31) and the expected strong demand by those conferences for continued access, it would appear that the cuts in teams

would have to come from the at-large pool, which would in turn mean fewer schools making the tournament from the power conferences. Because these programs are generally stronger than most of the AQ's, a reduction in the overall number of teams could have the unintended effect of diminishing the quality of the tournament instead of improving it. Accordingly, I do not recommend that this idea be pursued.

3. An alternative to reducing the number of teams in the tournament could be a revised competitive format. One idea would be to have the lower seeded teams play against each other in the early rounds so that they earn the right to play the higher seeds later on, rather than simply being overpowered by the higher seeds in the opening two rounds. For example, the bottom 32 teams could play first, with the 16 winners then playing the #17-32 seeds in the second round (games in these rounds would be played at the home courts of the higher seeds). The remaining 16 teams would then play the top 16 seeds (who would have two early round byes) in a "final 32" format. The primary benefit would be more competitive games in the early stages of the tournament and a better experience for the student-athletes from the weaker programs.

The primary disadvantage of this format is that it would expand the tournament from four rounds to five, which may present the NCAA with scheduling challenges. In addition, the prospects for attendance during the early rounds may be uncertain, as many of the lower seeded programs do not typically attract large crowds to their games. Accordingly, I do not recommend that this idea be pursued at the present time. However, I believe that further study along these lines should be undertaken so that the quality of competition for all rounds of the tournament can be at the highest level possible.

4. For the women's tournaments beginning in 2017, I recommend a plan of experimentation be adopted with respect to the event's venue and timing as part of an overall effort to enhance revenue prospects and fan appeal. The following are proposals to this end:
 - Assuming the women's tournament remains in the same time frame, combine the men's and women's tournaments in the earliest possible year into a single event along the lines of a tennis Grand Slam. The rationale behind this idea is to create an unparalleled college basketball showcase that would bring together the best players and coaches in both sports and, importantly, allow the women's tournament to avail itself of the presence of sponsors, media representatives and important guests who typically bypass the WFF altogether and attend the MFF instead. Under this configuration, the men's and women's games could remain on different days (I propose Friday/Sunday for the women and

Saturday/Monday for the men) or be reconfigured in some other way depending on television and other promotional considerations.

Two principal obstacles behind this idea are: (a) logistical considerations, which include identifying a site with the requisite hotel and facility capabilities to accommodate the on-site events associated with both sports and the heightened volume of attendees for the weekend; and (b) the possibility that, despite the best of intentions, the WFF ultimately might be overshadowed. However, I believe the idea offers extraordinary promotional opportunities for the NCAA basketball brand and should be pursued, at least as a one-off. This would allow the pros and cons to be assessed without the need for a long-term commitment.

- Assuming insufficient support exists for the idea above, establish a multi-year site for the Women's Final Four beginning in 2017, using the success of the College Baseball World Series in Omaha as a precedent. The rationale behind this idea is to allow the WFF to benefit by returning every year to a single market with an established infrastructure and proven community support that could be easily re-ignited on a recurring basis. An RFP process should be undertaken to identify interested markets and secure the best possible arrangement.
- As an alternative to staging the regional and championship rounds in different cities, a few individuals I spoke with proposed that the final 16 teams play in a single site in a week-long (or more) "super tournament." Due to the number of games involved and the length of time required to play out this format, this option seems to present more logistical obstacles than the other proposals (including hotel minimum night requirements, whether fans would have the appetite to remain on-site for the duration of the round, and the extent of missed class time for the student-athletes). However, the idea may present some unique promotional opportunities, and I recommend that analysis be undertaken to explore it further.
- Given the global popularity of women's basketball, the NCAA might also consider conducting a future WFF in an international market. This approach would require careful planning with respect to scheduling, as the Euroleague Women's Final Four, which crowns a champion from among the top European women's professional club teams, is generally held around the same time. To avoid the possibility of a conflict with the Euroleague, China or Qatar might also be considered as potential venues. While many unknowns accompany this idea, including the prospects for fan support in the host city, I believe it may offer compelling global

promotional possibilities for the NCAA brand and warrants further analysis.

