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NCAA Division I Lacrosse Expansion: Has It Changed Recruiting?

Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, here is the paper's first paragraph:

Lacrosse was one of the least popular sports in the United States. As time has gone on Lacrosse grew to be one of America's fastest growing sports in the entire country, growth was seen throughout all levels from the professional and collegiate, and especially at the high school and youth levels (Vivirito 2012). As the game grew at the collegiate level there started to be more competition within recruiting as more teams expanded into the collegiate ranks. Previous research had examined what the factors that student athletes in lacrosse look at when deciding to go to school amongst male and female athletes. It was found that the athletes cared more about the career opportunities that were given at the university and the education they would receive at the university over anything else the school had to offer (Pauline 2010). However, there had been no previous research about if recruiting had changed for coaches as the game continued to grow at the collegiate level. The purpose of this research was to look at if the expansion of Division I men's lacrosse had changed the ways coaches went about their recruiting.

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Expansion of Division I Lacrosse: Has it Changed Recruiting?

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Abstract

Lacrosse was one of the least popular sports in the United States. As time has gone on Lacrosse grew to be one of America's fastest growing sports in the entire country, grow was seen throughout all levels from the professional and collegiate, and especially at the high school and youth levels (Vivirito 2012). As the game grew at the collegiate level their started to be more competition within recruiting as more teams expanded into the collegiate ranks. Previous research had examined what the factors that student athletes in lacrosse look at when deciding to go to school amongst male and female athletes. It was found that the athletes cared more about the career opportunities that were given at the university and the education they would receive at the university over anything else the school had to offer (Pauline 2010). However, there had been no previous research about if recruiting had changed for coaches as the game continued to grow at the collegiate level. The purpose of this research was to look at if the expansion of Division I men's lacrosse had changed the ways coaches went about their recruiting.

Four men who were head coaches at the Division I level were interviewed about their experiences in recruiting for college lacrosse. The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how coaches went about their recruiting in college lacrosse. After conducting the interview with the four coaches there were four themes that emerged. The themes that emerged from the interviews were that there might not be any future growth at college lacrosse, recruiting during the present day, academic standards with recruiting, and the growth of the game.

Introduction

In recent years lacrosse was one of America's fastest growing sports from the youth level to high school to college, all the way up to professional lacrosse leagues (Vivirito 2012). The numbers of participants and teams being added have increased within each year. The North East/Mid-Atlantic used to be considered the powerhouse of lacrosse, but recently the sport started to gain popularity in other parts of the country especially in the south and west. According to SBRnet the most popular part of the country that was playing lacrosse was in the South Atlantic making up 33.8% of the total number of participants in the country, with the New England region being the next closest at 19.7%. The numbers of high school teams started to rapidly increase from just fewer than 500 teams in 1993 to over 2,000 high school teams in 2012 (SBRnet).

With the number of teams that had been increasing there was an increase in the number of participants playing the sport as well. As the increase in players started to rise, coaches at the Division I college lacrosse level had to start changing their recruitment styles, such as where they recruit, whom they recruit, and how they recruit the student athletes. They also had to change their recruitment style as the number of teams at the Division I level increased; it became more competitive for the coaches to recruit a player. Since the number of teams at the NCAA Division I level increased it was harder for a coach to recruit a player from the traditional lacrosse areas, so coaches had to start recruiting in some areas of the country that other coaches may not think to recruit.

The goal of this study was to show how coaches in Division I lacrosse coaches had changed their recruitment styles as the sport continued to grow across the country. The research question to be answered through this study was:

How has Division I lacrosse recruitment changed as the number of NCAA programs increase?

This study was important to the lacrosse community, because all the literature thus far has looked at why lacrosse players attend their respective college/universities, and how the sport has been growing at the youth and high school levels. There has yet to be study that looks at how the growth of the sport of lacrosse has impacted recruitment of high school lacrosse players for Division I lacrosse. Furthermore, this study provided information on how coaches went about recruiting compared to how/where they used to recruit. From the practitioner side this study provided people with the information about as the sport of lacrosse continued to grow, and more programs were being added to the Division I lacrosse level, there were going to be more and more players from the non-traditional lacrosse areas of the country.

Literature Review

Benefits/Detriments of having college sport at growth/expansion of Athletic Departments

As colleges and universities started to expand their athletic departments, community colleges started to follow in their footsteps. Byrd & Williams (2007) wrote their article about how community colleges had been going about expanding their athletic departments. The purpose of Byrd & Williams (2007) study was to inform the presidents and board of trustees at community colleges as to why they should expand their athletic departments, and how it would benefit the school in the end. They also wanted to provide more detailed information on a topic that was brought up in *The Community College Enterprise* in 2006, where the article discussed the leading perceptions of four aspects in community college intercollegiate athletics. Those four aspects were: current funding for community college athletics, future funding for athletics, whether local students are attracted to the community college because of athletic programming, and whether statewide guidelines on community college intercollegiate athletics are needed (Byrd & Williams, 2007).

The samples of the studies were presidents and board of trustees from community colleges in North Carolina. The study was a survey in which Byrd & Williams (2007) asked the president and the board 10 questions which were, institutional status regarding athletics, secure funding base for athletics by leader type, the funding for future athletic programs by leader type, understanding the funding process for athletics by the leader type, understanding the funding process for athletics, if the president and board chairs thought that athletics encouraged local students to attend their college, the presidents and boards preference for statewide guidelines. For questions two through ten Byrd and Williams asked both the presidents and board chairs if they either strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or were neutral about the statement. Then put it into percentages of how each answered the statement and would find the mean and p-value of how both the presidents, and board chairs felt about the statement. They also used t-tests to determine if there were any significant differences between the mean responses of community college presidents, and community college board of trustee chairs.

The way that Byrd & Williams (2007) set up their finding was that if there was a relationship between how the presidents would answer the survey and how the board chairs answered the surveys. If Byrd & Williams (2007) had found a relationship between the presidents and board of chairs answers, it meant that they had answered the questions in a similar way. Their first finding was that there was a relationship between the presidents and board of chairs, that both stated that there is not secure funding for athletics (Byrd & Williams, 2007) at the time the survey was conducted. Their next finding was that when comparing the presidents and board chairs at community colleges with or without teams was that there was a relationship about their understanding of the funding process for intercollegiate athletics at their community colleges. Their next finding had to do with the question do athletic encourage more students to attend their community colleges? They found that when comparing there was no relationship

when comparing presidents and the board of chairs, but there was a relationship between the presidents that have teams at their community college, compared to presidents that don't have teams at their community colleges.

Since community colleges around the country started to add more and more athletics to their athletic department, it could have been used as a template for Athletic Director's when they looked at expanding their athletic department. This study allowed the presidents and board chairs to take a look at this study, and see if they knew how to fund the athletics and if local area students are going to want to come to their community college. That way when they are decided if they should add certain athletics to their athletic department, the presidents and board chairs could decide if they should add that sport. This research can be used to show what the thought process is behind expanding an athletic department at the community college level. It shows what the presidents and board of trustees have to go through in order to decide if they're going to expand their athletic department.

