REFLECTIONS ON GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS: PAST, PRESENT, AND A PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE.

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ABSTRACT

Intercollegiate Athletics Programs in America generally follow two models, “Competitive” Athletics and “Participatory” Athletics. “Competitive” athletic teams are well funded and capable of winning conference and NCAA championships. “Participatory” athletic teams are not well funded and are not expected to win. “Participatory” teams are centered around the idea of providing student-athletes an opportunity to compete in a sport they enjoy playing. Georgetown University, a member of the Big East Athletic Conference, is operating its Athletic Department using both the “Competitive” and “Participatory” models. Georgetown University’s marquee athletic program is Men’s Basketball and membership in the Big East Conference has proven to be very valuable for the team and the University. The exposure of the program and the University on national television broadcasts gives Georgetown a tremendous amount of publicity. Revenues from ticket sales and merchandising have also proven to be very lucrative. The Big East Conference is great for the game of basketball but the same cannot be said for all sports at Georgetown. In order for the Men’s Basketball team to compete in the Big East Georgetown is required to have most of its other sports participate in the conference. While Georgetown Basketball is well funded in relation to its peers, many other Georgetown teams lack the resources of their conference
competitors. Georgetown’s “Participatory” programs in Baseball, Softball, Men’s and Women’s Golf, Men’s and Women’s Tennis, Men’s and Women’s Swimming, Field Hockey and Women’s Rowing compete against Big East teams with many more scholarships, more coaches and better facilities. As a result Georgetown’s “Participatory” sports are not successful in terms of wins and losses and securing Big East and NCAA tournament berths. Losing programs generally have trouble attracting top recruits, raising funds and attracting fans. Internal studies show that the student athlete experience for members of the “Participatory” teams is not as good as those on the “Competitive” teams. In this study I look at Georgetown’s athletic past to understand how it became a member of the Big East Conference. Next, examine the present state of Georgetown athletics to see which teams are successful and which are not. In interviews with the head coaches of many of the “Participatory” sports I find a divide between the idea and reality of a “Participatory” sport. Players and coaches on the “Participatory” teams want to win. However, the “Participatory” teams lack the funding to win in the Big East Conference. These teams have a history of losing in the Big East and their prospects for winning in the future do not look promising. The Big East is great fit for the “Competitive” teams but it does not meet the needs of the “Participatory” teams. In order to fulfill its desire to have both “Competitive” and “Participatory” Athletics Georgetown should request that the Big East allow all Georgetown to remove its “Participatory” teams from the conference. Georgetown should move these teams to a conference such as the Patriot League, which will provide these teams the opportunity to win and compete for a championship.
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CHAPTER 1
TRYING TO DO MORE WITH LESS

Intercollegiate Athletics is purely an American phenomenon. Nowhere else in the world is so much money, time and effort put into the athletic pursuits of college students. Almost every college and university in the United States sponsors some level of intercollegiate athletics. While the size of each institution and the success of their teams differ greatly, most colleges and universities participate in athletics for the same basic reasons. In his book Big-Time Sports in American Universities author Charles Clotfelter lists the four main reasons why American Colleges and Universities invest in athletics. The first reason is that in athletics “the athlete learns life lessons taught nowhere better than on the field of play.” The second reason for competing in sports is the idea that athletics, successful big time athletics, helps the University make money. Profits from Football and Basketball success can reach tens of millions of dollars a year and some times even more. The third reason is press and publicity that a University can get from its athletic programs. And the fourth reason that Universities sponsor athletics is that athletics can help bond a college community and can keep alumni involved in their alma mater. The authors of the article titled “The Sports Imperative in American Research Universities” argue that colleges sponsor athletics to help distinguish themselves from their competitors. According to the this article “While each university and college believes itself to have a unique product to provide its students, most college and university academic programs are, in content, virtually indistinguishable. They have

2. Ibid., 349.
almost identical courses offered to students in similar patterns sanctioned by standardized accreditation requirements.” There may be many more reasons that colleges sponsor athletics but there is no doubt that college athletics are very popular in America.

Intercollegiate Athletics programs in America generally follow two models. The first model is that of “Competitive Athletics”. This is found most notably at big state schools with Division I Football programs. Competitive sports are ones that are expected to win. Competitive sports have highly paid coaches; they are at or near the maximum number of scholarships allowed, and in many cases make money for the school. The success of competitive teams is based on how many NCAA tournament berths they earn and conference championships they win. There are no “moral” victories in “Competitive” athletics. Schools that follow the “Competitive” athletics model tend to sponsor a fewer amount of sports than those that don’t. The goal with “Competitive” athletics is to give every sport an opportunity to win by giving them the resources they need to succeed. Schools that follow “Competitive” athletics, like Stanford University, have multiple national championships in every sport they sponsor. The reason that many schools with Division I Football programs run a competitive model is that they make a considerable amount of money from football, which can help fund, the other sports. The top three schools in terms of revenue, Texas, Georgia and Penn State each earned more than $40 million from their football programs in 2011. To put that in perspective the entire budget for Georgetown’s 29 varsity sports in 2011 was just over $31 million.


The second model of collegiate athletics is known as “Participatory Athletics”. This model is found mostly in Division III schools as well as the Ivy League.

“Participatory” sports is centered on the idea of providing students an opportunity to compete in a sport they enjoy playing. Schools that follow the “Participatory” sports model tend to sponsor a wide variety of intercollegiate teams. Within “Participatory” athletics teams are not expected to win championships or earn NCAA berths.

“Participatory” teams tend to have a limited number of scholarships placing them well below the NCAA maximum. Universities value “Participatory” sports not for dollars made nor exposure and championships brought to the school. The value of “Participatory” sports is found in the benefits gained from playing the game. Those who believe in the value of sports often cite the values that playing sports instills in students. The values cited most often are; preparation and attention to detail more often referred to as the idea of “practice making perfect”, concentration, being able to perform under pressure by eliminating distractions, sacrifice, the ability to budget time properly and prioritize the most important things above the trivial and teamwork, being able to work together towards a common goal.

Georgetown University, a member of the Big East Athletic Conference, attempts to follow both models “Competitive” and “Participatory” at the same time. The dual philosophy of Georgetown Athletics and the challenges that philosophy encounters can best be expressed by looking at two sets of figures. Figure 1.1 shows the total number of varsity teams sponsored by members of the Big East. Georgetown offers the most varsity sports of any school. Figure 1.2 shows the overall operating expenses of Big East Schools in 2010-11. Georgetown is near the bottom of the 16-team conference in terms
of overall expenditures. Subsequent chapters will show that there is a relationship between the amount of money spent on a team and their overall success in terms of wins and losses and championships.

**Figure 1.1. Total Number of Varsity Teams in 2010**

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).

**Figure 1.2. Grand Total Expenses for each Big East School**

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Georgetown is well aware of its seemingly contradictory athletic models supporting “Competitive” and “Participatory” teams at the same time. According to its internal mission statement titled the “Georgetown Approach to Athletics”:

Georgetown University has a distinctive identity in intercollegiate athletics. Inspired by the University’s Jesuit identity and educational mission, our Athletics program seeks to develop the talents, character and leadership qualities of all student-athletes and members of our community.

A founding member of the BIG EAST Conference – one of the most respected conferences in America – Georgetown is one of the few highly selective private universities that sponsors programs that compete successfully at the highest level of intercollegiate athletics. We place an especially strong emphasis on competitiveness in basketball; given the sport’s history at Georgetown, the spirit and meaning it creates in our community, the ties it fosters to the city of Washington, and its national visibility.

At the same time, recognizing that intercollegiate athletics promotes many forms of learning and growth, we sponsor a comprehensive approach that includes 29 teams. Nearly 800 Georgetown student-athletes, a quarter of whom are walk-ons, have the opportunity to compete in a Division I sport and receive an outstanding education at an elite university.

Historically, Georgetown has been recognized as a leader in the education of student-athletes, with an NCAA Graduation Success Rate of 95 percent. Consistent with our Jesuit identity, we provide all student-athletes with a holistic education and expect them to integrate fully in campus life. As a result, many former athletes have gone on to attain advanced degrees, earn distinction in all professions, and, in some cases, become leaders in American sports and in society. 5

In this same document Georgetown lists the five values of Georgetown Athletics. They are in order,

1. Integrity
2. Educational Excellence,
3. Competitive Excellence
4. Community
5. Leadership.

It is Georgetown’s description of “Competitive Excellence” where we see the distinction that’s made between the “Competitive” and “Participatory” teams:

In all endeavors, Georgetown seeks strivers who want to excel in their fields of passion. Likewise, in Athletics, we attract students, coaches and Athletics staff who want to compete and win the right way – by reflecting the highest standards of preparation, effort, teamwork, sportsmanship, passion, and pride.

We value sponsoring some sports that contend annually for league and national championships. It serves as a source of pride for Georgetown – which seeks many forms of educational excellence – to succeed at the highest levels of athletic performance in some sports.

We do not believe that every team must compete for a national championship for that program to demonstrate competitive excellence. When a program displays powerful commitment, shows significant improvement, overcomes obstacles, and performs well given its resources and competition, student-athletes have a valuable competitive experience. Thus, we develop with each head coach clear performance goals and metrics.

We acknowledge that Georgetown needs to invest further in athletics infrastructure in order to strengthen performance in some sports. But that need cannot be an excuse for any team’s failure to maximize the opportunity to compete with intensity.6

Georgetown readily admits that some programs are intended to win, while others are not. Figure 1.3 shows the investment that Georgetown makes in each of its 29 athletics programs. The teams in the “Competitive” model are Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse, Men’s and Women’s Cross Country and Track and Field, Men’s and Women’s Soccer and Volleyball. The teams that fall in the “Participatory” Category are Baseball, Field Hockey, Women’s Rowing, Men’s and Women’s Swimming, Men’s and Women’s Tennis, Softball and Men’s and Women’s Golf. Football, Sailing and Men’s Crew do not participate in the Big East Conference and therefore are not examined in this paper.

Figure 1.3. Total Expenses for each Varsity Sport at Georgetown in 2010-11.

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
While the *Georgetown Athletics Positioning Statement* argues that success in some sports is determined by “displays of powerful commitment, showing significant improvement, overcoming obstacles, and performing well given its resources and competition,” do student-athletes really have a valuable competitive experience on teams that continually lose? Do the coaches of these “Participatory” sports judge their teams and themselves to be successful using the criteria listed above? This question gets to the heart of the problem this paper is investigating. The experiences of the student-athletes on the “Competitive” and “Participatory” Georgetown teams are very different and the question needs to be asked, “Is the Georgetown Model for Intercollegiate Athletics” successful? Georgetown has chosen to follow this path of dual athletic models because it is attempting to do something that most small private universities do not try. Georgetown is attempting to be Harvard (outstanding academics) during the week and Ohio State (outstanding intercollegiate athletics) on the weekends. Georgetown does this because they believe the benefits of membership in the Big East Conference for the “Competitive” teams and in particular the sport of Men’s Basketball, outweigh the negatives experienced by the “Participatory” teams. In order for Georgetown to be a member of the Big East it has to have most of its other teams compete in the Big East as well. So, the needs of the “Competitive” teams outweigh the needs of the “Participatory” teams. The question then must be asked, is the Big East Conference the best fit for Georgetown? Or is there another approach or conference that can better meet the needs of every Georgetown team? Before these questions can be answered it is necessary to find out how Georgetown arrived at the dual approach it is pursuing today. As the great
author George Santayana so succinctly put it “Those who ignore history are bound to repeat it.”
“Big Time” College Athletic programs (Sports at Division I schools that attract large crowds and generate revenue) are a phenomenon present only in the United States and since the beginning of organized college sports in America Georgetown University has been at the forefront of the college athletic scene. For the purpose of understanding how athletics came to be at Georgetown University and to see in comparison where they presently are, it’s useful to know a little of the history of athletics at Georgetown. Knowing this background will help us understand how Georgetown got to where it is today. It will also show that the issues facing Georgetown athletics in 2012 including “Competitive” vs. “Participatory” athletics have for a large part been around for over 150 years.

The first-ever intercollegiate college competition in the United States took place in 1852 on Lake Winnipesaukee, NH. It was a crew race between Harvard and Yale. Not surprisingly a businessman who wanted to attract new customers to his real estate development organized the competition.¹ The relationship between college sports and financial interests was present at the very beginning and continues to be at the very heart of college and specifically Georgetown athletics today. Throughout its history Georgetown Athletics has been in a state of fluctuation as its success or failure, prominence or obscurity, depends on the attitudes of the day concerning the value of

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intercollegiate athletics and the convictions of those in charge of the University at that time.