- Should there be support for shifting the date of the WFF to another time frame, I recommend that a test move be made to the weekend immediately following the Men's Final Four. Although the Masters has largely co-opted the weekend, that event is conducted during the day, leaving available television windows in the evening beginning at 6 PM ET (Thursday/Friday/Saturday) and 7 PM ET (Sunday). Because the NCAA Frozen Four (Thursday/Saturday) is also conducted that weekend, I believe the best days for the WFF games would be Friday night (semis) and Sunday night (final), with Thursday and Saturday set aside for business meetings and promotional events. This would allow the championship game to be the lead-out for the Masters on Sunday night. Alternatively, the WFF could be conducted either as a back-to-back on Sunday night (with semis starting at 7 PM) and Monday night (championship) or on Saturday/Monday, depending on the willingness of the NCAA and ESPN to adjust the timing of the Frozen Four championship game.

Alternatively, the weekend immediately following the Masters might also be considered for the WFF. The competitive sports programming on the air that weekend is primarily early season baseball and first round NBA playoff action, which may prove less daunting than competition from the Masters. However, on balance, I favor ending the women's season at a time more in line with the current college basketball window, and hence support the earlier weekend as between the two.

Instead of moving the WFF back, the NCAA could elect to move the event up and play it earlier than the MFF. As with the move-back option, this would allow the event to avoid competing with the men's tournament, have its own spotlight and potentially attract media and sponsors who now pass it by. I believe the best option under this scenario would be to conclude the women's tournament before the men's tournament begins (e.g., in late February or early March). However, this would require a significant shift in the overall women's basketball calendar and force the sport to be conducted primarily in the fall, creating challenges referenced earlier in this report.

On balance, I believe the "move-up" option is more disruptive and less favorable than either combining the men's and women's tournaments or concluding the women's tournament on the weekend following the men's.

E. BUSINESS OF WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

GOAL: To establish a more sophisticated approach to marketing, promotion, communications, fan development and revenue generation (including fund-raising) for D1 women's basketball programs and events at the national, conference and institutional levels, with an eye to improving the sport's visibility and creating a pathway to better net financial results for the sport.

1. Financial analysis

- As part of the mission statement exercise described earlier in this report, use the key word **LEAD** as an impetus to convince women's college basketball decision-makers to migrate from a "cause" mindset and toward the adoption of more aggressive marketing practices in the management of their programs.
- Working through the national office, establish a database covering the top 100 public DI women's basketball programs that tracks annual revenues and expense, so that the cost structures across schools can be more precisely monitored and corresponding guidance can be developed.
- Consider establishing a valuation for the national TV rights for the women's tournament so that a baseline exists for future television negotiations.

2. Membership business support

- In addition to creating the dedicated NCAA business services function described earlier in this report, create a template under which students from sports management programs around the country can be deployed as marketing and sales staff (for women's basketball or other women's sports, as needed) by athletic departments at the same institution, and in turn receive academic credit toward their sports management degrees.
- Conduct annual business meeting of conference and/or institutional women's basketball sales and marketing staff to discuss sales strategies and best practices in the areas of ticket sales, sponsor sales and activation, and promotions. This meeting should be a component of the annual stakeholders convention referenced earlier in this report.

3. Ticket sales

- Expand NCAA's existing marketing division to include a stronger ticket sales support function, so that institutions can be better supported in their efforts to meet attendance objectives. The services provided would include: (a) maintaining a central inventory of successful ticket sales strategies for use by institutions in their local sales effort; and (b) helping programs create reasonable sales metrics given their resources and market sizes.
- Issue schools a "10% challenge" that would incentivize them to improve their regular season attendance. In conjunction with this challenge, create national recognition events (including modest subsidies) to reward the programs that show the greatest attendance improvement on an annual basis.
- Assist schools in evaluating pricing structures to ensure that game tickets are priced at full market value and are not being sold at artificially low levels.
- Facilitate ticket sales collaborations between WNBA teams and college programs in the same markets and consider conducting a joint meeting with WNBA personnel to share season ticket lists and sales strategies.
- Encourage institutions to structure their future women's basketball coaching contracts so that a portion of compensation is earned for reaching attendance benchmarks.

4. Corporate sponsors

- Devise a separate sponsor sales approach at the national level to entice incremental spending on women's basketball (either alone or in conjunction with other women's college sports) by existing NCAA partners or new/stand-alone partners.
- Reassess the terms and conditions of the presenting sponsorship for the NCAA women's tournament and begin the process of identifying potential target companies.

5. Television strategies

- In conjunction with conference representatives, assess the volume of women's basketball games on the air during the course of the regular

season and determine whether a reduction in availability is desirable and/or feasible.

- Devise a strategy to better promote the key television match-ups during the regular season, so that these games are easier for viewers to find. Specifically, expand ESPN's "Big Monday" strategy to build equity in a day of the week during the regular season in which high profile match-ups will be featured and aggressively promoted.