As college athletic departments continued to expand, the athletic departments had to market their new teams added. Burden & Li (2003), studied if financial related variables influenced athletic administrators outsourcing marketing decisions. The variables they looked at were the overall annual operating budget, the annual operating budget for football, the revenue from football operations, the revenue from men's programs, the revenue from the women's programs, the total expense for men's programs, the total expense for women's programs, the amount of annual athletic giving received, and the profitability of the athletic program, (Burden & Li, 2003). They studied 236 athletic directors from all NCAA divisions. The process they used was a survey where they had 15 questions that were grouped into two different sections. The first section included items that asked questions such as whether or not the participant's institution had outsourced its major marketing rights, what was the designation of its football program, and

how many male and female athletic teams, respectively were sponsored by the institutions (Burden & Li, 2003). The second section included ten financial related items that had questions ranging from what was the amount of the annual athletic budget for the fiscal year 2000-2001, what was the amount of the annual giving received by the athletic department, (Burden & Li, 2003).

In the summary the authors mention that they had 3 findings from their survey, the first finding was seeking an outside marketing agency for help in generating needed revenues has been a common practice among athletic programs in American Colleges and universities, (Burden & Li, 2003). The second finding was financial-related variable played an important role in making outsourcing decisions, (burden & Li, 2003). The third finding was athletic programs that have decided to outsource their major marketing rights share three common characteristics. Those characteristics were both of their annual operating budget and annual operating budget for football are considerably large, and the total expense for men's programs is huge as well, (Burden & Li, 2003). One major takeaway from the study was as athletic departments continued to grow universities had to start make a decision to either outsource their marketing operations, and depend on things such as naming rights to athletic facilities as a way to generate revenue. Or were they going to be able to make enough money off these new athletics to generate revenue for their athletic department.

When looking at the goods and the bads of expanding an athletic department it is important to take note of what role college athletics plays. In his article Corlett (2013) challenged Professor Myles Brand's position on the role and value of intercollegiate athletic in universities, and he challenged it on the ground of that it failed to account for considerations of deep fiscal responsibility. Corlett especially looked at how universities could be using their money if they didn't have to fund their athletic programs. Corlett examined Professor's Brand paper on the role

and values of intercollegiate athletics in universities for his study. His process was he would take one of Professor Brand's arguments then would bring up a rebuttal about how he felt about the argument that Professor Brand made. Corlett found that if athletic departments would be able to be self funded then these universities could use their money towards other things at the universities such as paying more professors, putting money into different programs, etc. This research can be used to show that as these universities started to expand their athletic departments where would they going to get all the money to fund these different athletics. They could have started getting money from sponsorships or according to Corlett they should have to made decisions about if they should keep certain professors at their universities, or start giving less money to certain less popular departments

As athletic departments continued to grow, coaches had to start looking in different areas to recruit their athletes especially in the case of certain sports like lacrosse. Dyck (2011) examined the pursuit by Canadian youths of athletics scholarships offered by US colleges/universities, situating their individual efforts within longstanding family projects of child rearing as well as the operations of local sport organizations (Dyck, 2011). Dyck studied youth athletes in Canada in which were they had been recruited by Canadian universities, or had been recruited by American universities to play a certain sport whether it be basketball, baseball, hockey or lacrosse. Dyck interviewed these different athletes for the purpose of his study. In the interviews Dyck asked the athletes that had taken the scholarship offer questions such as why did they take the offer, after the experience would they still have taken the offer, etc. For the athletes that were being recruited he asked them questions such as what would be factors that would influence their decision, why would they want to take a scholarship with an American university, etc.

What Dyck found was that when interviewing the athletes that had taken the scholarship offer that only one of the athletes had used the scholarship as a means to move permanently to the United States, while the other athletes had used it as a way to make local American contacts that in hope would lead to a job (2011). Dyck also found that if it hadn't been for the "full ride" to these American universities, a lot of the Canadian athletes had a "fallback" to go to a university in Canada to further their education. He also found that when getting the scholarship offer many of the athletes saw it as a way to continue playing the sport that they wanted to play more than a way to get a good education. The benefits of this research are, it showed how universities started to recruit in other nations for certain sports such as Basketball, Hockey and Lacrosse especially in Canada. This article also gave an overview of how Canadian athletes perceived an athletic scholarship to an American university, and how they prepared to get a scholarship offer.

NCAA/Division I Recruitment

There are many different factors that go into a high schools student athlete's decision on what college/university to attend and play for. In his article Pauline (2010) investigated the factors that influenced college selections by NCAA Division I, II, and III lacrosse players. Pauline (2010) looked at three different major objectives of the investigation which were, (1) to examine the relative importance of specific factors and major categories (academic, athletic, social, coaching and financial) that influenced the athletes college selection, (2) to explore any differences between male and female lacrosse players, and (3) to explore an difference among division I, II, and III players. The data was from an influential factors survey for student athletes. Pauline (2010) studied 792 male and female collegiate lacrosse players from schools in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. The results that Pauline (2010) found towards the first major objective was that the seven most influential factors for the lacrosse players at NCAA Division I,

II, and III schools in order were: career opportunities after graduation, academic reputation of the university, overall reputation of academic major or program, social environment at the university, social atmosphere of the team, campus, head coach's personality or style, and academic factors (i.e. library, computer labs, classrooms, etc.). According to the survey the five least influential factors in descending order were: knowing athletes at the university, ethnic/gender ratio at the university, media coverage of the team, knowing someone on the lacrosse team, and the number of alumni in professional lacrosse.

In the findings towards the second purpose, Pauline found that there were relationships in three of the major areas of the survey, which were, athletic factors, coaching staff and financial aid. The athletic factors and coaching staff were viewed as more influential in the decision making process for male lacrosse players than female lacrosse players. On the other hand female lacrosse players considered financial aid to be more influential than male lacrosse players. For the third major objective Pauline found those athletes at Division II, and III schools cared more about academics than Division I athletes. Athletes from Division II viewed the coaching staff as more influential than those at Division III schools. Also financial aid was more important for the players at Division II schools, then those at Division I or III schools, and Division I players considered financial aid more important than Division III players. This study can be used to show what factors high school lacrosse players take into consideration when deciding what school to go play lacrosse at whether it be Division I, II or III schools.

When it comes to the on-field success of a college team one of the things that is looked at is how the team recruited for that season. Caro (2012) examined the relationship between recruiting and on field success. In this study she studied the automatic qualifying conferences (SEC, Big 10, Big 12, Pac-12, Big East, and ACC) in the BCS. In order to determine if there was a relationship between on field success and recruiting Caro used regression analysis. The

analysis looked at the average star player (i.e. 5-star player is the best player you could get) that each school in each conference that they recruited and got to sign to play football at their school. The analysis also looked at each team's winning percentages in the BCS automatic qualifying conferences. Caro found that there was a statistical significance between a team's winning percentage and what type of star athletes that the school recruits. This means that the better teams in college sports have a better chance at recruiting and getting these big 5 star athletes to come play for their school compared to the lower end teams in these conferences. For the purpose of this study it is important to know what a student athlete is looking for when being recruited such as the winning percentages of the teams when determining what team they are going to sign to play in college for. One major takeaway from this article is that according to Caro (2012) there is a relationship between the on-field success of a team and the type of athletes they recruited for that season.