The origins of athletics at Georgetown are humble. Organized sports much like the rest of the country did not become popular at Georgetown until after the Civil War. The motto written above the present day Athletics Hall of Fame reads “Mens Sana in Corpore Sano.” Translated from the Latin it reads “Sound Mind in a Sound Body.” This maxim comes from the Roman writer Juvenal and the Jesuits at Georgetown believed (and do believe) in the simple yet profound concept that the mind is benefited by the body being in good shape. Before the rise of organized team sports, Georgetown students were encouraged to be physically active. Athletics were simply meant as a way to get exercise and thus a sound body. These exercises included bicycling, gymnastics and even long walks that would end up with a picnic with a Jesuit.² The first competitive sport to become popular at Georgetown was handball.³ Handball courts could be found all over campus and were used by the students and Jesuit faculty alike. With the popularity and benefits of exercise becoming more and more apparent, the Board of Directors at Georgetown authorized spending for athletic facilities.⁴ By 1868 athletics was so much a part of the daily life at the school that Georgetown advertisements were referencing its athletic facilities and sports culture as a way of attracting new students.⁵

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⁵ Ibid., 190.
The first intercollegiate sport at Georgetown was Baseball. It is with this first organized sport that we see the first evidence of a conflict between the academic mission of Georgetown and the role of athletics. During the 1870’s and 1880’s Baseball was the preeminent sport at Georgetown. It was so popular that when an 1870 game between two Georgetown teams, the Quicksteps and Stonewalls, had to be called off because of rain, the President at the time, Father Early, gave students the next day off from school so they could go watch and participate in the game. This extra holiday and the rising popularity of the sport led future Georgetown President Patrick Healy to question the value of sports at Georgetown. Writing in his diary he said that, “it is a sorry practice at best the Schools of a University dismissed to see a Baseball match!!” As the popularity of baseball rose, the rules and regulations of the sport became more defined and organized. The result of this organization was the formation of the Athletics Association, a precursor to today’s Athletic Department. The Athletics Association was a student-run organization that not only regulated team sports but also raised money to fund them. The Athletics Association would organize a festival every fall that featured a number of athletic events that were held on campus. As the Athletics Association prospered the athletic world around Georgetown was becoming more competitive. Schools began to realize the financial benefits from collegiate athletics. Georgetown was ready to play ball.

The 1890’s saw a real rise in the importance and stature of college athletics at Georgetown. As the book *Sports and Freedom* points out in great detail, during the 1890’s college sports were the primary method of building character and toughness in

athletes and Universities became very competitive with the recruitment of athletes.\(^7\) In order to make the academic environment more appealing to athletes Georgetown went so far as to change its class and exam schedules.\(^8\) During this period Georgetown had a relatively small number of undergraduates, averaging around 100 students, and therefore had a pool of athletes much lower than their rivals.\(^9\) In order to compete at the highest level Georgetown needed to find more students. The desire to find more and better athletes at Georgetown increased the success of the sports but began to further expose the rift between the athletic ambitions and academic mission of the school.

The early history of Georgetown Athletics with its ups and downs can be best examined by looking at its three most prominent early sports: Baseball, Football and Track. In the early 1890’s Georgetown was not winning a lot of games. Leaders in the school recognized that in order to compete with some of its larger competitors and gain the fame and recognition other Universities were realizing, it needed to expand its base of players. To meet this goal Georgetown authorized the participation of graduate students from Law, Medical and Graduate schools in intercollegiate competition. The increased success was almost immediate.

Football began to eclipse Baseball as the popular sport on campus in the 1890’s. Recognizing the potential financial benefits from the sport the University began selling individual and season tickets to its games.\(^{10}\) Consistent crowds of over 5,000 per game

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9. Ibid., 395.

10. Ibid., 116.
quickly led to plans to expand the football stadium to enhance revenue. The success of Football was not lost on the President of the school Father Richards. Trying to capitalize on the success and popularity of athletics he sought to expand facilities. In a letter to a potential donor he wrote:

Our students have been for some years past deeply interested in the athletic movement which has taken place in the great colleges of the country, and by their energy and pluck achieved a place in the first rank behind Yale, Harvard, Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania. They recently desired a fine gymnasium… Every great college except ourselves has one.\textsuperscript{11}

Richards also began to award athletic scholarships as a way to attract better athletes. He did this in a very unconventional way so as not to offend the good senses of the other Jesuits. The University would not give money directly to the athletes; instead they would give scholarship money to the student manager of the sport who would in turn award that scholarship money to an athlete. Neither the faculty nor the student receiving the scholarship knew that the money came from the University.\textsuperscript{12}

During the 1890’s the sport of Football was all the rage in the collegiate ranks. The sport looked very little like it is today. Violence and injury were the norm, helmets weren’t required, and oftentimes the sport resembled more of a gang fight than an organized match. Georgetown was very successful at football but the horrors of the sport soon entered the Hilltop. During an 1894 game against the Columbia Athletic Club, Georgetown football player George “Shorty” Behan was involved in a vicious collision that left him paralyzed and led to his death a few short weeks later.\textsuperscript{13} The condemnation

\textsuperscript{11} Curran, \textit{A History of Georgetown University: The Quest for Excellence 1889-1964}, 116-117.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 117.
of Football was swift. Georgetown University banned the sport for three years. Shortly thereafter the Baseball team saw its schedule curtailed due to concerns from the Jesuits that the travel and expense of the program was antithetical to the educational mission of the school. Father Richards tried to convince his superiors of the benefits of allowing the team to play its schedule but was told by the highest-ranking Jesuit that athletics gave students a “ruinous freedom.” Baseball’s decline may also have been helped out by the successes and challenges posed to the school by the Georgetown Track program.

Georgetown Track, led by brothers Bernard and James Wefers and Arthur Duffy, was the other successful sport in the 1890’s. Bernard was already a world-renowned runner. His record-breaking performances on the track put the Georgetown team in the spotlight and brought the school international acclaim. To outsiders the Georgetown Track program looked like a real success. However, the competitive success came at the cost of integrity to both track and athletics in general. Graduate students comprised the vast majority of players on the successful teams and in many cases calling them “students” was a real stretch. Many of the best athletes, including the Wefers brothers, would rarely if ever go to class. They would routinely flunk out of one school and then transfer to another school within Georgetown thus allowing them to continue to compete. They would also show up to Georgetown on the first day of practice not the beginning of classes, which came earlier. Athletes of dubious academic credentials were also

admitted to the school without the approval of the Dean. Georgetown was also investigated for having former professional players on their college teams.\textsuperscript{16}

Without a Football team to help raise money and suffering the economic pain inflicted by the depression of the 1890’s plus the stain of having athletes who were not students Richards began to trim scholarships, coaches and travel from the athletics budget. Father Richards knew the risk of de-emphasizing athletics saying, “If we don’t allow our students to compete they will hate Georgetown and go to non-Catholic colleges.”\textsuperscript{17} Despite his protestations there was nothing more he could do. This period of decreased importance of athletics however lasted for only a few years. After the retirement of President Richards Father John Whitney became President of Georgetown. Whitney, a Georgetown graduate, was above almost all else a sports fan. He quickly reversed the trends from the end of the Richards’ era by increasing scholarships and hiring the first Athletic Director.\textsuperscript{18} The trend of using graduate players on teams continued and Georgetown quickly earned a reputation as a school that would do anything to win. It should be noted that the NCAA did not exist at this time and there were no formal eligibility rules. This reputation of a “win at all costs” school was famously publicized in a \textit{Harpers Weekly} article.\textsuperscript{19} After a blowout loss to the Georgetown football team the University of Virginia decided it would no longer compete against Georgetown accusing the college of using professional players.\textsuperscript{20}


\textsuperscript{17} Durkin, \textit{Georgetown University: The Middle Years}, 136.

\textsuperscript{18} Curran, \textit{A History of Georgetown University: The Quest for Excellence 1889-1964}, 122.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 130.
In 1905, due to the rising chorus of complaints about the professional nature of Georgetown athletics the next school President Father Daugherty decided to remove all school support for intercollegiate athletics. Daugherty was quoted as saying, “Georgetown will be kept clear from the professional taint more or less rife in many of our schools and colleges by having bona fide students who come to Georgetown primarily to acquire its intellectual training and engage in sport solely for the sports’ sake.” Control of the sports went back to the student managers and the University supported intramurals only. The next President of Georgetown, Father Buell, continued this trend by limiting the travel each intercollegiate team could undertake in a year. Intercollegiate sports teams at Georgetown were no longer competitive on a national scale.

New leadership in 1910 brought a new attitude towards athletics. Father Donlon, the new President of Georgetown, was a fan of sports believing that it helped build student morale and aided in alumni fundraising. Slowly but surely during the next ten years athletics at Georgetown began to reach the levels of success seen in the 1890’s. Teams like Tennis and Rifle and Golf saw championship seasons. Track and Baseball also excelled but it was in Football that Georgetown really earned its reputation as one of the nation’s best. The Georgetown teams from 1910-1930 won 123 games and had a winning percentage of over 70%.

22. Ibid., 130-131.
23. Ibid., 130.
to the 35,000 seat Griffith Stadium, the home of the Washington Senators professional baseball team. Football was the unquestioned king of all sports in the world of college athletics and at Georgetown. Football was so popular that a 1929 game vs. NYU drew over 45,000 fans at Yankee Stadium. Once again though there was a groundswell of opposition to athletics both internally and externally.

Faculty at universities across the country started to voice their concerns about the over commercialization of college athletics. There critiques were summed up in a scathing report produced by the Carnegie Foundation that is to this day among the most influential critiques of intercollegiate athletics. The 1929 Carnegie Report argued that college athletics were meant to be about freedom and opportunity but they had become a professional endeavor concerned only with profit and publicity. The report concluded that colleges have a natural tendency to compete and that they don’t want to be seen as not doing enough to benefit their students and alumni. The report cited five specific areas of concern:

1. That an athletic career is started far to early in secondary school,
2. This career and time spent on sport takes too much time away from study,
3. Athletes in college are given everything they want and don’t know how to cope with their fame,
4. Athletic Scholarships inherently corrupt the academic experience.

The report put the blame for the these issues on the publicity and wealth that sports brought to colleges and, more importantly, the report put blame directly on the college presidents who, they said, were too reluctant to take an unpopular stand against athletics.

The report recommended an end to big time (money driven) college athletics and suggested schools should return to the roots of athletics, that is intramural sports that provide exercise without publicity or high costs.

Georgetown University took this report to heart and entered into yet another period of athletic de-emphasis. In 1932 President of Georgetown Father Nevils ceased support for athletic scholarships, which was now a requirement of the Middle States Association of which Georgetown was a member. The Middle States Association agreed with the Carnegie Report and felt that intercollegiate athletics had become too important on college campuses. Nevils fired the professional coaches and put an emphasis on intramural sports and participatory rather than competitive intercollegiate athletics.

The competitive landscape of college athletics did not change all that much however and soon Georgetown’s next president was putting more resources into the major sports of Football, Baseball, Track and Basketball. This period from about 1935 until the start of World War II put a stop to most sports. It was the last so-called golden age of Georgetown Athletics until the rise of Big East Basketball in the 1980’s.

Georgetown would continue to pour more money into athletics, particularly football, and the competitive results were once again remarkable. Georgetown’s Football teams were among the best in the country and would play before crowds of over 30,000.

Georgetown had a three year unbeaten streak broken in 1940 in a game at Fenway Park vs. Boston College that some claim was one of the best college football games in history. The following year saw the Hoyas end up #9 in the country and being awarded

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a berth to the Orange Bowl vs. Mississippi State. This was the high point of the Georgetown Football team.

After the war was over Georgetown attempted to rebuild their Football team. During the period from 1946-1950 Georgetown put a tremendous amount of resources into its football team hoping to regain the glory and fame it had before the war. The post war teams were not as successful and Georgetown found itself losing money every year. Then one of the most important decisions affecting Georgetown Athletics to this day was made. In 1951 Georgetown President Hunter Guthrie decided to end the football program all together. In a now famous *Saturday Evening Post* article titled, “No More Football for Us!” Guthrie gave a blistering critique of college sports and football, in particular saying:

Football is important. We at Georgetown began to think it was too important. We did not want to be reduced to trying to persuade the public that we also educate students at Georgetown . . . No Professor with a PhD, a dozen books to his credit and an international reputation for scholarship, could hope for the opulent salary received by the head coach of football.  

Guthrie had a lot of reasons to drop the sport. The best estimates found that Georgetown football lost close to $250,000 a year. This was money that could have been used to build new dorms or pay for new faculty or libraries or graduate programs. Much like Presidents Healy, Richards, Donlon and Nevis before him, Guthrie felt that Georgetown athletics had reached a tipping point. More emphasis on sports to him meant less emphasis on the core educational values of Georgetown. In Guthrie’s mind, “Since Georgetown was founded to benefit students and not spectators, I find it fulfills that


31. Ibid.
purpose better by offering its students forms of exercise other than football.”

Georgetown’s decision to drop football altogether made national headlines and wasn’t until the rise of the Georgetown Basketball team in the 1970’s that Georgetown would once again find itself involved in Big Time College Athletics.

CHAPTER 3
FROM THE ORIGINAL BIG EAST CONFERENCE TO THE NEW BIG EAST – HOW DID WE GET HERE AND WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON GEORGETOWN ATHLETICS?

The formation of the Big East Conference has had profound effects not only on Georgetown University and Georgetown athletics but also on college athletics as a whole. In the 1970's Georgetown had two full time head coaches, Men's Basketball with John Thompson, Jr. and Men's Track and Field with Joseph Lang. The other head coaches in the department were only part time and held jobs outside athletics; for example, Joe McClure, the Women's volleyball coach was a physics professor at the University. Georgetown sports teams played local colleges and Universities and the emphasis was not on winning or losing but simply playing the games against like competition. The idea of reaching an NCAA tournament or becoming NCAA champion was largely a foreign concept at Georgetown.1 The varsity sports had varying degrees of success with Men’s Track and Field being the stand out sport. Georgetown teams were part of different conferences with Basketball and Track affiliated with the East Coast Athletic Association, ECAC, a loosely organized conglomerate of schools that included among others Boston College, West Virginia and George Washington. There were only a handful of scholarships for teams like Volleyball and Women’s Basketball and Title IX reforms that were passed in 1972 had not been fully implemented in Georgetown athletics.

