

November 28, 2012



An Interview With:

**JOHN SWOFFORD
HOLDEN THORP
JAMES RAMSEY
TOM JURICH**

AMY YAKOLA: Good afternoon, and thank you for joining us. Before we begin today's call, a couple housekeeping items that I want to mention. The format for today's call will begin with opening statements from each of our participants, and then we will have a question-and-answer session.

We do have a hard stop at 2:15 and will make the best effort to accommodate as many questions as possible. Today's participating speakers include John Swofford, Commissioner, Atlantic Coast Conference; Holden Thorp, University of North Carolina Chancellor and Chair of the ACC Council of Presidents; James Ramsey, President, University of Louisville; and Tom Jurich, Athletics Director, University of Louisville.

At this time I would like to turn it over to ACC Commissioner John Swofford.

JOHN SWOFFORD: Thank you, Amy. First of all, thank you for being with us today for this announcement. The ACC's Council of Presidents has unanimously voted to accept the application of the University of Louisville as the newest member of our conference. Our league was founded on the commitment of balancing academics and athletics, and the addition of Louisville, with its aggressive approach to excel in every respect, will only strengthen our conference.

Louisville is committed in its approach to doing everything at the highest level, and as we've seen, especially in recent years, their success has been well-documented and their facilities are truly outstanding.

Louisville fans are passionate, and that starts with the football and basketball programs which enjoy excellent support. That fan energy

also carries across the entire Olympic sports program.

Geographically, this allows the ACC to extend our footprint into a vibrant region that is collegiately driven, while maintaining our strong roots up and down the Atlantic Coast.

I'd like to commend the ACC's Council of Presidents as they have done a terrific job strategically positioning the ACC for the long-term future. I appreciate and thank them for their solidarity, their vision and their diligence in getting us to this point today.

In addition, I also want to acknowledge the membership committee made up of four presidents, four athletic directors and four faculty representatives.

If you look at what has been done over the last 15 months, the ACC has only gotten stronger with the additions of Louisville, Notre Dame, Pitt and Syracuse, combined with our recent partnership announcement with the Orange Bowl, and our place in the BCS as one of the five major conferences.

Again, let me say how pleased we are to have the University of Louisville join the Atlantic Coast Conference, and I know all of our member institutions welcome them, as well.

AMY YAKOLA: I'd like to now introduce University of North Carolina chancellor and chair of this year's ACC Council of Presidents, Holden Thorp.

HOLDEN THORP: Thank you, Amy. As Amy just said, I'm chancellor of UNC Chapel Hill and the chair this year of the ACC Council of Presidents. This is a terrific day for the Atlantic Coast Conference. Jim Ramsey is a long-time Carolina friend and a great leader in higher education, and we're thrilled to welcome him, and athletic director Tom Jurich, on behalf of my colleagues, welcome to both of you. The University of Louisville will be a wonderful member of the ACC. We are thrilled to welcome them as full partners.

And I would like to thank my colleagues who are on the Council of Presidents. We have



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**ACC Louisville announcement - 11
28 12.doc**

done a lot of work over the last 10 days or so building up to today's announcement. I think that as John just said, the collegiality and collaboration among the Council of Presidents couldn't be stronger than it is today, and it's an honor to represent them on this call and to work with all of them on behalf of the Atlantic Coast Conference, which is a vibrant and competitive league, and as everyone has said, is founded on values and principles that have endured for a long time. So it is with great enthusiasm that we make this announcement, and welcome to the University of Louisville.

AMY YAKOLA: Thank you. President James Ramsey of the University of Louisville.

JAMES RAMSEY: Thank you, Amy. I'll use the same word that Holden used. This is a terrific day for the University of Louisville family and the University of Louisville community. It's an important day for us. The Atlantic Coast Conference is a great athletic conference. It has an outstanding history and tradition. It stands for excellence, and as (Commissioner Swofford) mentioned, our focus at the University of Louisville is to build excellence every day in our athletic programs and in our academic programs, and so to be invited to be a member of this outstanding conference is very important to us and what we're about as an institution.

So I want to express my appreciation to the commissioner, John Swofford, who I've known for a long time, to Holden, who I've known for a long time, to everyone in the conference for looking at our record here at the University of Louisville and the trajectory we've been on over the last 10 to 15 years both academically and athletically and for the trust and confidence they have in the University of Louisville. We really look forward to being a great member of this wonderful conference.

AMY YAKOLA: Vice president and director of athletics, Tom Jurich.