Going along with the theme of recruiting and on the field success for colleges/universities athletic departments, Sparvero & Warner (2013) studied the relationship between on-the-field success and spending while also exploring current trends in recruiting at the NCAA Division I and III levels. The authors studied the schools that are associated with the Director's Cup Rankings, which include (Duke, Stanford, UCLA, Georgia, Arizona, etc.) For the process the authors drew longitudinal data from EADA reports, which they then compared to the Director's Cup rankings at the end of the different respective seasons within the athletic department. The findings of Sparvero & Warner (2013) were that there is a direct relationship between on-the-field success and how much an athletic department spends with their operating expenses, at the Division I level instead of salaries and recruiting expenses. At the Division III level on the other hand they found that selected budget variables are related to on-the-field success of their athletic teams, and have less predictive value than Division I athletic departments. This research

supported the assumption that a lot of college/universities started to use their money towards their recruiting expenses, but this study showed that schools at the Division I level used it towards their operating expenses, while Division III schools started to go with a more selected budget. This article also showed that the schools with athletics success are not necessarily the schools that use their resources the most efficiently.

A big factor that coach's used in their recruiting process is showing the student athlete how much television exposure would get by playing for their team. Fizek & Bennett (1996) provided an empirical analysis of the impact of that decision on recruiting success in college football. The authors specifically looked at how the recruiting percentages have changed for universities after the court case *NCAA v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and University of Georgia* in 1984 (Fizek & Bennett, 1996). The court decided in this case that the NCAA Football Television Plan restricted output and fixed price in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act (Fizek & Bennett, 1996). Fizek & Bennett looked at the recruiting success of teams in nine NCAA Division I football conferences at the time (Atlantic Coast, Big Eight, Big Ten, Mid-American, Pacific Coast (now Big West), Pacific Ten, Southeastern, Southwestern, and Western Athletic). When they looked at the recruiting process they calculated several years prior to and after the 1984 Supreme Court decision to see if there were any changes in recruiting success in these conferences.

The results of the authors analysis was first, that the recruiting rankings within the conferences changed little when measured by rank correlations between pre- and postdecision periods, only the Big Eight and Southwestern conferences had shown turnover in recruiting rankings (Fizek & Bennett, 1996). The second finding was that in the disparity between the recruiting success of the top and bottom teams in each conference were address, where analyses included top and bottom teams identified on the basis of past recruiting success and then on past

winning percentages (Fizel & Bennett, 1996). The authors found that the conferences “powerhouses” had improved their recruiting after the Supreme Court Decision. The authors also had evidence that indicated there was statistically significant improvement in recruiting success of traditional powers relative to nonpowers where the percentage had gone up from 30% from 1985-1991 to 41% for 1988-1991 (Fizel & Bennett, 1996). This article helped the research because it showed that before the Supreme Court decision colleges really didn’t use television exposure as a part of their recruiting tactics, but now since the ruling of the Supreme Court decision recruiters used the fact of television exposure as a tactic to get a student to play for their college/university.

Another big way recruiters used technology to recruit a high school athlete is through text messaging and facebook. Maher (2007) wrote about when all this new technology was just starting to come out. In the article Maher (2007) looked at two big concerns with how NCAA recruiters go about recruiting a high school athlete. The first concern is text-messaging where he broke the topic down into how the a text-message is created (is the student reaching out to the coach, or is the coach reaching out to the student), and initial development of text-messaging in relation to recruiting, including both the negative consequences and positive attributes of text-messaging with the recruits (Maher, 2007). Maher (2007) also looked as the use of the Internet community sites such as Facebook, and MySpace by student-athletes and the dangers that accompany their muse as the second big concern.

In this examination Maher went about interviewing former recruits, and recruiters about the issue of the text messaging and Facebook. In the interviews with the recruits he asked them questions such as how a coach used text-messaging or facebook to recruit them, what would the coach say, when would they do it, and how the athlete felt about it. In the interviews with the recruiters he asked them questions such as how they felt about recruiting through text messaging

or Facebook, if they have ever done recruiting like that, and where they think recruiting is going through these different technologies. Instead of having findings, Maher offered the NCAA some recommendations about how to go about these new recruiting tactics. With text-messaging Maher proposed that the NCAA make a regulation where coaches could only text their recruits for certain hours during the day, and that coaches could only send a certain amount of text-messages per week to the recruit. That way the recruits wouldn't have to worry about coaches texting them all the time, and wouldn't have to worry about a coach texting them during class or practice while they were at school.

For Facebook Maher suggested that the NCAA delegate regulation to each individual institution where the institution would be either be responsible for adding the working requirement to an individual's job description or hiring someone to monitor the regulation of the problem. According to Maher (2007) "The job would require that individual to discern which athletes were on Facebook, and MySpace then take the list of athletes that are not affiliated with one or both, and finally check to ensure no one was posing as them," (p. 150). Maher also suggested to the student athletes that they make their pages private so that no one can see their information, so that no one can access their information and pose as them as a different name on Facebook or MySpace. For the purpose of this study, this information was important because, as technology continued to grow coaches started to use this technology to get information about the student they were trying to recruit, or get in touch with them. With these recommendations by Maher he gave the NCAA a guideline of how they can regulate on how much a coach uses these new technologies, so that the athlete doesn't feel overwhelmed and concentrate on school and the sport they're playing.

With all the new ways for coaches to go about recruiting athletes on the Internet there has been more ethical issues come about on how coaches can go about recruiting online. Vanity &

Edmondson (2011), looked at new ethics that are being brought up with online recruiting today. The purpose of their study was to look how sport media identifies some of the ethical challenges associated with media coverage of high school athletes over the Internet and to propose a code of ethics for Web-based media outlets. In this study they went about two different processes, in one process they surveyed adult sport media professionals, where they were seeking a purposive sample of those who work in or are familiar with Internet coverage of college football recruiting (Yanity & Edmondson, 2007). In the other part of the study they interviewed fifteen people who were sport media professionals, college football coaches, and college football players who were highly recruited. (Yanity and Edmondson, 2007). These were open-ended interviews where they were either digitally recorded the interviews or the authors took notes.

From the survey Yanity & Edmondson (2007) found that there were six circumstances that might be considered ethical dilemmas some of the circumstances presented were: a publication reports and publishes that an athlete has made an oral commitment but had yet to sign a National Letter of Intent, a person with no journalism training is calling athletes, conducted interviews and wrote stories for publication, a person who covered recruiting attempts to persuade an athlete to attend a particular school, a person who covered recruiting made a persistent (at-least once-a-day) contact with an undecided recruit, and a Web site devoted to the coverage of recruiting operates without a published code of ethics (Yanity & Edmondson, 2007). In the interviews some of the themes they found with sport media professionals included the suggestion of published code of ethics, education for those covering college football recruiting or no changes at all (Yanity & Edmondson, 2007). With the coaches and players they suggested rules, regulations, and limits to access (Yanity & Edmondson, 2007). One key takeaway is as technology online started to improve not only are coaches, and players had to know what they were doing, but so did the people covering the recruiting process, because some of the things

they may be doing could be unethical such as talking to a recruit too much, or releasing a story before it even happens, etc.