By the late 1970's the NCAA was creating new rules and guidelines concerning Men’s Basketball scheduling. The results of the new rules made it very difficult for

schools from independent or loosely organized conferences to receive a berth to the
tournament. In order to qualify for the NCAA tournament an independent team would
have to schedule games against teams it had no desire to play. Georgetown Basketball,
under John Thompson, Jr., was becoming more and more successful and had the talent to
make the NCAA tournament but as member of ECAC conference the path to the
tournament was pretty muddled. It was during this time that a few athletic directors from
the ECAC got together to see if they could find a better way of helping their teams reach
the NCAA tournament.

Georgetown Athletics Director Frank Rienzo and Providence Athletics Director
Dave Gavitt were the leaders of this group. Along with the Athletic Directors from
Boston College, University of Connecticut, Syracuse, and St. John’s they created the Big
East Conference. Their idea was basic; form a conference based on Men’s Basketball
consisting of schools in the Northeast that played in the major media markets and large
arenas and the conference champion would get an automatic berth to the NCAA
tournament. In order for a conference to get an automatic berth they had to have a
minimum of six sports total in the conference. So Georgetown and the other seven
schools started the Big East Conference based on Basketball but also included five other
men’s sports Men’s Indoor Track, Men’s Outdoor Track, Men’s Cross Country, Men’s
Golf and Men’s Tennis.

The timing of the formation of the Big East could not have been better as a
number of important factors came together around this time to ensure that the Big East
would be successful. College sports were really beginning to become important on
television and the CBS broadcast network was interested in televising more games. The
1979 NCAA College Basketball Championship game televised on CBS was a game between Indiana State and Michigan State. More importantly, it was a game between Larry Bird and Magic Johnson, two of the best basketball players of all-time. The game itself was a huge success and to this day it is the highest rated televised basketball game in history.\(^2\) Many believe this game to be a watershed moment in college basketball as it was now eclipsing college Football in importance. CBS realized the importance and potential college basketball and to this day continues to televise the NCAA tournament.

In 1978 a small company was formed in Connecticut with the idea of televising all sports in that state. This new company called Entertainment Sports Programming Network (ESPN) soon decided it would be better to become a 24-hour sports station for the entire country. They needed programming to fill their schedule and the new Big East Conference was a perfect fit. The Big East gave ESPN access to the largest television markets in the Northeast, Boston (Boston College, Providence), New York (Syracuse, Seton Hall and St. John’s) and Washington, D.C (Georgetown University) and Hartford, CT (University of Connecticut).

The success of Big East Basketball was almost immediate and it sent a shockwave through the world of NCAA athletics. Prior to the founding of the Big East the vast majority of schools reaching the Sweet 16 and Elite eight rounds of the NCAA Men’s Basketball tournament were large public institutions. By 1985 however the Big East was able to boast of four teams in the Elite eight of the tournament, Boston College, Georgetown, St. John’s and Villanova. What made this a fundamental change in NCAA

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basketball was not the fact that four of the Elite eight came from the Big East. It was the fact that there were four relatively small private schools in the final eight. That was the real change. The Big East really shook up the world of college athletics. The mere fact that these smaller schools were now competing with the “big boys” and that they were getting the preponderance of the revenue shares from the NCAA tournament began to threaten the big public institutions. The “big boys” of college sports did not like this change and quickly sought to turn the balance of power back to their favor.

While Men’s Basketball was increasing in popularity and the revenues were pouring in, schools in the big Football conferences were becoming more concerned with what they saw as an unfair system. Football schools were not happy due to the fact that they wanted a change in the way television rights were awarded and they felt they alone should be able to vote on that. The NCAA had total control over the Football television contract and limited schools to two television games per season. In 1977 the big Football conferences, namely the Atlantic Coast Conference, SEC, Big 12, SWAC and Notre Dame formed something known as the College Football Association (CFA) and threatened to leave the NCAA if they couldn't negotiate their own television rights. The NCAA did not budge so in 1980 the CFA negotiated its own Football television contract with NBC. The NCAA threatened to expel the CFA schools and the CFA schools responded by filing an antitrust lawsuit against the NCAA. ³ In 1984 the US Supreme Court decided against the NCAA and in favor of the CFA. The floodgates of television contracts had now opened up. The ruling allowed individual schools and conferences to negotiate their own television contracts.

The Supreme Court ruling helped allay the concerns of the big Football schools but only for a short time. Ever since the beginning of the NCAA there was a school of thought that said those who pay more and invest more in sports should have more control over the association. The NCAA had a governance structure that allowed one vote per school. The big Football conferences felt that this was unfair and they spearheaded a change in NCAA organization that took effect in 1997. The NCAA was restructured in a way that gave more power to the Football schools of Division IA. Instead of vote by the every NCAA institution, a 15-member board of directors decided NCAA legislation with Division IA getting nine of the 15 votes.\(^4\) Five cabinets - Academic Affairs, Eligibility and Compliance, Business and Finance, Championships and Competition, Strategic Planning, replaced NCAA Committees.\(^5\) Each of the new cabinets had to have a majority of Division 1A members. The basic result is that the big Football schools now had control of the NCAA and the direction that it would go.

A number of other important changes to NCAA rules came out in the 1980’s and 1990’s that affected the way Georgetown would have to run its sports programs including criteria for scheduling within conferences and scholarship and financial aid minimums for NCAA schools. The new rule concerning sports sponsorship said that all sports, except Football, at Division I colleges had to have a minimum of 20 games and at least 75% of those games had to be against Division 1 opponents.\(^6\) While Georgetown was competing at a national level with Men’s Basketball most of its other teams were happily


\(^5\) Ibid.

\(^6\) Lang, interview.
competing against local schools of equal ability which happened to include a number of Division III schools. In order to stay in the Big East these teams would now have to compete at higher levels. Scholarship minimums were also set and the shares from the NCAA tournament were based on the number of scholarships a school had. Schools with more scholarships, namely the big Football schools, would earn more than the smaller private institutions like Georgetown, which had fewer scholarships. In many ways Georgetown was a victim of its own successes in Basketball. There was an ever increasing pool of money created by the popularity of college basketball and the Football schools wanted to get their hands on it. Coach John Thompson, Jr. perhaps saw this coming when he addressed the 1988 NCAA convention saying, “I think we teach education and preach education, but we vote money.”

It is important to note that membership in an athletic conference such as the Big East has values beyond monetary gain. A regular conference gives structure to athletics programs. A conference schedule gives a team meaningful games rather than a set of games on the schedule with no real meaning. Being in a conference also gives member school resources such as governance, initiatives, community outreach programs, and recognition of things like player of the week and all-academic teams. With all the benefits of being in a conference such as the Big East it was no surprise then that schools not in the Big East wanted in.

Seeing the benefits to its Basketball programs the schools in the Big East that played Football, Pittsburgh, Syracuse and Boston College decided to create a Big East Football Conference. In 1992 Miami, West Virginia, Rutgers, Temple and Virginia Tech were added creating an eight team Football conference. The Football schools did not

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7. Lang, interview.
want to share any revenue with the Basketball schools so they ended up forming two different corporations, Big East Football and the Big East Conference. The addition of the Football aspect to the Big East has on the one hand providing the conference with a larger share of money and publicity but it has also created a tension between the basketball and Football schools that has led to instability in the membership.

The mid 1990's saw a big change for Big East. The Football schools were desirous of more money and exposure so they worked together to come up with an idea to create a “Big East Brand.” The Big East Brand was essentially created by spending more money on sports in the conference in the hopes that they would become more competitive on a national scale. The Big East now required that each school have a minimum number of sports competing in the conference and these Big East sports had to have minimum number scholarships, a minimum that was set by the conference. The bottom line for Georgetown was that if it wanted to stay in the Big East it would have to fund its sports at a higher level. Georgetown did do its due diligence and investigated whether a switch in conferences would be beneficial. Every study that they commissioned came up with the same finding: the cost of leaving the Big East, namely the money that it made from Big East Conference Basketball TV rights, was far greater than any cost savings that it would realize by not having to fund the other sports at a higher level. Georgetown made the decision to stay in the Big East.

It is very hard to put a dollar value on the benefit from membership in the Big East. There is a dollar value to television contracts (Rights fees for the NCAA basketball

8. Lang, interview.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.
tournament with CBS were $28.3 million in 1985, $166.2 Million in 1995 and in 2010
the contract was for 14 years and nearly $11 billion\textsuperscript{11}) but the publicity gained from
having Georgetown on TV is difficult to estimate. Some evidence of the benefits of Big
East Membership is anecdotal or hard to quantify. There are some benefits that are easier
to value and the most important of these are licensing and merchandising of the
Georgetown brand.

When the Big East was founded in 1979 licensing and marketing of college sports
and even pro sports was a small market. For the relatively small amount of $25,000 the
Georgetown athletic department was able to get licensing rights for the now iconic
Georgetown G and Jack the Bulldog. The University didn't see any benefit that would
come from owning those rights but the Athletic Department saw promise.\textsuperscript{12} Georgetown
became one of the first schools to aggressively market its logo on merchandise. That
decision helped create over $25 million in revenue from 1982-2000. By 1989
Georgetown University merchandise led the collegiate market.\textsuperscript{13} The revenue from
licensing enabled the Athletic Department to better fund its sports. The Georgetown
dominance of the market did not last long as slowly but surely other college teams as well
as the professional sports got into the marketing and licensing game and the Georgetown
share of the market dropped.

With its precipitous loss in market share Georgetown looked at ways to find
another revenue stream. Their new revenue stream came from the growth of cable TV
sports. ESPN had now grown to four channels each with 24 hours of programming and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[12] Lang, interview.
\item[13] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
CBS started their own college sports network in 2002. The Big East took advantage of the demand for content and secured lucrative contracts with the networks. However with more money came more problems.

Starting in about 2002 the Big East Football schools wanted more of a share of the profits from the conference television rights. Soon word spread that the Football schools wanted to break away and force the basketball schools out. As Miami and BC were looking to join the Atlantic Coast Conference in order to get more money the other Football schools got nervous. They didn’t want to be left behind in a weakened Football conference. What happened next is the basic reason why the Big East Conference is now a 17 team conference with members as far south as Texas and as far west as San Diego.

In 2002 the Conference had a vote on whether to kick the Basketball schools out. The vote came down 6 in favor, 5 against and 1 abstain. The Big East constitution required that a majority of teams vote in favor of reforming the conference. Six votes was one short of a majority so the Big East Basketball and Football teams had to find a new way forward. Boston College, Miami and Virginia Tech left the Big East for the ACC and now the conference was down to five Football schools. The Basketball schools were able to convince the remaining Football schools of the benefit of having strong academic research institutions in the conference. The Football schools wanted eight Football teams in the Conference so in order to keep a balance between Football and Basketball the basketball schools wanted eight teams as well. This is how the Big East Conference ended up with 16 schools from 2005-2012. South Florida, Louisville and Cincinnati were added as Football schools and Marquette, DePaul became the seventh and eighth

14. Lang, interview.

15. Ibid.
basketball schools. This new 16 team Big East turned out to be a boon for revenue as the Conference was now better than ever. The Big East conference had more teams in the top 20 and more teams in the NCAA tournament than any other conference. Almost every night during Men’s Basketball season there would be a game between two great Big East basketball teams. The sheer number of games between ranked opponents helped the Big East eclipse the ACC in popularity.\(^{16}\) Again success would come at a price.

In 2010 as the Big East set out to secure a new television contract it quickly became apparent that there would be many bidders. The Big East received a renewal offer from ESPN for approximately $130 million a year over ten years. The Big East, however, voted to turn down this offer hoping that open bidding would lead to a better deal. This was a gamble for the Big East and it proved costly. Nervous that the Conference did not have a deal in place Syracuse, Pittsburgh and West Virginia each decided to leave the Big East for other conferences and the guarantee rather than the promise of more money. The fall of 2011 saw the Big East Conference once again in flux. In response to the loss of the three Football schools the Big East decided to add San Diego State, Boise State and Navy as Football only members and Central Florida, Memphis, Southern Methodist and Houston as all sports members. The Conference that was founded in 1979 by six small private schools in the northeast looking for a better way to make the NCAA men’s basketball tournament is now in 2012 on the verge of becoming a 20 team conference stretching all over the country.

This new conference will undoubtedly strike a lucrative television deal. But, one thing that has been absent from the discussion of the direction of the conference is the student-athlete. For all intents and purposes the student-athlete has now become a pawn

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\(^{16}\) Lang, interview.
of the networks and the Universities’ desire to make more money. With so much money involved the needs of the student-athlete have been overlooked. The changes in the Big East through the years now mean that the Georgetown tennis team, which no more than 15 years ago was competing and doing well against local competition from Divisions II and III, now will have to travel to Texas to compete against Southern Methodist. The Softball team, which is only five years old, will now have to compete against perennial NCAA championship Contenders University of Houston and Central Florida. This is the hidden cost of membership in the Big East. Basketball and Football occupy the headlines and the television deals are made primarily with those teams in mind. The smaller non-revenue generating sports are all impacted by conference additions. “Competitive” and “Participatory” sports alike will now have to travel longer distances, spend more time away from class, and compete against better competition. Sports that were beginning to crack into the top of the Big East are now left with new challenges and hurdles to overcome and there is no guarantee that the conference won’t add more teams in the future especially if that means a more lucrative television contract.