TOM JURICH: Thank you, Amy, and I want to echo what Dr. Ramsey said. Everybody in this community is elated today. We feel very privileged and honored to have this opportunity to join such a prestigious conference. Chancellor Thorp, I want to thank you very much for identifying us and thinking of us and holding us in as high esteem and giving us this opportunity, but most importantly Commissioner Swofford, I've known you, John, for a lot of years, and you come with the highest bit of credibility in the United States, and I can't thank you enough for what you have done

looking at us and examining us, and I know you scrutinized us very, very hard, but just to give us the opportunity to be on a different platform is very special to this place.

As I said to you this morning when we visited, I will make you a promise - I'm a man of my word - that we will make you proud here at the University of Louisville.

Q. This question is for Tom: Were you prepared to be long-term members of the Big East, or did you know something was happening with Rutgers well in advance of that?

TOM JURICH: We did not know that anything was happening with Rutgers well in advance of that, but we were always prepared to do whatever we needed to do on this campus to make sure we explored all our options and took care of ourselves to the best of our abilities. Sometimes we can't control those things, sometimes we can. We were very, very fortunate that this opportunity opened up for us, and we wanted to seize that moment.

Q. This is for Commissioner Swofford: I guess this is a frequent question we keep having to ask you. Is the ACC going to stand pat this time where it is numbers wise, or is there another move you think you may make to 16?

JOHN SWOFFORD: What I would tell you today is any time you have the deliberations that we have had over the last 10 days or so and we've had previously over the last 15 months or so as Syracuse and Pitt and Notre Dame came into the league and now just an absolutely tremendous addition with Louisville joining us, where we continue to come out is that we're very, very comfortable with 14. That's where we came out again in our deliberations over the past few days.

Q. This is for Commissioner Swofford, as well: With Maryland's move coming just nine days ago, did you guys feel it was necessary to move quicker or sooner rather than later on adding that 14th member?

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, obviously we felt based on where we ended up in a relatively short period of time that Louisville was the next right fit for the Atlantic Coast Conference and would enhance our league going forward, and just

very glad that a program and a university of this caliber was there and very interested in being a part of the Atlantic Coast Conference.

These things need to be a two-way street, and certainly I see this and our league sees this as a win-win that will be very good for the Atlantic Coast Conference and very good for the University of Louisville.

Q. Two quick ones: Could you clarify the timing? Is it definitely 2014-'15, and does Maryland's exit and Louisville's entrance change at all the terms of your media deals, particularly with ESPN?

JOHN SWOFFORD: To answer your second question, no, it does not change anything.

In terms of when Louisville will join us, that will be between Louisville and the Big East Conference, as we have said previously in other situations, and we will be ready to receive them as soon as they can join us in an appropriate way in terms of their exit from the Big East.

Q. Two quick questions if I can get them in: This is for President Thorp of North Carolina. In what way did -- it's mentioned quite a bit in the press release -- In what way did the four presidents balance the academic part of choosing Louisville over Connecticut and Cincinnati?

HOLDEN THORP: Well, it was really all of the presidents who discussed it, and I think that what we felt was that what the ACC needed the most was to add the most exciting sports program that we could. That is the way to ensure that the success of the ACC in sports was successful enough to allow us to keep our group together, and we talked about that extensively.

But Louisville -- Jim Ramsey is an excellent leader in higher education, and he's done a lot with their university, and it's on an upward trajectory, as he just said. So I think that we feel very good about the addition of Louisville in every respect, but our logic was that we wanted to make the ACC as exciting a sports conference as we possibly could, and we felt that Louisville unambiguously did that for us the best.

Q. This is for Dr. Ramsey: I know you were at UNC at one point. Can you explain how in your mind the University of Louisville academic profile fits into the ACC?

JAMES RAMSEY: Well, one of the models that we've used since I've been president

here is to emulate the commitment to academic excellence that I saw firsthand when I was at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It's a great school. I couldn't be doing the job I'm doing here if it were not for my experience there. UNC Chapel Hill is what we call one of our aspirational peers, so we're really following the Chapel Hill model with a focus on recruiting the very best students, giving them the opportunity to be successful and graduate, building our research programs, building our clinical programs to provide the very best of care to people across the state.

We are on an upward trajectory. We've got a lot more work to do, but it was my experience at Chapel Hill that has really sort of set the road map for us here at the University of Louisville.

Q. When you talked about adding Louisville because of the best sports program, specifically was Louisville chosen over UConn because it has the perception of having a better football program, having a better football/basketball program combined, and is this kind of -- and with Chancellor Thorp's very candid comments, thankfully, -- is this going to show that all this talk about academics in the past with conference moves and conference additions to the ACC, that it is always about adding the best sports program and this is just a question of the ACC finally saying so?