Since recruiting has been becoming more competitive for some players, the topic of recruiting violations started to come more into play in college athletics. Clark & Batista (2009) described the nature of recruiting violations, including major and secondary violations, conference affiliation of institution committing major violations. In the study the authors examined the frequency and distribution of NCAA major infractions from 1970-2007 with a specific focus major recruiting infractions from 1987 through the current construct of the Division I-A (Football Bowl Subdivision) structure in 2007, using a trend analysis. The authors collected their data from the NCAA Legislative Services Database (LSDBi), which contains a written case on each major infraction in the NCAA since 1954. The data contains the list of the institution responsible for the violations, the date of the infraction, and the nature of the infraction (Clark & Batista, 2009).

The authors found that with secondary violations 47.03% of Article 13's recruiting bylaws were accounted for by secondary violations, and that there had been a rise in secondary violations from 2004-2007 with the peak of violations happening in 2006 (Clark & Batista, 2009). With major violations in all of Division I (FBS) sports for both men and women's sports, Clark & Batista (2009), found that there had been 258 major violations from 1970-2007. They broke the data down into four different time periods (1970-1982, 1983-1989, 1990-1996, and 1997-2007). They also found that 77% of major violations each year in the NCAA are committed by schools affiliated with a BCS Conference (Clark & Batista, 2007). The benefits of this research are it provided athletic administrators with regional and sport-specific findings regarding major recruiting infractions. It is also informed athletic compliance directors of coal

points and monitoring strategies based upon sport, region, and conference in an effort to curtail future NCAA recruiting violations.

A big part of expanding a college's athletic department is how coaches go about recruiting with new teams being added each year. In their article Magnusen, Mondello, Kyoum Kim, and Ferris (2011), proposed that recruiting effectiveness has a lot to do with the individual qualities and characteristics of the coaches doing the recruiting, in addition to the reputation of the university. The authors also attempted to provide a more comprehensive picture of the recruitment process that was able to show sport organizations how to develop strategies and personnel to meet the challenges of their own unique athletic situations. The authors didn't have a study, but they got their information about how recruiters, recruited an athlete to come to their university. What the authors did was they first provided overviews for the recruitment research, and of the political skill research. They then talked about the role of the recruiter political skills in recruitment effectiveness, the role of recruited influence strategy, and the role of organization reputation in recruitment.

What the authors found with their model is that politically skilled recruiters are able to more effectively execute their plan in a way that significantly improves recruitment effectiveness (Magnusen, Mondello, Kim, Ferris, 2011). They also found that their model highlights the importance of reputation in the recruitment process. It also provided evidence of how politically skilled recruiters are better able to utilize organization reputation when crafting their influence strategy. One major takeaway is that, it provided information of how universities recruiters go about recruiting a certain high school athlete for the parents. It also provided a model of how coaches went about not only finding what athletes to recruit, but when recruiting that athlete of how they went about recruiting that athlete in the most effective way to get that athlete to attend your university.

Growth of Lacrosse

Growth at the youth level.

The sport of lacrosse has been one of the fastest growing sports in the United States from the number of participants/teams that formed from the youth level to the professional level.

According to SBRnet, a database that provided market research and full text articles that covered sports business and research, the sport of lacrosse is growing at a rapid pace. SBRnet helped show that even within a small nine-year period the sport of lacrosse grew rapidly. According to SBRnet in 1999 only 32.7% of youths from ages 7-17 had participated in playing lacrosse, then in 2012 there had been 36.7% of youths from ages 7-17 had started to participate in playing lacrosse. The database showed that in just 13 years the participation at the youth level had grown. Vivirito (2012) talks about how between 2001-2010 the number of participants at the youth level had increased by 160% within the states of Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey and California leading the way. Vivirito (2012) also talks about how the sport had grown at the high school level as well, and indicated that since 2007-2008 school year there has actually been a 153% increase in the number of high school programs around the country from public to private schools. According to Kent Summers who is the director of performing arts and sports for the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS), "I'm sure that youth growth is driving the growth of lacrosse, but I also know that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of high schools that now have lacrosse as a sport under their jurisdiction," (Vivirito, 2012 p.28). Kohl (2006) reported about a survey that was conducted by U.S. Lacrosse in 2004 about how many kids participated in the sport. According to the survey in 2004 there was more than 186,000 kids playing lacrosse while there was almost 134,000 high school athletes playing the sport as well.

One of the biggest factors to growing the sport of lacrosse was getting areas that don't have lacrosse programs to start one up. Logue & Allen (2001) wrote about how the sport was growing, and that places started to add lacrosse programs. In the article Logue & Allen (2001) give an outline of what a town would have to do in order to go about starting a lacrosse programs. In the outline the authors give examples of how people have started lacrosse programs in the past, and have talked to people who have participated in new lacrosse programs (mostly parents), and what their thoughts were about the program. In the outline the authors provided information that would be needed to know when trying to start a lacrosse program such as what equipment to use, how to divide up the participants, using a wider goal, having no contact at first, and having no goalie. This was important to the study because in order to grow the sport of lacrosse more programs are going to have to start forming at the youth level. This research was used to provide information that a person would need to know in order to start up a new program in their respective area.

Growth at the college level.

Along with the youth part of lacrosse, which had been growing the college side of lacrosse had started to grow as well. SBRnet showed that between a nineteen-year period over a 127 teams had been formed in college lacrosse, and the number of participants in men's college lacrosse had doubled in that time. In 2003 there were only a 168 men's college lacrosse teams, but in 2012 there were 295 men's college lacrosse teams. To go along with the number of teams in 2003 there were just 5,310 players playing college lacrosse, in 2012 there were 10,903 male participants in men's college lacrosse, and that number continues to grow as the number of teams in men's college lacrosse continues to grow, (SBRnet, 2011). For the purpose of this study, these numbers show how the sport of lacrosse had been growing just at the college level, which is what made SBRnet important to this study.

Vivirito (2012) talked about how the sport had been growing at the collegiate level at both the men's and women's side. In his study Vivirito (2012) mentioned how between 2006-2010 men and women's lacrosse topped the list of growth rate in the entire NCAA. Also in the section he mentioned between 2001-2011 how there had been an increase in the number of varsity programs for lacrosse increasing from 428 men's and women's programs in 2001 to 608 men's and women's programs in 2011, and that 26 schools had been expected to add lacrosse as a varsity program for both men's and women's lacrosse in 2013. In 2005 the exposure had picked up with ESPN starting to cover the NCAA championships every Memorial Day weekend (Wolff & Morrill, 2004).

Growth at the professional level.