Throughout the history of the Big East the priority has been Basketball and Football. The NCAA reforms of the 1980’s and 1990’s coupled with the idea of the “Big East Brand” has forced Georgetown to put more money into its athletics department. But, as a small private college offering 29 varsity sports, Georgetown doesn’t have the budget to compete with the large state institutions in every sport. Georgetown is also outspent by smaller schools that sponsor fewer teams and can make their money go farther. Therefore, Georgetown is forced to make decisions about which sports it will fund well and which sports it will allow to compete with the minimum number of
scholarships and realistically no chance of having a winning record. The rest of this paper will look at the different sports at Georgetown, the haves: Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Track and Field, Men’s and Women’s Soccer, Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse and the have nots: Baseball, Men’s and Women’s Swimming, Men’s and Women’s Golf, Men’s and Women’s Tennis, Softball and Volleyball.
CHAPTER 4
GEORGETOWN MEN’S BASKETBALL – MORE THAN JUST A GAME

As described in Chapter 1, Georgetown University sponsors 29 Varsity Athletics teams, which is the most of any Big East school. As of 2011 Georgetown was spending approximately $31 million a year on its intercollegiate athletics program. By contrast Louisville spent $83 million for only 23 Varsity sports. The disparity in overall athletics budgets can be seen in figure 1.2. Georgetown has continued to express the desire to compete in all of its Varsity sports and has so far refused to reduce the number it sponsors so it is left to make some hard decisions. With a $31 million budget Georgetown cannot fund each of its programs to the maximum so it is left with a choice: fund all programs equally or fund some programs more than others. Georgetown has taken the latter approach. Georgetown has chosen to put more funds into Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Men’s and Women’s Soccer, Men’s and Women’s Track and Field and Women’s Lacrosse. This Chapter will look at the “ Competitive” programs to see the benefits that being well funded means in terms of overall record, alumni giving, and benefits to the University community as a whole. Men’s Basketball is singled out as being of special significance to the University: “We place an especially strong emphasis on competitiveness in Basketball, given the sport’s history at Georgetown, the spirit and meaning it creates in our community, the ties it fosters to the city of Washington, and its national visibility.”¹

As Chapter 2 points out Georgetown men’s Basketball was not the most popular or successful sport on the hilltop for many years. That distinction fell to Football. From

1948-1972 the men’s Basketball team won 296 games and lost 302 and only reached a post-season tournament twice in that time.\(^2\) Ever since the hiring of John Thompson Jr. in 1972 Men’s Basketball has been the marquee program at Georgetown. As was discussed in the previous Chapter the Big East Conference was founded as primarily a Basketball conference. The success of Georgetown Basketball has been tremendous. In 1982 just three years after the formation of the Big East Georgetown made it to the NCAA final against North Carolina. The Hoyas made it back to the final game in 1984 and 1985 winning it all in 1984. In the Big East the Hoyas have won seven Big East Conference Tournament Championships tying them with Connecticut for the most in the conference. Figure 4.1 shows the funding of Big East Men’s Basketball teams from 2003-2010. Over the past seven years Georgetown has spent over $50 million on Men’s Basketball and puts Georgetown in the top four in the conference in expenditures. The total expenses are an important number to look at because there is a relationship between how much a college spends on a sport and how well that sport does.

Expenditures for Basketball include scholarship money; Georgetown has the NCAA maximum of 12 scholarships, staff salaries, travel, recruiting and expenses associated with hosting games. With funding that puts it near the top of the conference in terms of expenses, Georgetown is positioned to succeed.

Figure 4.2 shows the number of conference wins each team has had in the Big East since 2005. 2005 is the first year that all current teams competed in the conference. Georgetown is fourth in the conference in total wins over the last five years. The bottom two teams in terms of funding are also the bottom two in win total. Georgetown has won seven conference championships in Men’s Basketball, which is tied with Connecticut for the most in conference history. Georgetown has also qualified for the NCAA tournament 24 times since 1979 including five out of the last six years. Georgetown is ranked in the
top 20 schools in the nation in terms of number of NCAA men’s Basketball tournament appearances. 3

![Total Number of Big East Wins from 2005-2010](image)

Figure 4.2. Total number of Big East Wins for Men’s Basketball Teams

*Source:* Data from Big East Conference (http://www.bigeast.org/Sports/MensBasketball.aspx)

From a competitive standpoint it is very clear that Georgetown Men’s Basketball is successful. However, as the *Athletics Positioning Statement* says, Men’s Basketball means more to Georgetown than wins and losses: “We place an especially strong emphasis on competitiveness in Basketball, given the sport’s history at Georgetown, the spirit and meaning it creates in our community, the ties it fosters to the city of Washington, and its national visibility.” 4 Of the four values that Georgetown cites as the reason Men’s Basketball is given the most support, the history of success for the team is the easiest to quantify. The next three values are not as clear.

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The spirit and meaning that Men’s Basketball creates in the Georgetown community is something that is tough to measure. There is a great deal of anecdotal evidence of the importance the team plays in the lives of everyday students. Attendance at a home Basketball game is shown in Figure 4.3. Supporters of the Basketball program will point out that there is no other campus event that brings so many students and alums together in one place to support Georgetown. The best lecture on campus won’t get anywhere near these numbers. Events like Midnight Madness, which celebrates the opening of men’s Basketball season, regularly draws thousands of students.

As the book *The Game of Life* points out “Sports can play an important role in creating a campus ethos in part through the (sports game) but also through the banner on the dorm room wall and stories on the back page of the student paper. These ‘bonding’ effects can be important in attracting students and in making the campus a pleasant place.
for everyone.” A search of YouTube for videos of the celebration after the 2007 Basketball team beat North Carolina to reach the final four shows just how men’s Basketball “bonds” the campus. Thousands of students stormed out of their dorms and houses and celebrated the victory by marching on M Street, singing the fight song and chanting “Hoya Saxa.” This is the type of excitement and bonding successful teams can bring to a campus.

Much has been made of the idea that success in athletics can lead to an increase in the number and quality of applications to a school. Supporters of Georgetown Basketball argue that the success of the team has led to more visibility for Georgetown and that has led to a rise in applications. This phenomenon is sometimes known as the “Flutie Effect.” In November 1984 Doug Flutie, the quarterback of the Boston College football team, threw a last second game winning touchdown against highly ranked and heavily favored University of Miami on national television. Applications to Boston College rose by 25% that year. Universities have been touting the “Flutie Effect” as a reason why intercollegiate athletics success can have an impact on the school as a whole. Many studies have been done to see if the “Flutie Effect” is real and the studies have come to varying conclusions.

To date J. Douglas Toma and Michael Cross have done the most in-depth study. Toma and Cross looked at every NCAA football and Basketball champion from 1979-1992 to see if there was an increase in applications to the school. They also looked at


applications over a three-year period and applications to peer institutions during the same years. One of the schools featured in the study was Georgetown University and their findings are very interesting. Of the twenty NCAA Basketball champion schools profiled only two schools saw an increase in applications of over 10% in the following year: Michigan in 1989 and Georgetown in 1985. In the year following the 1984 Men’s Basketball Championship Georgetown saw a 13% increase in undergraduate applications. During the period from 1982, when the men’s Basketball team went to the NCAA final four, until 1987 applications to Georgetown rose 43% from a little over 8,000 to over 12,000. During that same period the acceptance rate for Georgetown went from 31% to 21%. Supporters of Men’s Basketball cite these statistics to show the positive effect athletics can have on Georgetown. More applications allow the admissions department to be more selective with the type and quality of the students they admit. Also, the increase in applications tends to mean that there is a more diverse group of students applying.

Looking at the admissions trends at other schools there is some evidence seems to diminish the importance of Basketball in terms of the rise in applications. Toma and Cross found that while applications at Georgetown did rise following the championship season, applications at peer institutions that did not win an NCAA Basketball championship such as Tulane, and Vanderbilt also rose by a similar amount, although not as high as Georgetown. Still, there is significant evidence to show that success in men’s Basketball did coincide with a 43% increase in applications to Georgetown. During that


8. Ibid.

time period there was no other significant event at Georgetown that could account for the rise in applications.

More research on the subject of the “Flutie Effect” occurred in 2000 when a research poll was taken of 500 college-bound seniors. The research found that 73% of those surveyed said a college’s position in the NCAA was not an influencing factor on college choice. In addition 37% didn't know the NCAA Division (I, II, or III) of the schools they applied to and 67% couldn’t even name a single athletics conference. This information would seem to cast doubt on the idea that a college’s athletics success makes a difference in the number and quality of applications to a school. Taking a look at Georgetown’s recent undergraduate applications numbers, Figure 4.4 shows that applications rose 15.6% following the 2007 Final Four and 19.2% in the following four years. This rise in applications isn’t as big as those seen in the 1980’s following successful Basketball seasons but Dean of Admissions Charles Deacon attributes that to name recognition "[Basketball] was a bigger factor back in the '80s, back then, Georgetown's name recognition was not there. Now, it's very high." According to Deacon, "(in the 1980s) Basketball was certainly making us more visible. The Georgetown name was on the tongue of a lot of people."


13. Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Win %</th>
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<td>19</td>
<td>15534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15404</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.4. Total Number of Undergraduate Applications to Georgetown University

Source: Data from Georgetown University Admissions Department

The most recent study relating to the “Flutie Effect” took place at George Mason University. In 2006 the George Mason University’s (GMU) men’s Basketball team made it to the Final Four of the NCAA tournament. The team was the lowest seed to ever advance to a Final Four in its current 68-team format. The study titled “The Business of being Cinderella” appears to prove that the “Flutie Effect” is still a reality today. According to the report admissions inquiries to George Mason increased 350%, actual applications rose 22%, and out of state applications rose 40%. The average SAT of incoming freshman rose 25 points. In addition to the admissions benefits there were significant financial benefits as well. Donations to the Athletics Department rose 52%. Alumni involvement which is measured by giving, participating in an event rose approximately 25%. Web hits on the athletic website rose over 700%.

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15. Ibid.
the most important statistic to come out of this study was the monetary value given to all the press coverage surrounding the Cinderella story of the GMU Basketball team. According to George Mason “an estimated $677,474,659 in free media was earned by Mason during the 2006 NCAA Tournament through national, regional, and local broadcast (including games), print, and electronic media coverage.”\(^{16}\)

Supporters of the Georgetown Basketball program often mention the increased philanthropic giving that occurs when the team does well. Figure 4.5 shows total giving to athletics from 2003-2010. The statistics show that there was a 24% increase in total dollars given to athletics following the final four appearance of the 2007 men’s Basketball season. Men’s Basketball fundraising also saw a jump in giving. Figure 4.6 shows a 27% increase in donations in the year following the final four.

The Men’s Basketball program is also considered a revenue generating sport. Proceeds from television and NCAA tournament contracts combined with marketing and advertising make Basketball a profitable sport for the athletic department.

\(^{16}\) Edgerly, “The Business of being Cinderella, Mason Releases Study on impact of Final Four.”

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The rise in giving to athletics also coincided with a new marketing and fundraising plan for the Basketball program. Starting in the 2006-07 season Georgetown began a program of mandatory donations for season ticket holders. The donations ranged
in size from $200 per seat in the lower bowl of the Verizon center to over $10,000 for
courtside seat.

Season ticket sales and mandatory donations are only a part of the significant
earnings of the Men’s Basketball program. The current Big East television contract,
$200 million for six years, guarantees Georgetown around $1.56 million each year.\textsuperscript{17} As
mentioned in Chapter 2, the Big East is looking to negotiate an even bigger deal in the
neighborhood of close to $1 billion. If the next contract is $1 billion over ten years
Georgetown could stand to make over $6 million a year from TV rights alone. There are
a number of reasons why the television money might be this lucrative. In the past two
years the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) and the Pac 12 conference have negotiated
new deals that guarantee $13 million and somewhere between $18-30 million
respectively per conference member. The Big Ten conference has its own television
network which coupled with network TV deals bring each member close to $20 million a
year.\textsuperscript{18} The school with the biggest television contract is the University of Texas, which
earns approximately $15 million annually from the major networks and is starting their
own channel with ESPN that guarantees an additional $15 million per year.\textsuperscript{19} The major
broadcast networks along with ESPN, CBS College Sports and Comcast/NBC are all
vying for more sports content and recent history has shown that the Big East and
Georgetown stand to make significantly more money from their next television contract.

\textsuperscript{17} Matt Peloquinn, “2011 NCAA Television Revenue by Conference,”
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Richard Sandomir, “University of Texas Will Create Its Own Sports Network with ESPN,”
Television money isn’t the only money that the Big East makes as a conference. The NCAA men’s Basketball tournament had gross revenues of around $757 million in 2011. Approximately 60% of that money or $454 million goes back to the member schools. The money is distributed in five different ways. Proceeds go to the conference for academic enhancement, Basketball fund, student assistance fund, grants in aid and a sport sponsorship fund. The Basketball fund is the largest of the funds and is doled out in shares based on the number of teams a conference has in the tournament. So, a conference like the Big East with 11 teams in the 2011 tournament earned more than a smaller conference. The Big East earned over $23 million last year, divided among 16 teams gives close to $1.5 million to Georgetown. The Sports Sponsorship Fund gives out funds based on the number of NCAA sanctioned sports a school sponsors. According to the 2010-11 figures Georgetown was entitled to close to $400,000. The proceeds Georgetown received from all five funds in 2010-11 are over $2 million.

As the title of this Chapter suggests men’s Basketball is not just a sport at Georgetown, it transcends sport and helps tie the University to the city of Washington. The hiring of John Thompson Jr., in 1972 was not just about Basketball. As a former NBA player, college great and DC native John Thompson represented something more than just a Basketball coach. As Dean Charlie Deacon, chair of the committee that hired Thompson said "hiring a black coach would establish a better identity for Georgetown


22. Ibid., 8.
within the community." and "Most of us were very aware of what an impact a successful Basketball team, with a black coach, would have on the image of Georgetown University with blacks, both locally and nationally." While never formally announcing that they were looking to hire an African American head coach, Georgetown made no secret that being African American helped Thompson land the job.