6. Digital platforms

- Re-vamp the NCAA women's basketball website to make it more user-friendly and to provide comprehensive information about rankings, key regular season match-ups, television broadcast schedules and other information of interest to stakeholders and fans. Alternatively, explore the feasibility of developing a new website that offers comprehensive information about all levels of girls' and women's basketball.
- Assist high-profile coaches and players with twitter strategies.
- Collaborate more closely with ESPN and ESPNW on the integration of game telecasts shown on ESPN networks with coverage provided on espnw.com.

7. Fundraising strategies

- Develop a basic template that can be used by institutional development departments to stimulate philanthropy by former student-athletes to their individual institutions.
- Create a member association or "sorority" to engage women's basketball alumnae nationally so that a formal base of support within this constituency can be strengthened (e.g., through a password-protected social media site established exclusively for former student-athletes).
- Identify and disseminate best practices for the engagement of women's basketball coaches in their schools' fundraising efforts.

8. Communications strategies

- Institute a "National Media Day" prior to the start of each regular season where top coaches, student-athletes, key NCAA staff members and

selected conference officials are made available to the national media for purposes of previewing key storylines for the season; arrange national television coverage of the event on ESPNU.

- Identify the ten highest profile players at the start every season and provide them with comprehensive media training.

9. Special events strategies

- Assess regular season tournaments conducted in major markets (e.g., N.Y., Boston, Chicago, S.F., Dallas, D.C.) and develop a plan to more effectively promote them, so that benefits of playing in large media centers can be maximized (e.g., Maggie Dixon Classic in NYC).
- Partner with the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame or Women's Basketball Hall of Fame to conduct a "Four in the Fall" (or other name) opening season tournament involving the prior year's WFF teams. Alternatively, explore the possibility of playing such an event in an international location (such as Europe, China, Brazil or a Gulf State).
- Facilitate the staging of 3-5 regular season games every season in unusual or iconic venues to stimulate interest among casual fans.
- Working in conjunction with USA Basketball and men's college basketball representatives, explore a modest roll-out of 3x3 basketball events at selected schools/conferences or during the NCAA tournament (NOTE: FIBA has developed a comprehensive 3x3 grassroots and competition initiative, which includes female participation, and anticipates the inclusion of 3x3 as an Olympic discipline for both men and women beginning with the 2016 Rio Games).

10. Promotional strategies

- Review the dates of all major women's college team championship events (i.e., soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse) and determine whether promotional/commercial synergies could be created by promoting them under a single banner.
- Consider additional enhancements to the Play 4Kay campaign and explore the feasibility of initiating an additional, non-medical cause marketing campaign that appeals to a younger demographic and complements the branding strategy described earlier in this report.

2013-2020 BASE METRICS

- A. On-court performance: reverse annual declines in average division-wide two-point and three-point shooting percentages and scoring; achieve record highs in all three categories within the next seven seasons.
- B. Attendance
- Achieve 5% annual growth in regular season attendance among the top 40 highest-drawing schools over each of the next seven years.
 - Increase the number of programs hitting attendance benchmarks over the next seven seasons, as follows:
 - 1) 10,000 fans per game: at least five schools per year finishing at this level, beginning with the 2015-16 season;
 - 2) Under 10,000 but more than 5,000 fans per game: at least 25 schools per year at this level;
 - 3) Under 5,000 but more than 3,000 fans per game: at least 25 schools per year at this level;
 - 4) Under 3,000 but more than 1,000 fans per game: at least 150 schools per year at this level.
 - Achieve record NCAA highs in per session attendance figures for the first, second and regional rounds of the tournament within the next five seasons.
- C. Sponsorship: secure at least one financially meaningful, stand-alone sponsorship for the NCAA tournament at the earliest contractual time.
- D. Television and digital audiences
- Maintain stable ratings for ESPN2 regular season telecasts and stable or improved ratings for regional and championship round tournament telecasts.

- Demonstrate progressive growth in page and video views and unique visitor levels on NCAA women's basketball website and espn.com over the next seven seasons.

E. Revenues

- Demonstrate a progressive reduction in the operating deficit for the women's tournament over the next 3-5 seasons.
- Demonstrate a progressive increase in revenues attributable to women's basketball programs at the BCS level over the next seven seasons.

ADDITIONAL EXHIBITS

12. Selected media articles
13. Selected ideas and proposals submitted by interested parties