With youth and college growth leading the way for the growth of lacrosse, the professional side of lacrosse had started to grow as well. Vivirito (2012) talked about both the National Lacrosse League (NLL) and the Major Lacrosse League (MLL) had grown since their formation. Vivirito (2012) talked about the leagues have grown with adding teams in non-traditional lacrosse areas such as Colorado, Minnesota, Washington, etc. The benefits of this research was it showed how lacrosse has not just grown at the college level, but also at the youth and professional levels as well. It also shows us its not only the traditional lacrosse areas that are growing, but other areas such as California that are coming up to be one of the popular lacrosse states. In their research Miller & Washington (2013) looked at the attendance numbers for teams in the NLL. In 2012 Miller & Washington (2013) found that the top 5 teams that had the highest attendance numbers were the (in order): Buffalo Bandits, Colorado Mammoth, Toronto Rock, Minnesota Swarm and Calgary Roughnecks rounding out the top 5. Their study gave numerical evidence that lacrosse was not only growing in participation, but in popularity as well with

having had 3 of the top 5 highest attendance teams being in non-traditional lacrosse areas in Colorado, Minnesota and Calgary.

In his article Gross (2008) asked the commissioner of the Major League Lacrosse League (MLL) questions about what his impressions about how the league had been doing so far, how he runs the league, and where the league is going in the future. Something interesting the commissioner said from one of the questions about what the commissioner's biggest concern was, the commissioner answered that it was growing the sport at the Division I lacrosse level in the NCAA but not at the professional level, (Gross, 2008). The commissioner thought that if we could expand the sport at the Division I lacrosse level that not only would it help the growth at the professional level, but at all levels as well (Gross, 2008). The commissioner also believed that one of the biggest reasons why the sport had been growing, is because the sport is starting to get more TV exposure, so when kids saw it on TV they would want to go out and try the sport (Gross, 2008). The benefits of this research were shown how the sport had been growing through the professional level, and it showed how people in the professional level feel about the growth of lacrosse, and what we can do to keep growing the sport. In 2005, NBC started to air both MLL, and NLL lacrosse games (Wolff & Morrill, 2004). In the past couple of years however, the MLL had started being aired on ESPN, while the NLL had started being aired on CBS Sports Network.

Conceptual Framework

This study looked at how Division I lacrosse recruitment had changed as the sport of lacrosse itself had started to grow, especially at the college level. In the study 3 different concepts were examined within how recruitment had changed as the sport of lacrosse changed at the college level. One of the concepts that were looked at was the benefits/detriments to a college's athletic departments expansion. When looking at this concept the goods and bads to

expanding a college's athletic department, were researched to better understand why a college would want to add a lacrosse team. The role that athletics play at a university was examined when researching within this concept. Within this concept research proved to show why college athletic departments expand and add different teams, and the thought process of why they should add different teams. The second concept examined in the study was the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), specifically at the Division I level. By looking at this concept research identified how athletes are recruited, how coaches go about recruiting, and what athletes look for when being recruited. The third concept that was examined in this study was the growth of lacrosse. Within this concept the growth of lacrosse was examined at three different levels, which were the youth level, the college level, and the professional level. Research found that all three of the levels had a relationship in helping the other levels grow.

The first and second concept were related to each other, because when a college/university adds a new team other coaches had to change their recruiting styles and where they recruit, since there was more competition. The first and third concept were related to each other because lots of schools had started to add lacrosse to their varsity programs, and when deciding if they should an athletic department had to look at the goods and bads of adding a lacrosse to their athletic department. The second and third concepts were related to each other, since the sport of lacrosse was growing so much, coaches had the opportunity to recruit in other parts of the country, instead of going to just one part of the country. A major part of this study was looking at the growth of the sport of lacrosse. Within this study the research showed how the sport had grown to different parts of the country, where it was growing, and how it had grown within in the high school and youth levels. By having these concepts in study, research was able to identify how recruiting at the Division I lacrosse levels has changed as the sport of lacrosse has continued to grow especially at the college level.

Within these concepts there were variables that affected the study, one of those variables was the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The governing body for all college sports in both the United States and Canada that has 3 separate divisions, the NCAA was considered a variable, because there are certain guidelines coaches have to follow when they recruited an athlete. Along with the variable of the NCAA, the variable of recruiting within the NCAA was a variable that could have affected the study. When a coach went out and convinced an high school athlete to come play for their team it's considered, that the coach recruited the athlete. Recruiting was considered a variable in this study, because coaches had different ways of how they recruited their current athletes, and changed their recruiting as the sport continued to grow. These two variables were related to each other because coaches couldn't go out and just pay players to come to their school to play for their teams. Recruiting changed between all 3 levels of the NCAA especially between Divisions I, II and III since a coach wasn't allowed to offer a student athlete an athletic scholarship for Division III schools. That's why for the purpose of this study only recruiting at Division I level was examined. Another variable that was presented in the study was how an athletic department went about deciding why to expand their athletic department. When going about deciding to expand their athletic department a college had to decide how it would affect their recruiting, and if they would be able to recruit high school athletes to come play for their new varsity teams.

Summary

In recent years lacrosse was one of the fastest growing sports in the United States. The purpose of this study was to show how the growth of lacrosse at the college level changed the recruitment process. The concepts in this study consisted of the benefits/detriments of expanding a college's athletic department, recruitment in the NCAA, and the growth of lacrosse itself. The benefits/detriments of expanding a college's athletic department consisted of the role of college

athletics, expansion at the community college level, how a college markets their athletic department, and recruiting outside the United States. While looking at NCAA recruitment research found factors that influence student athlete's decisions, recruiting through technology, ethics behind recruiting, and recruiting violations. Looking at the growth of lacrosse research found growth at the youth, college, and professional levels. The literature provided the study with background information on the growth of lacrosse and how it affects the expansion of a colleges athletic department.

Methods

Restatement of RQ

The purpose of this research was to examine how coaches changed their recruiting in Division I lacrosse, as the sport of lacrosse was growing with the number of NCAA programs increasing. The research question of this study was:

How has Division I lacrosse recruitment changed as the number of NCAA programs increase?

The aim of this research was to prove how Division I lacrosse coaches change their recruitment plans as the game of lacrosse continued to grow, and as the number of NCAA programs at the Division I level increased.

Design

The design of this research was a cross-sectional design. According to Gratton & Jones (2010) cross-sectional design is when the data for the research is only collected once; where it can be collected through interviews. From this a relationship is identified. Some of the strengths from conducting a cross-sectional design included convenient with limited resources, low attrition rates, random samples allows for results to be generalized (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The reason a cross-sectional design was the best design for this research was because the data was

only collected once through the different interviews that were conducted with the different coaches.

Desired Sample

The desired population for this research was all head coaches at the Division I lacrosse level. Head coaches at the Division I level had the most knowledge on how the expansion of lacrosse across the country affected recruiting athletes. The coaches provided information about how they changed their recruitment styles as more teams were added to the Division I level and as more high schools continued to add programs. There were 63 head coaches at the Division I lacrosse level at the time of this study, with the predominant of the coaches being from the northeast part of the United States. The sample for this study was a key informant sample, which is when only the sample is able to give the information needed for the purpose of the study (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The desired sample for the research was all coaches at the Division I level that had 10 or more years in coaching at the Division I level. The coaches that were chosen for this study were determined by looking at their bios on the lacrosse teams websites, to see how long they had been coaching at the Division I lacrosse level. In order to gather the data four coaches at the Division I lacrosse level were chosen to be interviewed. The reason these coaches were chosen was, because they had seen how the recruiting process had changed first hand, and had the most knowledge of how they changed their recruitment styles as more NCAA programs were added to Division I lacrosse.