Former Georgetown president Timothy Healy, SJ is quoted as saying:

There is something about Washington, D.C. that has always reminded me of a cuckoo’s nest. The local people make the nest. The cuckoos – the federal people and all their hangers-on – move into the nest. They fly in and out and their main interests are elsewhere. They don’t really care about…what they do to the nest…. I think Georgetown has been one of the cuckoos. After the 1968 riots it became obvious that the University’s position wasn’t very smart or defensible. We began making some changes, some statements to the local community that we were going to try to be at least more responsible and useful. I think it’s fair to say that hiring John Thompson was one of those statements.

As part of the campaign to be more engaged with the local community the University lowered admission standards for African American students and they began to recruit more students from DC. By 1980 there were 400 African American undergraduates at Georgetown. By 2010 46% of all students at Georgetown were minorities with African Americans making up close to 7%. This connection to DC and the African-American community continued throughout the John Thompson era at Georgetown. In 1989 Coach Thompson became a forceful opponent of Proposition 42, an NCAA regulation requiring minimum admission standards for athletes. Coach

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24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
Thompson argued that the new regulations would adversely affect minority students. He argued that proposition 42, due to its reliance on standardized tests, discriminated against poor and minority students. Thompson boycotted games until proposition 42 was repealed. Georgetown’s Men’s Basketball became a symbol for the African-American Community in Washington, DC and around the country. Former Dean of the Georgetown College Royden Davis argued that “success of the team on the court and of its members in the classroom has helped considerably in changing Georgetown’s past image of an all white, isolated hilltop campus.”27 The connection to the community still exists to this day. An article in an influential African American paper this fall about the Men’s Basketball 2011-12 season said:

Over the past 30 years there has been a strong connection between DC’s black community and the Georgetown University men’s Basketball team. Spend a few hours at your local barber shop or the bar at B. Smith’s restaurant and it will become apparent that our community is of full of anticipation regarding the upcoming season, Once again the team will be led by an African American coach, feature lots of African American players, and play against some of the best teams in the country. Those are certainly three elements that the African American community can get behind. It’s (Georgetown Basketball) a legacy that continues today, and we should do all we can to protect the tradition, enhance the legacy.28

Georgetown has done a number of things outside of Basketball to increase its involvement with the District of Columbia; it sponsors programs for high schools students, takes part in numerous community service projects and is the largest private employer in the District. Basketball is not the only reason for diversity and community ties but it certainly made a difference.


Georgetown believes that its men’s Basketball program helps with national visibility. How much Basketball helps with visibility is tough to measure. On March 12, 2012, using the search term John DeGioia (Georgetown President) generates 132,000 hits on Google. A search of John Thompson III (current men’s Basketball coach) generates 4,490,000 hits. A search of Georgetown Basketball generates 36 million hits while a search of Georgetown University gets 56 million hits and Georgetown Law gets 24 million. In the summer of 2011 the Georgetown Men’s Basketball team traveled to China to take part in a goodwill Basketball tour. A game vs. a Chinese professional team ended in a brawl. News and video of the brawl quickly made it around the world. On YouTube alone the video of the fight was watched over 5 million times. This is not the type of advertising Georgetown is looking for from its Basketball team but it is publicity nonetheless. While this is an unscientific method it does help illustrate the popularity of men’s Basketball. The George Mason study shows just how valuable a successful Basketball season can to a University. There has been no study commissioned that looks at the total dollar value publicity of Georgetown men’s Basketball brings to the school. If the GMU study is any indication the dollar value is very significant.
CHAPTER 5

COMPETITIVE TEAMS IN A COMPETITIVE CONFERENCE

While Men’s Basketball is the sport with the most funding there are other Georgetown sports that fall into the category of “Competitive“ athletics. The other teams that fall into the “Competitive” category are Men’s and Women’s Cross Country and Track and Field, Men’s and Women’s Soccer, Women’s Basketball, and Volleyball. These teams all share characteristics that make the competitive. The first is that each of these teams is at or very close to the maximum number of scholarships allowed for their sport. As a result of this these sports tend to be near the top of the Big East Conference in terms of expenses. With the exception of Track and Field, each of these teams has an on campus facility where they practice and play games. The third characteristic that each of these teams shares is the fact that most finish in the top half of their conference and have earned berths to the NCAA championship. The final similarity is that the teams that have had a long history of success, Track and Field, Men’s Soccer, Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse, receive a large number of donations from alumni, parents and friends each year.

The most successful of the “Competitive” teams is the Georgetown Men’s and Women’s Cross Country and Track and Field teams. Georgetown Track has been the most consistent program in terms of long-term competitive success at the University. The Wefers brothers and Arthur Duffy made Georgetown Track famous in the 1890’s and 1900’s but the program has stood the test of time and remains successful. Track has more members in the Georgetown Athletics Hall of Fame than any other team. (Bernard
Wefers and Arthur Duffy were the first two inducted.\(^1\) Since the start of the Big East Conference in 1979 Georgetown Track programs have won a combined total of 41 Big East Championships in Men’s and Women’s Cross Country, Men’s and Women’s Indoor Track and Field and Men’s and Women’s Outdoor Track and Field.\(^2\) Figure 5.1 shows how Georgetown compares to the rest of the Big East in terms of Conference championships. This is important to note because Georgetown Track is second only to Villanova in the number of Conference Championships won in Track. Compared to its Conference opponents Track is well funded and has the maximum amount of scholarships allowed for the sport. Statistics on Big East track team expenses from 2003-2011 are shown in figure 5.2.

![Figure 5.1. Total Number of Big East Championships 1979-2011](http://www.bigeast.org/Championships/AllTimeBIGEASTChampions.aspx)

Source: Big East Conference

\(^1\) Georgetown University, “Georgetown University Official Athletic Site - Hall of Fame,” http://www.guhoyas.com/hallfame/gu-hallfame-list.html (accessed March 5, 2012).

Georgetown ranks fourth in terms of overall expenses in Track and Field compared to the rest of the Conference. It is important to note that with the exception of Syracuse, which has the most expenses in track and only three championships, the teams that spend the most win the most. The teams that spend the least win the least. This is a trend that becomes very evident in all sports and especially the “Participatory” sports.

![Bar chart](image)

**Figure 5.2. Total Expenses for Big East Track Programs**

*Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).*

Track and Field has the most All-Americans and Olympians of any sport at Georgetown and Women’s Cross Country won the 2011 NCAA championship, the only other team to win an NCAA championship is the 1984 men’s basketball team. The Track teams success has also translated into a successful rate of alumni giving averaging close to $89,700 a year from 2002-2011.³ Georgetown Track has the maximum number

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³ Hoya’s Unlimited Fundraising Statistics from 2002-2011.
of scholarships allowed in the sport, 12.6 for men and 18 for women. This fact alone has undoubtedly helped them recruit the best talent. Track is classified as an equivalency sport meaning that the 12.6 scholarships for men and 18 for women can be spread out among the 40 men and 30 women respectively on the team. Track also has four full time coaches, which is near the top in the Big East but is four short of the NCAA maximum.

While Track may be well funded compared to its Conference foes, the team lacks something very important: a Track. The Track team lost its on campus facility in 2001 and has been practicing off campus at high schools since then. Despite the lack of an on campus facility the Track team has remained successful because they offer the maximum number of scholarships and have a history of success both of which help recruit the best talent.

One of the best examples of how a program can benefit from more funding can be found by looking at Georgetown women’s soccer. Founded in 1993 the team was for many years part of the “Participatory” sport category. While the NCAA allowed a maximum of 12 scholarships, Georgetown Women’s Soccer for many years had no scholarships at all. Then in 2006 the Big East Conference made a decision that both Men’s and Women’s Soccer would become “Tier 1” sports within the Big East. This meant that the Big East expected teams competing in Soccer to fund their programs well enough to have a chance of winning. The effects on Women’s Soccer were almost immediate and were found across three important areas. First, the team began to win more games and qualified for the NCAA tournament. The team’s budget was increased which was the result of additional scholarships, more travel money and a boost in staff.

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pay. Finally, the alumni parents and friends of the Women’s soccer team donated more money. Three charts show give a demonstration of the improvement in all three categories. The number of Big East wins is shown in figure 5.3. From 2007-2010 the team more than doubled their win total from the previous three years. From the time the new scholarships were added to the team

![Georgetown Women's Soccer Big East Wins](http://www.guhoyas.com/sports/w-soccer/gu-w-soccer-body.html)

Figure 5.3. Big East Wins for Georgetown Women’s Soccer

Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

(http://www.guhoyas.com/sports/w-soccer/gu-w-soccer-body.html)
Figure 5.4 shows that expenses for Women’s Soccer increased 108% from 2003-2010. The increase in spending is largely due to the addition of scholarships for the team as well as a boost in coach salaries.\textsuperscript{5} Figure 5.5 shows that fundraising increased 48%.

According to Head Coach Dave Nolan there is a direct correlation between the amount of funding and the amount of winning and alumni satisfaction.\textsuperscript{6}

\textsuperscript{5} Nolan, interview.
The success of Women’s Soccer on the field has been fantastic. In 2010 the team made it all the way to the NCAA tournament and into the Elite Eight. 2010 was the first year that the women’s soccer team had four scholarship classes on the team at the same time.\(^7\) As a “Competitive” team women’s soccer has been a success. But, the funding and success of the program have brought up a number of issues that the team hadn’t faced while it was a “Participatory” sport. One issue is that as a “Competitive” sport there is a greater expectation to win and win consistently. Women’s soccer has 12 scholarships but the NCAA maximum is now 14. While a difference of 2 scholarships may not seem much, according to the coach it’s the difference between an exceptional team and a good team. Women’s soccer is an equivalency sport meaning that it can spread its 12 scholarships among as many players as possible. This is a disadvantage to Georgetown

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7. Ibid.
because the tuition for Georgetown is much higher than tuition at the other Big East Schools. A $15,000 scholarship at Georgetown is ¼ of tuition while $15,000 at Rutgers is close to a full scholarship. Another factor that hurts women’s soccer is that it is one below the maximum number of coaches allowed. The extra coach could help with recruiting and help improve the team at practices.

Men’s Soccer, while not as successful as the women’s team in recent years, remains a very competitive team in the Big East. Georgetown Men’s Soccer was founded in the 1952 and the team had very few successful years prior to the formation of the Big East. Big East Soccer started in 1982 and Georgetown has won two regular season Conference championships in 1994 and 2010. The team made the NCAA Tournament three times in 1994, 1997 and 2010 and the Big East tournament a total of 19 times. Georgetown has been ranked in the top 20 many times over the past five seasons.

Georgetown is right in the middle of the Conference in terms of overall expenses. The team has never finished last in the Big East and is generally somewhere in the top half of the Conference. Until 2004 the team played without any scholarships. Now the team has a total of 9.9 scholarships, which is the NCAA maximum. Figure 5.6 shows the total operating expenses of Big East Men’s Soccer teams.
From a fundraising standpoint Men’s Soccer has been very successful averaging over $68,000 a year in donations. The team’s most successful year came in 2010 when it tied for first in the Big East and won a game in the NCAA tournament. The following year donations to Men’s Soccer doubled from $45,000 to $91,000.

The Georgetown Women’s Basketball team has historically not been nearly as successful as their male counterparts but they have begun to change their luck in recent years. Women’s Basketball started play 1970. From 1970 until Big East play began Georgetown competed against mostly local division III schools and had winning records every year including going 21-3 in the 1979-80 season. Big East play began in 1983 and the Hoyas didn’t have a winning record until the 1991-92 season. In recent years the Women’s Basketball team has been ranked in the top 20 and is a regular participant in the NCAA tournament. Figure 5.7 shows the Big East finish position for Women’s

Figure 5.6. Big East Men’s Soccer Total Expenses.
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Basketball. While the team has not won a Conference Championship it has shown steady improvement. Connecticut has the most Conference Championships, 17 since the league started in 1982 and seven out of the last eight.

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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14 of 16</td>
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Figure 5.7. Women’s Basketball Finish Position in Big East  
*Source:* Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

Figure 5.8. shows funding for women’s basketball teams in the Big East from 2003-2010. Georgetown is 9th out of 16 in overall expenses. Connecticut, the most successful team in the Conference ranks first in expenses. Connecticut has spent $11 million more on Women’s Basketball over the past seven years than Rutgers, which ranks second in expenses.

![Graph: Total Expenses of Big East Women's Basketball 2003-2010](http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/)

Figure 5.8. Big East Women’s Basketball Expenses  
Women’s Lacrosse is one of the newest Big East sports but Georgetown’s team has been successful for many years. The program was started in 1977 and didn’t have a winning season until 1984. Prior to 1989 the team competed against mostly division III opponents. The team started competing against division I schools in 1989 and by 2001 the team made it to the NCAA final game losing in overtime to the University of Maryland. The following year the team once again made it to the NCAA championship game but lost to Princeton. The Big East added Women’s Lacrosse as a sport in 2007 and Georgetown has continued to be successful finishing in the top three every year. From a funding standpoint Women’s Lacrosse is near the top of the Conference. Lacrosse has 12 scholarships which is the maximum number allowed by the NCAA. Figure 5.9 shows the total operating budgets Big East Women’s lacrosse teams from 2007-2010. The top three teams in terms of budgets are also the only three teams to have won a Conference championship: Syracuse has two, Notre Dame and Georgetown each have one.