JOHN SWOFFORD: I'll answer that. I think the answer would be that we felt Louisville was the best fit for the Atlantic Coast Conference at this point in time in every respect. I think that when you look at Louisville, you see a University and an athletic program that has all the arrows pointed up, a tremendous uptick there, tremendous energy.

So that's my response to that. It's always (about) an overall fit in every respect, and I think that's what we found.

HOLDEN THORP: And the only thing, I don't really have a lot to add to that other than what I said earlier, except that you have to balance the two things. You have a collection of institutions that you want to have in a conference, and that collection of schools has to be a group that everybody wants to be part of, but it also has to succeed in athletics in order to make the conference viable, and we balanced those two things and we just felt adding Louisville was the best way to do that.



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JOHN SWOFFORD: That's very well said. I would very much agree with that. And when you look at the collection of schools from a purely academic standpoint in the ACC, this is still the strongest collection of institutions academically of any conference in the country probably short of the Ivy League.

Q. This is for John: John, the marquee coach in the ACC, Mike Krzyzewski, said after Maryland's departure that he considered the conference vulnerable, using his word. Did you ever feel that way? Do you think this eases any member concerns about any potential defections?

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, I've never really felt that way. You know, I think particularly in working with our presidents over the last 10 days and listening to them and their commitment to the league and to each other, and now adding Louisville and the collective strength of this conference athletically and academically, I couldn't feel any better about the future of this league.

Q. Tom, was there ever a point, maybe a point where West Virginia goes into the Big 12, where you guys have wondered whether this whole musical chairs thing was going to stop and Louisville was going to be left on the outside looking in?

TOM JURICH: Well, you always worry about that, there's no question about it, especially when you're sitting in our chairs. But I think when you look at what we've done and our body of work, I think it was very well worth it to wait because we were able to get what we wanted. If you would have said last year to us, we had the opportunity to go to the ACC or to the Big 12, we wanted to go to the ACC. We feel it's the best fit for this university. All 23 sports will move in seamlessly. From an academic standpoint, it just helps us so much as a university as I mentioned earlier, the national platform that it's going to give us I think will propel all of our sports, so we couldn't be more excited about it.

Q. This question is for Tom Jurich and President Ramsey. A year ago Louisville was on the doorstep of getting in the Big 12 but West Virginia went in ahead, obviously it was very political with the senators getting involved. If both of you could compare the emotions of missing out on going to the Big 12

and now getting in ahead of Cincinnati and UConn to the ACC.

JAMES RAMSEY: Well, I'll go first. This is a day of great elation for us, because as Tom said, we've always looked out there and said the ACC is a great conference and would be a great fit for us. What we've tried to do both with our athletic and academic program is just keep moving this university forward, and we always had the feeling that if we did that and kept making progress every day in our academic programs, in our athletic programs that we would get that opportunity.

So we don't get too discouraged. We just keep trying to do the very best we can, and we think things will play out, and in this case they've played out in an incredibly great way for our university family and for the community.

TOM JURICH: I'll second that, also. When we were looking at it last year, we wanted to make sure all our opportunities were looked at. That was a great option, and the Big 12 is a fantastic conference as we all know, but having the opportunity to go into the ACC is I think second to none, especially for our community around here. We have a very good football program and a world-renowned basketball program, both men and women. They look so forward to it, and this community, the way they support this program, we sell out the (KFC) Yum! Center every single night; we have 7,000 people on a waiting list. So it's the premier building in the United States, whether it's pro or college.

So we're very excited for it, and I can just tell you from our standpoint that we couldn't be in a better fit.

Q. Commissioner Swofford, do you foresee any other schools leaving the ACC, and have you considered raising the exit fee once more since Maryland has left and you've added Louisville?

JOHN SWOFFORD: First question, I do not envision that at all. In fact, just the opposite, again, based on the conversations among our Council of Presidents over the last 10 days.

The exit fee, we have not discussed that. It is what it is.

Q. I was wondering if you could talk about Georgia Tech; there have been rumors about them specifically. What have been the nature of your conversations with

Dr. Peterson?

JOHN SWOFFORD: The nature of my conversations with Dr. Peterson has been emphatic in terms of their commitment to the ACC and Georgia Tech's future.

Q. This is for John: With Louisville coming in to take Maryland's place, how will they fit in, in terms of the divisions, and is there any conversation about looking at possibly rearranging the division setup?

JOHN SWOFFORD: We have not had any conversations of that nature. I think that our anticipation is that Louisville will jump right into the decisions that have already been made in terms of a 14-team league and take Maryland's place in terms of the Atlantic Division in football and simply to take Maryland's place in terms of our basketball scheduling and other Olympic sports scheduling, as well.

