

### Comments from the Editor

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This issue of the *Journal* includes papers from our third Colloquium, held this year in conjunction with the NCAA Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme of the Colloquium was unusually timely—College Sports in Recessionary Times: Assessing Challenges and Opportunities. Our program chairs, Jay Coakley and John Thelin, assembled a “who’s who” of experts on sport and the economy. They included Rodney Fort, Rick Hesel and Amy Perko, Richard Lapchick, and Andrew Zimbalist. The eight reactors to their papers were of equal stature.

As you will read in these articles, one of the contested notions addressed by most speakers was that of sustainability. Is the current model of intercollegiate sport—particularly at the Division I level—sustainable or not? Some said that it is. Most argued that it is not. And still others suggested that any attempt to sustain it in its current form would have unacceptable consequences, whether intended or not.

Similarly, speakers differed on the impact of the current economic downturn on intercollegiate sport. Some suggested that current economic realities are unprecedented in nature and require swift and significant actions. Others disagreed and felt that college athletics would weather this storm as it had survived such fiscal storms in the past.

An important sub-theme of the conference was the impact of economics on those who are at risk—specifically, on athletes in Olympic sports, women, and minorities. The general concern expressed here is that economic downturns and intractable economic problems often have the greatest impact on those who are least powerful and least well-off.

The papers also address the question of solutions to economic problems. Who will find them? Who has enough clout to implement them? What specific steps can be taken that would preserve broad-based athletic participation and the educational benefits that go with them but still allow administrators to balance the books? Some point to presidents. Others suggest that the NCAA has to play a crucial role. Still others doubt that change will take place without federal intervention. But most everyone agrees that an initial step in economic reform is fiscal transparency, something that is not yet a reality. And most everyone agrees that some kind of increased cost control must be exercised, something that college and university presidents admit they have not been able to effect.

While it may be true that there are currently more questions than answers, most speakers felt that solutions can be found and that courageous leaders and coalitions of individuals who are concerned about the future of intercollegiate athletics can bring about positive change.

I think you will find the reading provocative and enlightening. Many of the ideas that were shared during the Colloquium are very much “in play” in any number of discussions that are taking place on college campuses, in conference offices, at the NCAA, and in Washington. It is no exaggeration to say that the resolution of economic issues will do much to enhance the integrity of intercollegiate athletic programs in the years ahead.

This issue of the Journal also includes a Colloquium supplement entitled, “Economics of College Sports: A Topical Reading List.” Authored by Board Member Rodney Fort, this addendum provides guidance for those who are not familiar with sport economics literature. It should be useful for administrators who are interested in solutions to particular issues as well as faculty athletics representatives who need to know more about the impact of economics on programs at their respective institutions. It should be particularly helpful for young scholars who are beginning to do research in this area.

Colloquium papers and the supplement are followed by regular articles. Nels Popp presents some important research on cross-cultural adjustment by international student-athletes. Jeremy Sierra provides an analysis of how team attachment and other emotional variables affect consumption patterns in the context of college football.

Volume III, Number 1 of the Journal comes to a close with two book reviews. One is authored by long-time professor and faculty athletics representative Jan Rintala. She reviews McDonagh and Pappano’s *Playing with the Boys: Why Separate is not Equal in Sports*. Colloquium Board Member and Law Professor, Timothy Davis, reviews Lee and Lee’s, *Sport and Criminal Behaviors*.

As always, we invite submissions from anyone who is conducting research on college sports and related topics. Suggestions for themes, format changes, or any other ways to improve the Journal are always welcome. Also, if your library is not currently carrying *JIS*, I would urge you to contact the individual responsible for journal collections and recommend that it be added to your holdings.