![Bar chart showing Big East Women's Lacrosse Total Expenses 2007-2010](http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/)
From a fundraising standpoint Women’s Lacrosse has done well, averaging over $65,000 a year in donations. Apart from the good fundraising and relatively high overall budget Women’s Lacrosse also has an on campus facility and has the maximum number of coaches allowed by the NCAA.

Men’s Lacrosse has been around at Georgetown for over 30 years but has only been in the Big East for one season. Men’s Lacrosse at Georgetown became very competitive on a national scale following the hiring of Dave Urick as the Men’s Lacrosse coach in 1989. That year Georgetown decided to make Men’s Lacrosse a major sport and fund it to a level where it could compete and win. Coach Urick inherited a team that had never had a winning record but in short order he led the team to the NCAA tournament even reaching the NCAA Final Four in 1999. The Big East did not sponsor men’s Lacrosse until 2010 and Georgetown has finished second in the Big East behind Syracuse in each season.

Men’s Lacrosse budgets are illustrated in figure 5.10. Syracuse spends the most on lacrosse and has two Conference titles. Georgetown is ranked third out of seven in expenses. Success in men’s lacrosse has also translated into successful fundraising averaging over $161,000 year in donations from 2002-2011.
Women’s Volleyball is a “Competitive” sport at Georgetown but rests right on the line between competitive and participatory in terms of finish position in the Big East. Women’s Volleyball has had some great years in the past including a remarkable run in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. From 1976 to 1982 the team had an overall record of 180-74. During that time period the team was competing in the American Intercollegiate Association of Women (AIAW) which was a precursor organization to the NCAA. The year 1982 was the last year of existence for the AIAW due to the fact that the NCAA started sponsoring championships for women’s sports. Volleyball became a Big East sport in 1982 and from 1982 until 2011 Georgetown has won only one Big East title in 1999. Georgetown Volleyball is close to fully funded in scholarships offering 9 out of a maximum of 12. Volleyball is known as a “head count” sport meaning each scholarship is given to one player only. The money cannot be divided among more than one player.

Figure 5.11 shows the finishes of the volleyball team from 2007-2012. Volleyball has struggled to reach the top half of the Big East in the past five years. Following a trend similar to other sports, the teams with the largest budgets tend to be the ones winning the Conference championship. In the period from 2003-2010 Notre Dame won two championships (2004, 2005), Louisville four (2006, 2008, 2009, 2010). Pittsburgh has the most titles in history, eleven, their last coming in 2003. While Georgetown is in the middle of the pack in funding it generally finds itself finishing near the bottom of the pack in standings.

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<td>2008</td>
<td>9 of 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>15 of 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.11. Women's Volleyball Finish Position in Big East
Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department*

Figure 5.12 shows the total expenses of Big East Volleyball teams from 2003-2010. Georgetown is right in the middle of the Conference when it comes to funding.
While Women’s Volleyball is funded well compared to its Conference opponents, the team has struggled to find success. Head Coach Arlisa Williams is determined to change that trend but she encounters some difficulties along the way. The difficulties that Women’s Volleyball faces are very similar to the issues confronting every “Participatory” team. With three less scholarships than most of their competition, the Volleyball team has less depth on the bench. If a player is injured, the team has a lot of difficulty replacing the injured player with someone of equal ability. Volleyball also falls short of the maximum number of coaches allowed. The team has three full-time coaches but lacks the Director of Operations position that the top schools have. The Director of Operations takes much of the recruiting and administrative duties from the head coach and enables the coach to actually coach. Coach Williams has also seen many of her assistant coaches leave after one year for jobs that pay more money. The top volleyball...
schools, according to Williams, have coaching staffs that are more stable.\textsuperscript{9} Georgetown Volleyball does not have a facility of its own and therefore has to practice before sunrise in order to get access to the gym. All of these issues combine to hurt the overall performance of the team.

The “Competitive” teams at Georgetown have all found some level of success in the Big East Conference. These teams have won Conference Titles, earned NCAA berths and have at or near the maximum number of scholarships allowed by the NCAA. These teams are funded well enough to win. For these teams, the playing field in the Big East, is level.

\textsuperscript{9} Arlisa Williams, interview by author, Washington, DC, March 1, 2012.
CHAPTER 6
“PARTICIPATORY” TEAMS IN A COMPETITIVE CONFERENCE

The previous chapters have discussed some of the issues related to Georgetown Athletics as well as what it takes to be successful in the Big East Conference. As the previous chapter made clear there are certain things that are essential for a team to win in the Big East. Funding, in the form of scholarships, salaries and facilities is at the top of the list. In most cases the teams in the conference with the highest expenses have the most conference championships and NCAA tournament berths. Georgetown teams in men’s Basketball, Men’s and Women’s Track and Field and Cross-Country and Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse are well funded in comparison to their conference competitors and have the most Big East and NCAA championships. Women’s Basketball, Men’s and Women’s Soccer and Volleyball, while not at the top of the conference, are close enough in terms of funding and scholarships that they are able to be competitive in the conference and earn NCAA tournament berths. This chapter will focus on the teams that fall into the “Participatory” category: Baseball, Softball, Men’s and Women’s Tennis, Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving, Women’s Rowing and Men’s and Women’s Golf. From interviews with the Head Coaches of teams in the “Participatory” category some common threads emerged.

The first thread tying each of the teams together is that their funding falls at or near the bottom of the Big East Conference. The biggest difference in funding tends to come from having significantly fewer scholarships than the best teams in the
conference. The “Participatory” teams with few exceptions, tend to finish near the bottom of the conference standings and rarely if ever qualify for the Big East or NCAA tournament. The statistics found below show that teams with the most expenses have the most scholarships and win the vast majority of Conference Championships. Scholarships are important because the best athletes will receive scholarship offers from many schools in the country. Even if the school offering the scholarship ranks lower than Georgetown in terms of academics, the student-athlete and their family will choose the school that offers the scholarship because of the financial impact. A four-year scholarship and most schools can be worth well over $100,000.

Another thread tying “Participatory” sports together is that head coaches often find it difficult to keep continuity on their staff. With salaries near or even at the bottom of the conference and costs of living in Washington, DC higher than almost every other Big East city, Georgetown has a great deal of staff turnover every year. This is true of almost every sport “Competitive” and “Participatory.” When Georgetown has a great assistant coach the expectation is that they will get offered more money to coach somewhere else. The lack of coaching continuity is one of the most common complaints of Georgetown head coaches on the participatory teams.

Facilities and lack thereof are a concern for every “Participatory” team. Baseball, Softball, Field Hockey and Golf all practice and compete off campus. Swimming and Tennis have facilities on campus that they share with the rest of the Georgetown community. A lack of a visible on campus presence makes it difficult for these teams to find fan support.
Another issue that is common among the “Participatory” teams occurs with recruiting. Of all the Big East Schools, including Notre Dame, Georgetown is the hardest school to get into. Figure 6.1 shows the academic rankings and acceptance rate of every Big East School. Georgetown is ranked right below Notre Dame in terms of US News rankings, but is clearly the hardest school to get into with a 20.1% acceptance rate. When Georgetown recruits a player who is talented and willing to forgo a full scholarship from another program to come to Georgetown, the reality is that most recruits will not be admitted. It is considerably easier for a player to get into Louisville, St John’s and Connecticut. According to many coaches, even Notre Dame is able to accept athletes that could not get into Georgetown.

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<tr>
<td>Notre Dame</td>
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Figure 6.1. US News Rankings and Acceptance Rates for Big East Schools in 2011
Source: U.S. News and World Report College Rankings 2011
The recruiting calendar is also a barrier to success. Only recently has Georgetown been able to tell recruits whether they can be admitted to Georgetown by the beginning of their senior year. While that might sound early to high school seniors and parents, the reality is that many Big East schools are able to tell recruits whether they will be admitted by the end of their sophomore year. By the time Georgetown is able to guarantee acceptance most of the top talent has already been recruited to another team. That is not to say that great academics and strict admission standards are always a hindrance to Georgetown’s success. Every coach of a “Participatory” team sells potential recruits on the education they will receive from Georgetown. According to these coaches Georgetown’s academic reputation is the number one reason why their players come to Georgetown. With limited scholarships, a history of losing, aging facilities, or no on-campus facility at all, Georgetown’s academic reputation is “Participatory” teams’ best asset and is the most important thing they stress to recruits.

This chapter will examine each of these sports to see how their funding compares to their conference competitors and how their relative lack of funding has impacted their success on the field of play.

Baseball was the first intercollegiate sport at Georgetown and for the last half of the 19th century was the preeminent sport at Georgetown. Georgetown was very successful and even won a few unofficial college championships in the early 20th century. In the decade prior to the joining the Big East, Georgetown baseball was a very successful team. While a member of the ECAC in 1983 the team qualified for its

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first NCAA College World Series. The success continued in 1984 when the team won 31 games, finished 14 games above .500 and qualified for the College World Series again. The 1985 season was the first for the team in the Big East and is to this day their only winning season in the Big East. Since 1986 Georgetown Baseball has not had a winning record.

The NCAA maximum for Baseball scholarships is 11.7 and Georgetown has 5. From 2005-2011, the team competed with two scholarships and prior to 2005 the team did not have any scholarships. The Big East team with the most expenses is Notre Dame and from 2003-2010 they have won the most conference championships - four. The team with the second highest expenses is Louisville and they have won two out of the last four championships. St. John’s has the most in history, six, and are third in expenses. None of the bottom five teams in expenses has won a Big East Championships since West Virginia in 1996. Baseball Coach Pete Wilk believes that there is no coincidence that the teams that spend the most win the most. According to Wilk there are two teams in the Big East that have below the maximum in scholarships, Villanova and Georgetown. Georgetown and Villanova have finished in the bottom three in the Big East in the past four years. Figure 6.2 shows how Baseball has finished in the past 5 years.


3. Ibid.

4. Wilk, interview.
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Figure 6.2. Georgetown Baseball Finish Position in Big East  
*Source:* Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

Figure 6.3 shows one of the main reasons why Georgetown Baseball has trouble winning. Georgetown ranks near the bottom of the conference in terms of expenses. The difference in expenses is mainly the result of scholarships.

![Graph showing total expenses for Big East Baseball 2003-2010](image)

Figure 6.3. Total Expenses for Big East Baseball 2003-2010  
*Source:* Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).

While lack of scholarships may be the biggest reason that Baseball has not had a winning record there are other obstacles that the team must overcome. The maximum number of coaches a team can have is three full-time, one part time as well as a director...
of operations. The operations director is not permitted to coach but takes care of many of the logistical issues involved with running the team such as travel, fundraising, recruiting and expenses. Georgetown has three full time coaches and volunteer coach. Georgetown does not have an operations director. According to Wilk the lack of an operations director means that coaches at Georgetown aren’t able to spend as much time coaching or recruiting as other schools in the conference. With only five scholarships the Georgetown team has many more walk-ons who are generally less skilled players than their competitors. The dearth of scholarships also means that the team has very little depth on its bench. The lack of depth has hurt Georgetown in the late innings of games. According to Wilk “we've lost 22 games in the past two years after leading in the 8th inning by one run.” 5 Depth is important because the Big East is the one of the top six conferences for college baseball and last year alone 42 Big East baseball players were drafted into the major leagues.

Fundraising for Baseball has been very successful and perhaps the most successful of the “Participatory” teams. From 2002-2011 the team has averaged over $283,000 a year in donations. According to coach Wilk much of this money comes from alumni who were part of successful teams and current parents who want to provide current team members with more resources to compete against their Big East competition. Wilk also points out that members of teams that competed in the Big East with no scholarships and finished at or near the bottom of the conference tend to donate little or nothing at all to Baseball. While the fundraising statistics available for this

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5. Wilk, interview.
study do not include the names of the donors, many other coaches of the “Participatory” teams report similar difficulties in receiving donations from members of losing teams.

Softball, the newest team at Georgetown, was founded in 2005. During the late 1990’s and early 2000’s Georgetown University was not in compliance with Title IX, which mandates that Universities provide equal opportunity for both sexes in college athletics. Like the other “Participatory” teams it comes in near the bottom of the conference in operating budgets, scholarships and wins. Figure 6.4 shows how softball has finished in the Big East since becoming a member in 2008. Georgetown has never finished higher than 11th in the 13-team league.

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Figure 6.4. Georgetown Softball Finish Position in Big East

Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

Figure 6.5 shows the budgets of Big East Softball teams since 2005. Georgetown is last in the league in expenses primarily due to its lack of scholarships. The NCAA maximum is 12 scholarships and Georgetown has 3.6. According to Head Coach Pat Conlon, the lack of scholarships is the main reason why Georgetown finishes near the bottom of the conference. The Big East, according to Conlon, is one of the top

6. Lang, interview.

seven conferences in the country and the conference regularly sees four or more teams make the NCAA tournament.\textsuperscript{8}

![Total Expenses for Big East Softball 2005-2010](image)

**Figure 6.5. Total Expenses for Big East Softball 2005-2010**  
*Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).*

In order to win enough games in a Big East season a team must have depth and great pitching. The lack of scholarships hurts both. The Big East champions in Softball tend to be the team with the highest expenses. Since 2006, DePaul has won one title (2008), Notre Dame has won two (2006, 2009), Louisville one (2007) and Syracuse two (2010, 2011). These four teams rank are also in the top four in Softball expenses.

Clearly the team has a long way to go to reach the top of the standings but Conlon is optimistic that the team can do it. Softball does not raise much money each

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
year but that is mostly due to the fact that the sport is new and does not yet have an alumni base to fundraise from.