Q. Just a follow-up to that: Would the crossover rival that Virginia had, would that be Louisville if they took Maryland's place, or would that be revisited, as well?

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, the anticipation is that would be Louisville.

Q. This is for Commissioner Swofford, as well: As it pertains to the exit fee, in the suit you guys filed against Maryland you've said that the exit fee is meant to be on projected future losses. Do you feel like adding a school to replace Maryland so quickly affects you guys' argument in that department in any way?

JOHN SWOFFORD: I don't think those two things are connected.

Q. You've been a part of the Big East for several years now. I wonder if you could maybe address why you felt this (move) was necessary? You were clearly looking elsewhere, and I wonder what you think the future of your former conference might be.

TOM JURICH: You know, we went in the Big East with the greatest intentions. We felt very fortunate to be there and it was a wonderful home for us, and we had long-term goals there and felt that the stability of that conference would really match up to what we were looking for.

We had incredible success in that conference, but when it began to deteriorate, we felt that all our options were pulled away from us and we had to look and we were forced to look. To

see a lot of your peers moving around you, leaving nobody to schedule, it was very, very difficult for us to see, and a very once proud conference I think was in a very difficult position. And they've got tremendous leadership in Mike Aresco. I think the job that Mike Tranghese did and John Marinatto did was fantastic, and I wish them nothing but the best.

Q. This is for President Ramsey: I was wondering in the year since talking to the Big Ten if Louisville has held conversations with the Big Ten or other conferences with joining, or if it's just been solely with the ACC since then.

JAMES RAMSEY: We've had no other conversations, and again, to echo what Tom had said, we just felt all along that if we just keep focused on doing our job and building excellence in all that we're doing that that was the right thing to do and there would be the right opportunity, and this is the right opportunity. But we didn't know -- no conversations with the Big Ten.

Q. This message is for Tom and Dr. Ramsey. When you said earlier that you had been prepared for the possibility of moving to another conference since the Big 12 last year, can you elaborate a little bit on what that means? Did you have presentations ready or other materials ready to shoot off as soon as the possibility came open?

TOM JURICH: Well, we never look at presentations. What we look at first and foremost is what we can do on our own campus, and that's always been our motto here; let's be the very best that we can be at the University of Louisville and people will notice us. Let's do things the right way; let's handle gender equity; let's handle academics; let's handle compliance; let's have success on and off the field and make sure that our players represent our University in the best available way, and I think that's all we try to do.

Like I said, there's so many things in this situation that were out of our control, and we wanted to make sure that let's take care of the things that we can control.

Q. Commissioner Swofford, if you can compare the two expansion moves in, I believe it was '03, and now. Correct me if I'm wrong, back in '03 did you go on site surveys with

Boston College, Miami and Virginia Tech, and if so, did any of that occur in this process with Syracuse, Pitt, Notre Dame and Louisville?

JOHN SWOFFORD: We did go on site surveys (in the past), and when we were complete with that decision making, we immediately changed our bylaws to take that out of our bylaws as a requirement. So we have not done site visits since then, and I think that was a very good decision.

In today's world, we see each other enough and see each other's campuses enough that we have a very good idea of whether facilities, culture and so forth is what we would want. You know, our decision making processes have flowed much better.

Q. This is for Commissioner Swofford, as well: With the Big Ten Network and the Pac-12 network and all these conferences getting their own networks, is there more of a hastening for the ACC to look into kind of an ACC national network, as well, to rival those?

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, first of all, ESPN, our partner, is a national network, but in the sense of having your own network, we have looked at that very thoroughly from the time that we did our last negotiations with ESPN, and we will continue to look at that and are actually having some conversations now with our television partners about possibilities in that regard.

But it needs to be the kind of ... you don't do that just for the sake of doing it; you do it because it's the right thing for your league financially and from an exposure standpoint moving ahead. So ... we have five-year look-ins in our television agreements. We have an ongoing partnership with ESPN and the ACC Network, and we will continue to look at that.

Our distribution is outstanding; first of all, so I'm not sure we can do a whole lot better in terms of distribution than we're doing with our current partners. But as I said, we'll continue to look at that.

It seems to be the sexy thing in today's world, but it also needs to be the right thing and the thing that's best for our particular conference. We're tremendously well-positioned, I think, from that standpoint as we move ahead.

One of the things with the - and Tom may want to speak to this, too - the Louisville market is the highest rated college basketball market in the country.

TOM JURICH: That's the last 10 years running, also, because nobody works here. (Laughter.)

AMY YAKOLA: I thank everybody for joining us today and wish you well the rest of the week.

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