Procedure

The sample for this study was acquired from looking at the different college teams athletic websites. Information was gathered about the sample by specifically looking at the lacrosse teams page, and looking at the coach's information page. While looking at the coach's page, how long the coach had been coaching at the college and in Division I lacrosse, as a head coach was the factor if the coach was chosen for the sample. For the purpose of this study primary data was gathered to collect the data. Primary data was chosen for this study, because in order to get how coaches changed their recruiting styles based on how the game of lacrosse has changed it was better to talk to the coaches instead of looking at secondary data.

As mentioned in the design section the process used in this research to obtain the data was a cross-sectional design. In the cross-sectional design an interview was conducted with Division I lacrosse coaches in order to obtain the results. The interview was a semi-structured interview, which is an interview where questions can be made based on the answers given. The answers obtained from the sampling were open-ended answers, since there can be a different answer for each question asked in the interview. The interview of the coaches was recorded so that the interviews could be transcribed and the data was separated based on the answers given. Some examples of questions that were asked in process were as followed:

When you first started coaching how did you go about recruiting?

What are the differences in how you recruit now, as compared to when you first started coaching?

How long has the coach been coaching at Division I level?

Once the interviews were conducted, the data was coded into different themes. In this research inductive coding was used. According to Gratton & Jones (2010), inductive coding is associated with qualitative research, and with inductive coding the pattern is usually to collect

the data and then analyze the data to develop a theory, (p. 36). In this research the data was first collected from the interviews with the Division I coaches. Then from that data codes were formed, and then the data was analyzed and developed themes based off the data.

Results

Sample Description

For the purpose of this research that sample that was used were Division I lacrosse coaches. This research had a total of four participants from the Division I coaches. The common characteristics among the participants that took part in the research was that the sample all had experience being a Division I lacrosse head coach for at least 15 years or more. All the head coaches had experience head coaching at 2 different schools. A third characteristic of the sample was that 2 of the head coaches were from bigger schools, while the other 2 head coaches were from much smaller Division I lacrosse schools. The sample was representative of the population, because the sample of for this research was Division I lacrosse head coaches that had significant experience in head coaching.

Codes

There were six different codes used in the data collection. The codes that were used in this data collection were codes that were emerged from the data collection process. The first code that was used from the data collection was *how the coaches went about recruiting when they first started coaching*. This code was used because one of the questions in the interview was “how did you first go about recruiting as a head coach,” so by having this code in the data collection it was used to see if there were any commonalities among the coaches when they first started recruiting.

The second code that was used in the data collection was *how coaches currently recruit*. This code was used because the research was around how recruiting was done by coaches today. By having this code it was used to compare how the coaches went about recruiting during the present day. The third code that was used during the data collection was *academics with recruiting*. In this code there were two subcategories which were: *high academic standards, and emphasis on education over professional career*. This code was used, because one of the questions in the interview was about how academic standards went along with recruiting. By having this code it was important to the data collection to see how academics played a role in how coaches went about their recruiting process. A fourth code that was used in the data collection was the *growth of the game*, which included two subcategories of *TV exposure, and more athletes coming from all over the country*. This code was chosen from the data collection, because part of the research emphasized on how much the game of lacrosse had been growing. From the results the sample talked about how it has been growing in those 2 different ways with TV exposure, and the athletes started to come from all over the country. The fifth code that was used from the data collection was the *pressures in recruiting*. This code came up from the data collection because two of the questions were about the pressures in recruiting and how it had affected the coaches recruiting process, and there were commonalities amongst the coaches about the pressures in recruiting. The sixth and final code that came up from the data collection was the *future expansion* of Division I men's lacrosse. This code arose from the data collection, because the coaches all talked about how there probably wasn't going to be any future expansion among BCS schools in college lacrosse.

Themes

Through the data collection there were four themes determined which were: *recruiting in the present day, academic standards with recruiting, the growth of the game, and future expansion*. These four themes were determined from the data collection, due to the fact that these themes had the most commonalities between the four coaches that were interviewed for this research. To come up with these different themes there was three different iterations that occurred in order to determine the four different themes. Choices were made during the different iterations based on if the themes related back to the research question. Afterwards it was looked at if there were any similarities between the samples answers to the different questions throughout the interview. Then some themes were deleted, due to the fact that there wasn't enough support in the answers from the coaches to keep the themes in the research.

Theme One: Recruiting in the Present Day

When asked about how they go about their recruiting today all the coaches mentioned about how the recruiting has gotten earlier. All the coaches talked about how now when they go about recruiting they have had to start recruiting earlier. What they meant by earlier was that they had to start recruiting earlier in the year as compared to when they first started coaching. Also what they meant by earlier is that they started to recruit athletes at an earlier age. Chris talked about in his interview that "You know it's (recruiting) happening so much earlier, so it has become a little bit more a challenge." In his interview Bob mentioned about "There have been recruiting events you know in November, prospect days during September and October." When it comes to starting earlier Dom said it the best "You know there's always some cycle of when you're doing it (recruiting) that's why my concern is that its going to get earlier." The coaches had starting recruiting kids earlier in the year, and they also started to recruit athletes at an younger age.

Also what was mutual in this theme from the data collection was the how recruiting was affected by the club level lacrosse coaches. When asked about it in their respective interviews, all coaches commented on how it hurt recruiting, because club lacrosse had become a business to the club coaches to get their athletes recruited by a Division I team. John mentioned in his interview “Well the thing is you know its really impacted recruiting negatively. In that you have these men (the club coaches) to them it’s a business.” Dom also mentioned it in his interview about the club coaches saying “You know the club coaches are very interested in one of their players committing to Virginia, because then that’s a feather in their cap that they get to tell the parents, they’re trying to get 7th and 8th graders to play for their club team. One of their kids is going to play for UVA or Syracuse or anywhere else.” It was clear while conducting the interviews that the coaches were not happy about the impact club coaches have made on the recruiting process, because to them its more of a business, then trying to teach a kid the game of lacrosse.

This theme was formed from the controversy that not only was recruiting starting earlier in the process. But these coaches were starting to recruit younger kids to come play for their program, which didn’t happen when they first started coaching. They believed that was due to the fact that these club coaches saw it as a business and were trying to get their athletes committed to Division I schools so that they could sell it off to the parents that they were a good coach since one of their athletes went Division I. As Dom stated in his interview “Uh well the most dramatic difference is I mean were dealing with younger students now. Uh we have much more contact with the club coaches then we used to. And its almost as if its one of the pieces of evolution that I’m not happy about.” These coaches did not like the fact that they had to start

recruiting kids at a younger age, and that they had to deal with these club coaches. Which to them is about a business of getting an athlete recruited instead of helping them better their skills.