Field Hockey is perhaps the team that whose performance has been hurt the most by becoming a member of the Big East. Prior to joining the conference in 2005 Field Hockey played as an independent. The team had some very successful years including a stretch from 1995 to 2002 where they had six winning seasons. Field Hockey has not been successful in the Big East. Figure 6.6 shows the finish position from 2007-2011. The team has finished last in every season including a stretch from 2007-2009 where they lost 33 games straight. Figure 6.7 gives an indication of why Field Hockey struggles in the Big East. Georgetown is at the bottom of the conference in terms of overall expenses and that is primarily the result of lack of scholarships.

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Figure 6.6. Georgetown Field Hockey Finish Position in Big East

Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

The Field Hockey teams with the maximum number of scholarships have the most expenses and are the most successful. Connecticut has four conference championships (2005/2006/2007/2009) and Syracuse has three (2008,2010/2011). The maximum number of scholarships allowed for Field Hockey is 12 and Georgetown has

2. This is clearly a disadvantage for Georgetown. Georgetown also lacks an on-campus facility to practice and play games so the Field Hockey team travels to American University for practice and games. Field Hockey also has difficulty raising funds from alumni and parents. Despite being in existence since 1960, from 2003-2011 the team averaged only $15,600 a year in donations. Field Hockey has another issue that is hurting success and that is student-athlete turnover. Each year from 2007 to 2011 an average of eight players quit the team. With this large turnover in athletes it is hard for a coach to develop a cohesive team. Also, with a majority of students quitting by the time they are seniors, team leadership is hard to establish.

Figure 6.7. Total Expenses for Big East Field Hockey 2005-2010

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).


Georgetown’s Men’s Tennis had its inaugural season in 1920 and the Women’s team in 1960. Similar to many of the older “Participatory” sports Tennis had a number of very successful years prior to joining the Big East. In the late 70’s and early 80’s the Georgetown women’s team was one of the best division II tennis programs on the east coast. Men’s tennis joined the Big East in 1979 and women’s tennis in 1982. Only the men’s team has a Big East championship, which occurred in 1989. Over the past eight seasons Georgetown tennis has finished at or near the bottom of the standings in the conference. Lack of funding compared to conference foes is the major reason for the lack of success. Despite being in existence for so many years the teams are at the bottom of the list of funding at Georgetown and in the Big East. Figure 1.3 shows the dollars spent on tennis at Georgetown. The money spent on tennis represents less than 1% of the total athletics department operating budget. Men’s tennis has zero out of a possible 4.5 scholarships while the women have .5 out of a maximum of eight allowed by the NCAA.

Figure 6.8 shows funding for Big East Men’s Tennis teams and figure 6.9 shows funding for the women. Georgetown is near the bottom in both and that has hurt success. Since 2003 three teams have won Big East Men’s Tennis Championships. Notre Dame has won four, Louisville three and South Florida one. Notre Dame and Louisville spend the most on men’s tennis. On the women’s side Notre Dame has won six out of the past seven conference titles including the last four in a row. Notre Dame has the maximum amount of scholarships. Head Men’s and Women’s Tennis Coach
Gordie Ernst believes both his teams can be successful in the Big East but needs scholarships to do so. At the Big East Championships each team must compete in six singles matches and three doubles matches. The teams that win, according to Ernst, are the teams with the most depth. With little to no scholarships the tennis teams at Georgetown usually finish near or at the bottom of the conference. According to Ernst, Georgetown’s academic reputation is the biggest selling point for coming to the school and if the scholarship money were close to being equal the best players would come to Georgetown.

Figure 6.8. Big East Men’s Tennis Expenses

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Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving at Georgetown has a similar story to the other “Participatory” teams. Georgetown has been competing in the Big East since 1980 for the men and 1983 for the women and they have never won a conference title. The maximum number of scholarships allowed for men’s swimming and diving is nine and for the women 14. Georgetown has no scholarship money for men and .5 scholarships for the women. Much like the other sports, money and scholarships equal success in swimming. Georgetown spending on swimming is in the bottom three of the conference ahead of only Providence and Villanova. Figure 6.10 shows total expenses for Men’s Swimming and Diving and figure 6.11 shows total expenses for Women’s Swimming and Diving. Georgetown ranks near the bottom in both sports. The teams with the most expenses have the most scholarships and win the most championships.
From 2003-2010 Notre Dame has won five men’s titles. Pittsburgh has the most men’s titles in conference history with 19. Louisville won the 2010 and 2011 titles. In women’s swimming and diving Notre Dame won the conference championship every year from 1997-2010 and Louisville won in 2011.

Figure 6.10. Big East Men’s Swimming Expenses 2003-2010

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Head Swimming Coach Jamie Holder believes his teams’ lack of scholarships is what hurts them the most. In order to win a Big East Championship a team has to compete in a total of 17 events. The sheer number of events means that depth is the key to winning. Coach Holder believes that with as little as three scholarships per team would put the Hoyas into the top third of the conference. Table 6.4 shows the finish position of the Men’s Team in the Big East and Table 6.5 shows the finish position of the women.

Women’s Rowing at Georgetown is also a Big East team but there is very little competition within the Big East Conference. The team generally competes against local rivals like George Washington, American and Navy as well as Ivy League schools. The

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14. Ibid.
Big East Conference runs one rowing event each spring that counts as the Conference Championship. Since the championship began in 2001 only two schools, Notre Dame and Syracuse, have won a conference title.

Women’s Rowing has been able to finish near the top of the Conference. Figure 6.12 shows how has finished in the Big East since 2007. Looking at figure 6.12 it would appear that the lack of scholarships isn’t hurting the results too badly. Head Coach Miranda Paris confirmed this and added that lack of scholarships are not as much a hindrance to success in rowing as it is in other sports.15 According to Coach Paris it’s the lack of a facility, a boathouse that really hurts Georgetown in recruiting.16 Coach Paris is convinced that if Georgetown had a boathouse of its own recruiting the best athletes would become much easier and the team would be able to win a conference championship.

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Figure 6.12. Georgetown Women’s Rowing Finish Position in Big East
Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

Figure 6.13 shows the funding for each Big East Women’s Rowing team from 2003-2010. Georgetown ranks second from last in terms of overall expenses. The main


reason for this is scholarships. The NCAA allows a total of 20 scholarships for Women’s Rowing. Georgetown Women’s Rowing has no scholarships. Since Rowing is an equivalency sport, scholarship money can be spread out amongst many of the athletes. Schools like Notre Dame have as many as 50 team members receiving scholarship money each year. In order to win a Big East Championship a team has to field six boats and a total of 36 women.¹⁷

![Bar Chart]

**Figure 6.13. Big East Women’s Rowing Expenses 2003-2010**

*Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).*

Women’s Golf, founded in 2003 is the second newest sport at Georgetown behind Softball. Of the 16 members of the Big East Conference only eight schools sponsor a Women’s Golf team. Since 2003 only three teams have won a Big East Women’s Golf Championship, Notre Dame five times, Louisville four and St. John’s

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¹⁷. Paris, interview.
one. They are also the three schools with the most expenses in women’s golf. As figure 6.14 shows, the lack of scholarship money has an impact on Georgetown’s finish position. While the team is last in funding they have never finished last in the conference. Their best season was 2009 when they finished third and their worst finish was 2010 when they were seventh. Figure 6.15 shows the amount of funding each Women’s Golf Team receives. Georgetown is at the bottom of the conference in funding and that is a result of having no scholarships. The NCAA allows a total of 6 scholarships for women’s golf and within the Big East Louisville, Notre Dame and St. John’s have the full amount.

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Figure 6.14. Georgetown Women’s Golf Finish Position in Big East

Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department
Men’s Golf at Georgetown provides perhaps the most interesting challenge to the notion of “Competitive” vs. “Participatory” athletics. Men’s Golf has no scholarships and they compete in a conference where most schools have the full 4.5 scholarships allowed by the NCAA. Men’s Golf has however won two Big East Conference Championships since 1998. Men’s Golf became a Big East sport in 1979 and since then a total of eleven schools have won a Conference Championship; that is tied with Men’s Basketball for the highest number of schools to win a Conference Championship for a Big East sport. Georgetown has had good years and bad years in Men’s Golf and their uneven performance is illustrated in figure 6.16. After a string of three years where the team finished 8th out of 12, the Men’s Golf team won the 2010 Conference Championship. Head Coach Tommy Hunter believes that even though

Figure 6.15. Big East Women’s Golf Expenses 2003-2010

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Men’s Golf is not funded as well as its opponents, the format of the Big East Championship gives everyone a chance to win. In Men’s Golf the Conference Champion is determined by lowest combined score of a team’s best four golfers at the Conference Championship Tournament.

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Figure 6.16. Georgetown Men's Golf Finish Position in Big East
Source: Data from Georgetown University Athletic Department

Unlike most sports where a championship is decided over the course of a season, in golf, a team can win every golf match by 20 strokes all season long but their finish in the Conference Championship is all that matters. In 2010 the Georgetown team had their best performance of the season at the championship and it was enough to beat Notre Dame by one stroke. Figure 6.17 shows the expenses of all Big East Men’s Golf Teams. Georgetown, with its lack of scholarships and an assistant coach ranks fourth from last in expenses.
At the beginning of this chapter there were four things that were mentioned that tied “Participatory” teams together: a lack of funding, difficulty keeping coaches, difficulty recruiting and lack of facilities. In interviews with the Head Coaches of these sports another common theme emerged. While all coaches acknowledge that their sport is categorized by the University as a “Participatory” team, the coaches all treat their sport as if it were in the “Competitive” category. Every coach felt that their success and that of their teams was a measure of how well they finished in the conference. To the coaches these teams there are no moral victories. The Georgetown Athletics Positions statement argues:

We do not believe that every team must compete for a national championship for that program to demonstrate competitive excellence. When a program displays powerful commitment, shows significant improvement, overcomes
obstacles, and performs well given its resources and competition, student-athletes have a valuable competitive experience.\textsuperscript{18}

The Head coaches argue that while the above description may sound good on paper, it does not translate to the field of play. The argument that the coaches make is simple but it gets to the heart of the difficulty with the “Participatory” model. Sports, is about winning, not participating. The reason that scores are kept, rules are made, championships are run, is to determine a winner. That is the fundamental nature of sports. Every “Participatory” teams coach has a blueprint for winning. Every coach feels that Georgetown, with its academic reputation and great location, is capable of winning. When a Georgetown team loses a game to a conference opponent that has twice as many scholarships, more coaches and better facilities that does not lessen the disappointment of losing. According to the coaches, they want players who want to win. They want student-athletes who are willing to practice hard and improve everyday with the goal of becoming a champion. These coaches do not recruit student-athletes with the promise of competing against and losing to conference champions and NCAA champions. They recruit student-athletes who want to win a championship. Additionally, coaches and athletes at Georgetown want a level playing field. They want to play a sport where the outcome is determined not by how much money a team spends, but on the hard work and determination of the players.

Perhaps the best example to illustrate the fact that every “Participatory” team wants to win comes from the 2010 Georgetown University Men’s Golf Team. Coach

\textsuperscript{18} Georgetown Athletics Positioning Statement, April 6, 2010, 3.
Tommy Hunter has a tradition with his seniors that he will walk the final hole of the Big East Championships with them. In 2010 Coach Hunter walked the 18th hole with Senior Vincenzo Salina. Coach Hunter knew the score of the tournament and knew that the Hoyas were winning. Typically the Georgetown team is not in a position to win so Coach Hunter will talk to his seniors about the past four years and how proud he is of how far they have come. On this occasion Vincenzo wasn’t interested in talking about the past. He wanted to know what the scores were and how close Georgetown was to winning. He had hit a great drive off the tee and left himself with a great lie for his second shot. Typically in this situation Vincenzo would hit an 8 iron and lay up right in front of the green for an outside chance at par. Vincenzo asked Coach Hunter if he should hit his 7 iron or his 8 iron. A 7 iron would take the ball closer to the hole. It was a risky shot. An 8 iron was a safer shot. Vincenzo wanted to win and Coach Hunter wanted to win so he told him to use his 7 iron. The next shot was perfect. It cleared the hill in front of the green and landed close enough that Vincenzo was able to sink the par putt and win the championship for Georgetown. On that day in May 2010, no matter how little they were funded, Georgetown Men’s Golf was a “Competitive” team.

On that 18th hole with the championship in his grasp Vincenzo Salina was on a level playing field and it was his skill and determination that won the Championship.

Unfortunately, for the “Participatory” sports at Georgetown, the level playing field is more of a dream than a reality. In the Big East Conference, the playing field is not level and the Conference Champion is more often than not the team that spends the

most money. This poses a significant problem for many teams at Georgetown. When a student-athlete practices hard every day, sacrifices vacations, weekends, study time, and a social life to train hard, and the end result is four years of last place finishes, that student is often disillusioned. When student-athletes view their time spent in Georgetown Athletics as a negative, they are less likely to give back to the school. Georgetown Athletics fundraising figures show that teams who finish near the bottom of the conference simply do not raise as much money from their alumni as the teams who have won. Head coaches of teams that have no scholarship money often don’t solicit donations from alumni who were members of losing teams because they know they are not inclined to give back. This creates a vicious cycle of losing.

The teams that finish in or close to last place each year lack the funding necessary to succeed. These teams have to rely on alumni donations if they want to get a new facility or endow a scholarship or even help augment the salary of an assistant coach. The alumni of these programs are less likely to give back due to their negative experience. This is the cycle that many teams are now in and those newer sports such as Softball and Women’s Golf may find themselves in the same position in the future.

