Minutes of the Athletic Committee Meeting  
October 7, 2009  
1:00 PM – Willow River Room – Student Center

The first meeting of Athletic Committee for the 2009-10 academic year was brought to order at 1:00 pm in the Willow River Room at the Student Center. Those in attendance were:

Brian Huffman – Chair  
Richard Bowen – Athletic Director  
Melissa Wilson  
Kevin McLaughlin  
E. Craig Morris  
Kenneth Ecker  
Victoria Houseman  
Kathleen Olsen

Swimming and Diving Team
This committee was tasked with making a recommendation to the Chancellor ASAP regarding the future of the swimming and diving team. Brian began the meeting by welcoming the guests (there were many supporters of the team in attendance) and suggesting the following approach for the meeting:

1. Rick Bowen would give his report/recommendation concerning the team’s future.  
2. Others could speak beginning with those most prepared to speak (Coach Henderson and others).

Brian asked that those who spoke should voluntarily limit their comments in order to give everyone who wanted to speak the opportunity to do so.

Director Bowen’s Presentation
Rick said that the new athletic building will probably not include the pool in the first phase. He also noted that the pool in Karges is now beyond repair. His recommendations for the swimming and diving program were outlined in the attached statement.

Coach Henderson’s Presentation
Coach Henderson read a statement (attached) as well as some statistics from an email from Rick Bowen (regarding the student-athletes).

The balance of the meeting consisted of statements from supporters of the swimming and diving program.

This meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Huffman
Chair, Athletic Committee
Summary Report

Considerations for Suspending or Terminating a Varsity Sport

To: Faculty Athletic Committee

From: Rick Bowen
Director of Athletics
UW-River Falls

1. Title IX Impact
The UW-River Falls athletic module currently supports 11 women’s teams and 7 men’s teams. The women’s swim team has an initial roster of 22. The men’s team has an initial roster of 17. The end of season roster will be smaller, the proportion will be the same.

The 2008 Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) report lists 3252 female undergraduates for a percentage of 53.8% and 2322 men for 41.7% of the student body.

The 2008 EADA report listed 239 male athletes and 189 female athletes for 428 total student athletes. 56% of our athletes are male and 44% are female.

For perspective (and perspective only) football, of which there is no female equivalent, has a roster of 100 men. Factor out football’s 100 and we have 189 female athletes and 139 male athletes leaves 57.6% of our athletes female.

UW-River Falls has demonstrated a very strong commitment to Title IX.
- 1981 women’s softball added as a varsity sport
- 1986 women’s softball coach made full-time
- 1991 women’s basketball coach full-time
- 1994 added women’s soccer as a varsity sport
- 2000 added women’s hockey as a varsity sport
- 2003 added women’s golf as a varsity sport

Discussions have been held at the conference (WIAC) level regarding women’s lacrosse. Women’s lacrosse is THE up and coming sport in the twin cities high schools. WIAC athletic directors have discussed adding women’s lacrosse to the WIAC sport module as a group. UW-River Falls would support the addition of a women’s lacrosse program as soon as there is adequate competition in the area, thus adding 25+ women.

2. Are the facilities adequate to support a competitive program?
No. Karges pool has been permanently closed. We have no on campus facility to support a swim program.

We have not been competitive in a very poor on campus facility. For coaching evaluation purposes I define competitive as “the ability to compete for a conference championship once every five years.” The emphasis is on the words “compete for” not winning a conference championship in that time.
What does the future of competitive swimming hold with no on campus facility? Can we expect to be competitive without a pool?

3. What is the competitive history of the sport?
Men’s swimming became an intercollegiate sport in 1967 (42 years) UW Superior dropped swimming in 1978. UW-Platteville and UW-Stout dropped their swim programs in 1983. This leaves UW-River Falls as the smallest of the remaining 6 institutions with swimming programs (UW-Stevens Point, UW-Whitewater, UW-La Crosse, UW-Oshkosh and UW-Eau Claire).
Men’s highest conference finish ever is 3rd in 1969.
Men have finished 6th (last) from 1997-98 to 2008-09 or twelve consecutive seasons.
Men have finished last 22/42 seasons.
Men have finished 5th or 6th 28/42 seasons or 66% of time.
Men have finished in the bottom third 36/42 times, the middle third 3/42 times and the top third 1/42 times.
Men did not field a team in 1988.