Theme Two: Academic Standards with Recruiting

When asked about the academic standards when recruiting all coaches talked about how academics is a huge part of their recruiting. John talked about how when he recruited an athlete there were three parts that the athlete had to pass in order to be recruited, and one of those parts was that the athlete had to be a good student. He stated in his interview that “You know the first piece is um the academic piece, and that if the student academically doesn’t look like they could be admitted then don’t bother with them.” He goes on to talk about later in his interview that he looks for athletes that get all A’s and B’s and do well on the standardize testing, and that if a student does get a C, then they better have done well on the standardize tests. Bob mentioned in his interview “You know our school is a challenging school academically, so you don’t want to waste your chasing an athletes that isn’t going to be able to get into the school.” So to these coaches the academic part of recruiting was important to them, because not only did they want an athlete that was going to excel on the field but exceled in the classroom as well.

Another reason that these coaches put such a big part of their recruiting on academics is, because there wasn’t much of an pro option for the lacrosse players after college. Dom mentioned in his interview “That at the end of four years not only did you have a good lacrosse experience, but you have gained the tools to help you succeed for the rest of your life...” Bob states in his interview about his athletes that “They know they’re bread and butter, where they are going to make their money is based on what they do career wise.” To these coaches it wasn’t about getting their athletes to the professional level. It was about getting their athletes an

education that could set them up to have a successful career, while at the same time getting to play lacrosse in college.

This theme was able to show that academics was not only a huge part of the recruiting process for these coaches, but keeping their kids in school so that they could get a good job was just as important to them. The coaches wanted to make sure that they were students before they were athletes so that the athletes could obtain good jobs when they graduated in four years. By doing this men's lacrosse had one of the highest graduation rates throughout the NCAA.

Theme 3: Growth of the Game

When talking to the coaches all of them talked about how the game had been growing throughout the country. Specifically they talked about two areas in where the game had growing which was in TV exposure and where some of the athletes are coming from to play. Bob talked about in his interview in regards to TV exposure that "And I think one of the things you see a lot more is you see that you see more and more game on TV where as like 5-6 years ago there was maybe 1 or 2 games on a weekend. Now a days when it comes to the tournament you can watch games from noon-until 9 o'clock at night straight through." Dom also talked about in his interview where he mentioned "ESPN carries these games Denver being on of them but they carry more Syracuse, Hopkins, Virginia, North Carolina game and stuff like that so you know." All the coaches talked about TV exposure has helped grow the game, because it allows people in these non-traditional areas to see the game, and possibly want to try it after watching a couple of games on TV.

Another aspect in the growth of the game that these coaches talked about was where they are starting to get some of these athletes to come play for their teams, or other teams as well. Bob talked about his team this upcoming season and some of the players that he would have on his team. He stated “You know but now you’re seeing great lacrosse in Minnesota, Michigan, you know believe it or not Nevada, Las Vegas two kids are going to Rutgers that are great. You know California some kids from Oregon, Atlanta, Georgia, Florida. There will be 5 kids from Florida on our team next year. There’s good talent everywhere so um you know you gotta be patient and do your homework and find the right one for your program.” Dom also mentioned how there were athletes coming from all over the country in his interview “You know so there are just kids you know that are from all around the country that are good enough to play at this level.” John also has players on his team that are from all over the country. This showed that recruiting has helped grow the game because these coaches have to go all over the country now to recruit players to help their program be competitive. Chris mentioned it in his interview that if you don’t have the best players you can get then you’re not going to be successful during the springtime.

This theme was chosen, because it showed how the growth of the game has impacted the recruiting for these coaches. Whether it was having more TV exposure for the game so that more people would want to try it in areas that weren’t traditional areas of lacrosse. By having the growth the coaches had to adjust and start recruiting kids from all over the country so that they could make their teams competitive come the springtime for the season.

Theme 4: No Future Growth

When asked about the future of college lacrosse, and if any BCS teams might add a lacrosse team all the coaches we pretty adamant that there wouldn’t be any BCS teams added to Division I men’s lacrosse. Chris mentioned in his interview “I’m not sure its on the rise my hope

would be another one of two can tip this thing and get a little more growth at the highest level. I just don't know if its going to happen..." When asked about it John stated "Never, I think Michigan was an exception because they had a sophisticated club program that was already in place." In their interviews both Dom and Bob had the same comments as John and Chris in that they both believed that the game wasn't going to grow any. Especially at the BCS level, because many of these BCS schools have football teams, and didn't have the Title IX gender equality to add a men's lacrosse.

This theme was important to the study, because it showed that there may not have been any expansion at the Division I lacrosse level to impact recruiting. Through the data collection it was shown that there may be other factors that would affect recruiting in the future, but it would be hard to tell at the point of the study. It showed factors such as academics, and competition, and more athletes to choose from might impact recruiting in the future. Instead of having more teams expanding being the one of the factors in recruiting.

Discussion

Findings

After analyzing the data, the following results were found. The first result was that the coaches believed there may not have any future growth at Division I lacrosse. When they were asked about it all the coaches were adamant about the fact that they didn't believe that there would be any future growth in Division I lacrosse amongst BCS schools. If there were to be any growth at the level it would be at schools that did not have a football program. The second result that was found was that the coaches believed that there was going to be more growth at the youth level of lacrosse. All the coaches mentioned in their interviews that growth was going to be at the younger levels, and that was going to play more of a factor in recruiting then the growth at the

college level. They all mentioned it would affect recruiting based on there would be more kids to choose from, so the newer teams would start to become more competitive since everyone had more good talent to recruit, and each team only had a certain amount of spots on their respective teams. The third result that was found from the data collection was that academics play a vital role when coaches were recruiting athletes. It was not only vital for the coach, but for the student as well, because they wanted some place where they could succeed academically, and set themselves up for a good job. All the coaches that participated in the interview talked about how they wanted their athletes to have academic success so they could obtain good jobs upon graduation.

No Future Growth

During their respective interviews, all the coaches that participated in the study talked about how there was not going to be any future expansion in lacrosse, especially amongst BCS schools who all have football programs. John said it best when he stated “Never, I think Michigan was an exception because they had a sophisticated club program that was already in place.” With these big BCS schools that have football, and basketball as their popular sports they were making revenue off those sports, and if those schools added a lacrosse team it would have just added more expenses to the schools athletic department. This finding contradicts what was previously known about the growth of Division I men’s lacrosse. Vivirito (2012) mentioned that the game of lacrosse had grown at the collegiate level. He talked about how between 2001-2011 there had almost been 200 new college lacrosse programs started throughout the country. However it was taken into consideration that Vivirito was talking about both men’s and women’s lacrosse programs, and he didn’t specify how many teams were added on both the men’s and women’s side and at which level they were added.