Women’s swimming became a varsity sport in 1978 (30 intercollegiate seasons).
Women’s best finish in the conference was third in 1995.
Women have finished last since the 2004 season for 5 consecutive seasons.
Twice in the past twenty seasons the women were unable to field a team (1988 & 2005)
Women have finished in the bottom third 26/30 seasons.
Women have finished in the middle third 3/30 seasons.
Women did not have a team 2 seasons.
23/30 seasons finished 5th or 6th.

Should the ability, or inability to be competitive be considered a criterion for the continuation of a sport at UW-River Falls? As Director of Athletics I believe a certain level of competitive respectability is necessary. At some point in time, the decision must be made, if an activity is worth doing, it is worth doing reasonably well.

A precedent was set in 2002 when UWRF evaluated the sport module and dropped women’s gymnastics, men’s wrestling and baseball while adding women’s golf and men’s track and field.

The specific reasoning for dropping women’s gymnastics were:
Gymnastics was not a sanctioned NCAA sport.
We did not have a gymnastics facility.

The specific reasoning for dropping men’s wrestling were:
UWRF did not have a wrestling room or a wrestling area to support the sport.
Adequate coaching was not available.
The team was not competitive, struggling to fill weight classes.

4. Is quality, consistent coaching available?
Yes
5. What are the financial implications, including the possibility of reallocating resources within and outside of athletics?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swim S&amp;E</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim Assistant Coach</td>
<td>$ 3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim Coach Salary (50%)</td>
<td>$21,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFHS Pool Rental</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$54,574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the last meeting with Dale Braun the architects, and a UW-System representative, we were told the best case scenario to be in a new building is 2014. Assuming we are able to find funding and build phase two (the pool) I would assume 2019-2020 would be the earliest we would be in a new aquatic center. I cannot justify spending over $545,574 over a 10-year period of time to send the swim team off campus.

6. Contribution to broad based program:

   a. Balance between team and individual sports
      With a suspended swim program UWRF would be at 10 women and 6 men.

   b. Other opportunities for competition
      N/A

   c. Availability of intramural alternatives
      Intramural alternatives on campus would not exist. There has been no swimming as an IM offering for some time.

7. Effect on community involvement and service.
   The lack of a pool has a dramatic effect on a very dedicated and active but very small minority that swims at noon.

8. What are the enrollment implications, including impact on the university's strategic enrollment goals?
   No impact
A Statement to the Athletic Committee of the Faculty

Senate:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Bill Henderson and I am proud to be the Head Coach of the University of Wisconsin at River Falls Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving teams. I have served in this position for seven full seasons now and am in the early weeks of season eight. Our reasons for being here are unpleasant and for me doubly so, because not only do I have to possibly see these wonderful young men and women have their team taken away from them, I also have to deal with possibly losing my job. However, should the worst happen and this team is suspended for however long, I will go on and coach again. So I am not here today for myself. I am here to make sure you hear the story behind this amazing group of student athletes and know why
What this team has achieved

- In the past seven years the team has grown from five male swimmers and twelve females to the current team of seventeen men and twenty two women. The women finished 5-1 in dual meets last season and defeated Oshkosh for the first time in over ten years.

- The men’s team had a 3.18 GPA last season and the women a 3.0.

- The team hosts the largest collegiate invitational in the nation. The Falcon Invite will have over 500 swimmers competing in this year’s event.

- The team hosted the 2006 WIAC championships and are scheduled to host this year’s meet at the Univ. of Minnesota Aquatic Center. Prior to 2006 the team had
not hosted the championships since the mid 70s. Doing this has influenced the WIAC to change its plans for the meet so that we will always have the meet in a pool that will facilitate the best swims possible.

- The team was the only UWRF team to march in the Homecoming parade. The team made the decision to do this before they were made aware of possible suspension.

**The Team grows and is prospering despite**

- Up to this season, the team trained at the Karges pool. The pool was sub standard for NCAA competition when it was built. Last season we often had to run practice with over thirty athletes in a five lane, 30 foot wide pool.
• No Diving Boards: to call us a swimming and DIVING team is actually not fair. The diving boards were removed from the Karges pool in the mid 90s. Any divers that have wanted to compete for UWRF have had to train themselves elsewhere or with a club coach in the Twin Cities if available. So, the team has been competing without divers for over twelve years. At the usual dual meet this means we generally start the meet anywhere from 10 to 32 points behind and at the championships spot the other teams an average of 30 – 60 points. If you take diving out of the scoring at the team’s dual meets in the past seven years the women’s won-loss record goes from a 40 winning % to over 60, and the men’s record goes from below 20 to 40.
• The team subsists on the lowest operating budget in the conference by 40%. We travel by van more than any team on campus of comparable size and have kept our competition generally within a two hour drive to keep transportation costs down. Most of our pool equipment is purchased with foundation funds that the team fund raises for.

• I am paid at 50% for coaching a six month season; other winter sport coaches are paid 75% (the high school seasons in swimming run back to back, the women beginning in early August and the men starting right after them and finishing in mid March); the team receives only $4000 for assistant coaching.

• There has been a noticeable lack of support from the Athletic Department. [Handwritten: DeBowen has been to two meets in seven years (2006 champs and one of the than 5% of home meets over the past 7 years]
invites] and never over to RFHS for a home dual meet.

No one from the department works at the invite, it is all run by parents, alumni, volunteers and UMINN employees. We have a trainer at only half of our home meets.

The Future of the Program is Bright

- There are only three seniors on this year’s team. We have eighteen freshman on the squad this year.

- Recruiting for next year is very positive: there are 29 active recruits and thirteen have already indicated their plans to attend UWRF and swim (5 women and 8 men).

- The RFHS pool has proved to be a true blessing in disguise. Despite it being an “off campus” facility, the team has embraced the move and it is working out far better than we imagined. We can exist quite nicely in
this facility. Note: the school is saving money by having us swim at RFHS versus the cost of heating, treating and servicing the Karges pool.

- Graduating and fifth year students who were on the team are staying around to serve as volunteer assistant coaches. We have two super young men helping with the program this season.

- Local high school and club swim teams are being coached by UWRF swimming alums: North St. Paul, White Bear, Hudson and River Falls Swim clubs.

**What Suspending this team will mean for the University**

- A conservative estimate of ten of the current swim team members and ten of the recruits will go elsewhere if the team is cut. This represents almost a quarter of a million dollars in lost $.
• If the team is suspended it will send a message to Madison that the pool really isn’t that important to the campus and will be put off indefinitely or phased in even later than current plans would estimate.

• An alumni group of over 100 will lose faith in the future of the program, the athletic department and the university.

• Re-building the program will be a very difficult task.

Finally— What Keeping the team will mean for the University

• The university will see a team that will continue to grow and improve.

• We will demonstrate to the local area, the states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, the NCAA and the nation that this university truly believes in our core values and that the true worth of an athletic team lies not in
it’s win-loss record but in the character of the
student/athletes who make up the team.

I want to thank the committee for allowing me to speak
today and I invite you all to come over to RFHS and
observe our practices and/or swim meets. As I said at the
start, I am so very proud to be the Head Coach of this
team and hope to be for many years to come. Please Save
the University of Wisconsin at River Falls Swimming
and Diving teams!

I'll close end with some words of
wisdom that I received today
The Hall of Fame banquet is Saturday, October 17 at the Best Western. Anybody needing tickets ($25.00) should contact Melissa Wilson at foundation office.

Do any of you have a work study person that would be interested in earning $10.00 an hour (plus a free meal) to film the banquet. Let me know ASAP.

I thought this interesting

Our Student Body
51% are from Wisconsin
45% are from Minnesota
4% other
63% of student body is female
45% of student body lives on campus
50% of the student body is 1st generation college students
UWRF has the 2nd lowest household income of all UW schools.

I love the bottom two categories. We are an institution of opportunity. Let's never forget that. It speaks to why UWRF grads are so passionate and loyal about this place. It is here they found opportunity.
This also is quite interesting.

Of 100 high school seniors
66 take the college entrance tests
47 actually apply for a college
42 are admitted to college
32 become new freshmen
27 become 2nd year students
21 graduate

Rick Bowen
Director of Athletics
UW-River Falls
410 South Third St
River Falls, WI 54022
Office  (715)425-3246
Cell  (715) 441-9555
rick.bowen@uwrf.edu

Printed for William Henderson <william.henderson@uwrf.edu>