Growth at the Youth Level

During the interviews the coaches all talked about how there might not be much growth at the collegiate level, but there is going to be growth at the youth level. Chris talked about it best in his interview that kids from non-traditional areas were starting to play lacrosse due to the fact that the younger generation of adults was starting to move out to these non-traditional areas of the country such as out west in states such as California, Colorado, Oregon, Washington and in the south. When they did they were trying to start up youth programs, and give private training sessions so that kids had the opportunity to start playing lacrosse. This result corresponds with what was known earlier in the research about how the game had started to grow at the youth level in these non-traditional areas of lacrosse. SBRnet database showed that in 1999 there were only 32.7% of youth lacrosse players from the ages of 7-17, then in 2012 they had found that it had grown to 36.7% of kids between the ages of 7-17 had been playing lacrosse (SBRnet). Vivirito (2012) also talked about in his article that there had been a 160% increase in the number of participants playing youth lacrosse across the US, and there was 153% increase in the number of high schools adding lacrosse to their athletics. Kent Summers who is the director of performing arts and sports for the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS), stated in Vivirito's (2012) article, "I'm sure that youth growth is driving the growth of lacrosse, but I also know that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of high schools that now have lacrosse as a sport under their jurisdiction," (Vivirito, 2012 p.28). This result corresponded with previous findings, since in previous findings it had shown how much the game had grown at the youth level. Then during the interviews the coaches talked about the game had grown at the youth level as well.

Academics Play Vital Role in Recruiting

When talking to the coaches about the academic standards and how it related to their recruiting experiences, all of the coaches talked about how academics played a big role in their recruiting experiences. John stated during his interview that the first thing they look at when recruiting an athlete was how the student was academically. If the student wasn't going to be admitted into the school then he wasn't going to bother trying to recruit them. He also talked about what they look at academically, when they looked at an athlete they wanted they athlete to have high grades, and that they did well on standardize testing. Bob and Chris also talked about how academics played a big role in how they went about their recruiting. Chris talked about how he liked athletes that took a couple of AP courses, or were enrolled in some honors courses so that he knew that not only were they a talented lacrosse player, but that they were a good student as well. All the coaches talked about how they wanted their athletes to succeed in the classroom, so that they could gain the tools they needed to help them get a good job once they graduated from the school in four years. This result corresponds to what was previously known about how academics played a role in recruiting. In 2010 Pauline studied what influential factors there were for Division I, II, and III lacrosse players to go to the schools that they had selected. In his finding he found that academics played a big role in where these athletes wanted to go to school. Along with that the athletes cared about what career opportunities the school would provide them once they graduated from the school (Pauline, 2010). This result corresponded with what was previously known in that academics wasn't only a big part of the recruitment process for the coaches, but it was just as important to the athletes as well.

Limitations/Delimitations

While research was being conducted there were a few limitations that were encountered. The first limitation was that there weren't many coaches at the Division I lacrosse level that had 10 or more years experience being a Division I head coach. Out of the 67 teams that were in

Division I lacrosse, only 22 had 10 or more years experience in being a Division I head coach. Which meant that only about 32% of the head coaches in Division I lacrosse had that experience. Another limitation that was faced during the research was not being able to talk to the head coaches at the military academy schools (Army, Navy, Air Force). Those schools did not give athletic scholarships to their athletes, so the way they went about recruiting was different than the rest of the Division I schools. A third limitation that was faced during this research was time. If there had been more time to conduct the research, and to conduct more interviews, there could have been better support for the results that were found.

As a researcher there were also some delimitations that were dealt with while research was conducted. A delimitation that was dealt with while the research was being conducted was how the sample was contacted. At first emails were sent out to the sample that asked them to participate in the research. However there was too much of a lag of when the email was sent out and when the sample was started to be contacted by calling them. It would have probably had been easier to call them first, instead of waiting around seeing if they had responded to the emails.

Future Research

For future research one thing that might want to be looked at is how the growth at the youth level might have impacted future recruitment. As more kids started playing at the youth level, it gives coaches more choices of who to recruit, which will then help smaller school teams get just as good players since there were so many athletes to choose from around the country. Another thing that could have been looked at for future research is how academics play a role in lacrosse recruitment. One of the themes that were noticed among the participants was that academics played a bigger role in recruiting for lacrosse than most sports; it should have been looked at into how it specifically affected recruiting.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to look at how Division I lacrosse coaches had changed their recruiting styles as more teams expanded into Division I lacrosse. Through research there were three different findings, the first was that there wasn't any speculation about future expansion of Division I lacrosse. The coaches that were interviewed all agreed that they didn't believe there was going to be much expansion. The second finding was that the game of lacrosse itself is growing more specifically at the youth level, with the help of TV exposure of the collegiate and professional games. Then the third finding was that academic play a big role in the recruiting process. For future research there should have been more of an emphasis on looking at how the growth of the youth game had changed recruiting, or how academic standards had changed recruiting.

Appendix A

Interview Questions

- 1. First I am going to be asking the coach the following:
 - a. Name**
 - b. How many years have you been a head coach in college lacrosse?****
- 2. When you first started coaching how did you go about recruiting?**
- 3. How do you go about your recruiting now?**
- 4. How does your experience compare to earlier in your career?**
- 5. How have you seen college lacrosse change since you've become a head coach (specifically with recruiting)?**
- 6. Tell me about how academic standards relate to your lacrosse recruitment experiences.**
- 7. What pressures exist in recruitment? How does this compare to earlier in your career?**
- 8. From where does pressure in recruitment come? How does this compare to earlier in your career?**
- 9. How does the business of lacrosse recruitment today compare to the business of lacrosse recruitment in the earlier parts of your career?**
- 10. As more college/universities continue to add teams, how do you think your recruiting will be affected?**

Appendix B

Sample E-Mail sent to coaches

Dear Mr. _____,

My name is Michael Widay, and I am currently a senior at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York. As a part of the sport management major, it is required of us to take on a research project where we go out and conduct our own research. The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of recruiting at the Division I lacrosse level, while the teams continue to expand in Division I lacrosse. As a participant in this research, you are being asked to be involved in an interview that addresses this research. For example you will be asked questions regarding, how you currently recruit your players, and how you used to recruit your players. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete.

The reason you are being asked to participate in this interview is because; you have many years experience as a Division I head coach. By having so many years of coaching you have seen first hand how recruiting has been effected over the years. This will be able to provide me with data that will better my research, and provide a better understanding to my research.

It would be greatly appreciated if we could set up a time at your earliest convenience to conduct the interview via video chat. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at (518)-514-8405 or by email maw07252@sjfc.edu

Sincerely,
Michael Widay

Appendix C

Consent Form

Project Title: Lacrosse Expansion Changed NCAA Division I Recruitment

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Purpose and Description: The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding on how the growth of lacrosse has changed recruiting for college lacrosse at the Division I level. As a participant in this research, you are being asked to participate in an interview that addresses how you recruit as a head coach. For example, you will be asked questions about how you recruit players for the different recruiting classes over your tenure as a head coach in Division I lacrosse. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete.

The answers you give will provide a better understanding on how the growth of lacrosse has changed recruiting at the Division I level. A risk associated to your participation in this interview is that your coworkers or supervisors may be aware of your participation through observation of you speaking with me. In addition, names and contact information will be kept confidential and will not be included in the results.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. You have the choice to not participate and if at any time during the interview you have the option to not answer a question or stop the interview completely. Any decisions to do so will be respected.

By participating in this interview you give permission. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participants please contact my research advisor Dr. Katharine Burakowski by phone (585)-385-7389 or by E-mail kburakowski@sjfc.edu

(Print Name & Date)

(Signature)

(Researcher Signature & Date)

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