Life in the Big East for every team is going to get a lot harder in the near future. Conference realignments occurring in the fall of 2011 resulted in the Big East losing three members and gaining seven, four for all sports and three for Football only. West Virginia is leaving the Big East for the Big 12 following the 2012 spring season and is being replaced in all sports by Temple University. After the Spring 2013 season Syracuse and Pittsburgh will leave the Big East and join the Atlantic Coast Conference.
They will be replaced by Memphis University, University of Houston, University of Central Florida and Southern Methodist University. The net result is that the Big East is getting bigger and the competition is getting better. Every team will feel the impact of the changes in membership. It is the “Participatory” sports at Georgetown, however, that will see the biggest challenge.

Away games at West Virginia, Pittsburgh and Syracuse, that involved day trips by bus or van, are now plane flights to Texas, Tennessee and Florida. The cost of travel will go up and that will impact the budgets of these teams. For Baseball losing Pittsburgh and West Virginia, two teams that are close to Georgetown in funding and scholarships, puts them even farther behind in the conference. Houston, Central Florida and Memphis are all ranked above Pittsburgh and West Virginia and have more funding and scholarships.

Men’s Golf, which has the most Conference Championships of any of the “Participatory” sports will also find the new competition to be much tougher. The three teams leaving the conference don’t sponsor a Men’s Golf Team. Currently Georgetown is ranked #142 in Men’s Golf. The rankings of the new Big East teams are: Central Florida #20, Southern Methodist #40, Memphis #43, Houston #60 and Temple #245. Women’s Golf has a similar hill to climb with the three new Women’s Golf teams,


Southern Methodist, Memphis and Central Florida all ranked in the top 100 while Georgetown is ranked #138.  

Georgetown Athletics finds itself in 2012 at a crossroads. The teams that are well funded are for the most part competing for Big East Conference Championships and NCAA berths. Teams that are not funded well compared to other Big East Schools are stuck finishing at or near the bottom of the conference. Every coach of a “Participatory” team wants to win. Their players want to win. In most cases competing in the Big East at their current funding level makes winning next to impossible. With the addition of four new teams to the Big East over the next two years, the competition has gotten even harder. The question that needs to be investigated is what are the alternatives to the current athletics model at Georgetown? Is the current approach to athletics the best model for Georgetown going forward or is there a better way?

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CHAPTER 7
ALTERNATIVES FOR THE FUTURE

Georgetown Athletics has a math problem. It is trying to fund 29 varsity sports on a budget that is too small to make every team a “Competitive” sport. It has made the decision to compete in the Big East Conference due to the value it brings primarily to the Men’s Basketball program and the revenue and exposure it brings to the University. Georgetown has decided to split its limited resources in a way where some teams are funded well and others are not. The teams that are funded well, the “Competitive” teams, have for the most part been successful in the Big East earning conference and NCAA championships and championship tournament berths. The teams that are not funded well finish at or near the bottom of the conference. With the recent changes in Big East Conference membership, the gap between the “Competitive” and “Participatory” sports will continue to grow. Teams like Men’s and Women’s Golf and Baseball will now find winning the Big East to be much harder than before. As the interviews with the Head Coaches have shown, the “Participatory” teams want to win. While the Georgetown Athletic Positioning statement may argue that winning is not the goal of these teams, the reality is that sports is about winning. Every team, every player, every coach wants to win. It is the nature of sports. The current state of affairs within Georgetown Athletics and the Big East make it impossible for many of Georgetown’s sports to win. The competition is too strong. The difference in scholarships, facilities and recruiting is too much for most sports to overcome despite the cache of a Georgetown degree. Georgetown student-athletes on “Participatory” teams are not competing on a level playing field. Is this the best Georgetown can hope for? Are the “Participatory” teams
doomed to lose over and over again? As Georgetown’s Athletic Department assesses where they are in 2012 they will come to the conclusion that they have a limited number of options for the future.

The first option, and the option that Georgetown is currently following, is to remain with the status quo. Georgetown is not currently looking to switch conferences, drop a sport or invest more in “Participatory” sports. As Georgetown Athletic Director Lee Reed said in an email on September 21, 2011:

> Despite the conference scenarios, Georgetown remains committed to competing at the highest level of men's basketball and creating the best experience possible for our student-athletes in each of our 29 varsity programs. To do so, we need to continue to make progress on our strategic priorities, specifically, enhancing the infrastructure and facilities for athletics, endowing scholarships to continue to attract the best and brightest to the Hilltop and providing our coaches and student athletes with the resources necessary to achieve our academic and competitive goals.¹

The facility that Reed is referring to is a new athletic training center that would be the first new athletics building since 1951. The new training center is meant to help every sport at Georgetown but in particular the “Competitive” sports. As Reed goes on to say in the same email, the new training facility will contain:

> New practice courts, locker rooms, team meeting rooms, lounge areas and coaches' offices for men's and women's basketball; Weight training facility and sports medicine/training room areas for all varsity student-athletes; Student-athlete academic center, auditorium and team meeting facilities for all varsity sports programs; New home for the Georgetown Athletic Hall of Fame and additional reception space to honor the University's rich athletic tradition and history; Additional locker room areas for the men's & women's soccer and lacrosse programs.²

A new facility will help all of Georgetown’s sports but as Reed’s email states, it will specifically benefit Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Men’s and Women’s Soccer and

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¹ Lee Reed, e-mail message to Georgetown Athletics, September 15, 2011.

² Ibid.
Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse. The facility is, according to Reed, the #1 priority for both the “Competitive” and “Participatory” teams.

The status quo is good for Georgetown's flagship Athletics program, Men's Basketball, because the program has benefited greatly from being in the Big East, and the continued success of Big East Men’s Basketball in the NCAA tournament will lead to more revenue for the Athletic Department. There are issues, however, that will arise from staying in the Big East. One thing Georgetown has to consider is that the landscape of college athletics is constantly changing. Costs for athletics rise every year and Conference membership is in flux. Just when the Women's Basketball team and the Soccer teams are beginning to finish near the top of the conference, the Big East adds four more colleges with great athletic programs. Georgetown will have to invest more money in the “Competitive” sports to keep pace with the rest of the Big East Conference. This can be accomplished by using the increased revenue Georgetown stands to make from the new Big East television contract. As Chapter 4 points out Georgetown could earn over $6 million a year from the new television deal which represents a yearly increase of close to $5 million a year from the previous contract. This money can be used for salaries and scholarships and facilities for the “Competitive” teams. "Competitive” teams will still win conference championships and earn NCAA berths. They may not win as often but as long as their funding doesn't decrease they can win.

The status quo will lead to a bigger gap between the “Participatory” teams and the rest of the conference. With the arrival of four new teams in 2013 the Big East will be more competitive than ever. The “Participatory” teams, who are already at the bottom end of the conference in terms of funding, will find that the disparity in budgets will
increase even more. Travel costs for “Participatory” teams will certainly rise with the addition of away games in Texas, Florida and Tennessee. In order to make up for the increase in travel costs, equipment, salary and recruiting budgets may have to be cut. The vicious cycle of losing that has plagued many of these teams will continue. The “Participatory” teams will continue to finish at or close to last place. In order to win these teams need more scholarships but there won’t be any more money coming from the athletic department and as history has shown teams with a long history of losing have trouble fundraising.

If Georgetown decides it is not content with the status quo then it can look into a number of other options. One such option would be to cut some teams and use the money spent on those sports to increase scholarships and salaries for the remaining teams. This has been the option that many colleges have chosen to explore. In the fall of 2010 the University of California at Berkeley announced that they would cut five sports in an effort to close a multimillion-dollar budget gap. Berkeley, much like Georgetown, subsidizes its athletics department with money from the main campus. This was not a source of contention until the recent economic downturn caused the school to cut spending in many of its academic departments. In fall 2011 The University of Maryland at College Park announced plans to cut eight sports teams from its Athletic Department by the end of the year. Maryland is also facing a budget shortfall and decided that cutting Men’s Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field, Men’s Cross-Country, Men’s and Women’s Swimming, Men’s Tennis, Women’s Water Polo and Competitive Cheer would save the

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4. Ibid.
department from $3.5 million to $5 million a year from its budget of $57.7 million.\textsuperscript{5}

Brown University recommended cutting four sports in spring 2011, Wrestling, Skiing and Men’s and Women’s fencing. The Big East has seen its members cut sports in the past as well. Providence cut three sports in 1998, Baseball, Men’s Golf and Men’s Tennis. West Virginia cut its Track program in 2003. St. John’s cut its Men’s Track, Football and Men’s and Women’s Swimming programs in 2003.\textsuperscript{6} In 2010, Seton Hall cut its Men’s and Women’s indoor and outdoor Track teams.\textsuperscript{7}

The most common reasons that a school cites for cutting a sport are the amount of money that can be saved and the need to keep compliant with the Title IX. Title IX requires that a University provide equal athletic opportunities to members of both sexes. The opportunity is calculated using the percentage of men and women enrolled as undergraduates.\textsuperscript{8} Georgetown, for a period of time in the early 2000’s, was not in compliance with Title IX. Instead of cutting men’s sports Georgetown decided to add Softball and Women’s Golf and is now in compliance with Title IX. Georgetown University is however operating with a budget deficit every year. In 2011 Georgetown


\textsuperscript{8} “A Policy Interpretation: Title IX and Intercollegiate Athletics,” Department of Education, \url{http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/t9interp.html}.  

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had a budget deficit of $12.8 million. University Services, the area in which the Athletics Department budget falls under ran a deficit of $5.4 million. Georgetown could look at Athletics as a way to help decrease this deficit. But what sports would Georgetown cut? If Georgetown cut its worst performing sports, Field Hockey, Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving, Baseball and Men’s and Women’s Tennis it would save roughly $1.5 million dollars in expenses. Taking out the average donations these teams receive each year the net savings would be close to $1.1 million or roughly 3% of the total athletics budget. If Georgetown cut all of its “Participatory” sports it would save close to $4 million. That savings could be used to fully fund (maximum scholarships) every “Competitive” sport as well as increase coaching salaries and travel budgets for those teams. Georgetown does have experience in cutting sports. Football, which was running deficits of over $100,000 was cut in 1951. Cutting sports would not be a popular decision and Georgetown has so far refused to explore this option. One reason that Georgetown hasn’t eliminated sports is that it values the fact that it offers its students a wide variety of sports in which to compete. Georgetown’s peer institutions, the Ivy League schools, offer a wide selection of sports. As Chapter 1 points out, Universities sponsor athletics programs to help distinguish themselves from their competitors. Georgetown does not want to tell prospective students that it doesn’t offer the sports that they are interested in, especially when their peer institutions provide that opportunity.

Another option Georgetown could explore is elevating every one of its 29 sports to the “Competitive” category. Georgetown wouldn’t have to change conferences, nor


10. Ibid.
would it have to eliminate teams. Georgetown Women’s Soccer is a great example of how a team’s record and fundraising can improve dramatically if it is well funded. In interviews with the head coaches of “Participatory” sports, the coaches expressed their belief that their team can win the Big East if they have a level playing field. A fully funded Big East Athletics program, (meaning every sport competing in the Big East has the maximum number of scholarships, the maximum number of coaches with competitive salaries) would cost over $9 million more per year.11 For Georgetown, already running a $5.4 million deficit, an increase of $9 million per year in Athletic spending would almost triple the debt incurred by University Services. Georgetown could use the money it makes from a new television contract to pay for $5 million of the new spending but that still leaves a gap of $4 million. Georgetown would need to find a new revenue stream to bridge that gap. One such revenue stream would be an increase in donations. Right now athletics averages over $4 million a year in donations. Athletics donations would need to double in order to make up the deficit from making all sports “Competitive.”

There are other issues with making every sport “Competitive” within the Big East. With the ever-changing landscape of college conferences there is always the risk that the Big East might expand more, requiring even more than $9 million for every team to compete for a championship. If the Big East contracts and loses one or more teams, the television contract would be amended resulting in less money.12 The Big East could also disband or vote to remove the Basketball-only members in a move similar to what

11. Figures arrived at by looking at the budget number of Notre Dame which has a similar cost of education to Georgetown.

happened in 2002. As of 2013 the Big East will have seven schools that play Basketball only and nine that play Football and Basketball. A breakup of the Big East would have serious consequences for Georgetown athletics. With no Big East, there would be no revenue from the television contract and Georgetown would be left with a sizeable budget deficit without the millions of dollars in television revenue.

If Georgetown chooses to raise every Big East team to the “Competitive” level there is another important issue to consider. As Chapter 2 illustrated, Georgetown has a history of changing attitudes towards athletics. On four separate occasions, 1894, 1905, 1932 and 1951 the leadership of Georgetown University, believing that it had become too important and too expensive, deemphasized Athletics by cutting University support. If Georgetown Athletics costs increased by $9 million there is a strong risk that the debt incurred by Georgetown would lead many University leaders to believe that Athletics had once again become too important and too expensive.

A fourth option that Georgetown could explore is to leave the Big East Conference altogether and join a conference where its current budget would allow all teams to be “Competitive.” There are three conferences that Georgetown could look to join. The first is the Patriot League. Figure 7.1 shows how Georgetown Athletic spending compares to the schools of the Patriot League.
Georgetown ranks at the top of the Patriot League in Athletics expenses. The Patriot League is an all sports conference so every one of Georgetown’s Big East teams could participate in the Patriot League.

The next conference Georgetown could consider joining is the Colonial Athletic Conference (CAA). The CAA features teams that Georgetown already competes against in many sports. Figure 7.2 shows how Georgetown’s athletic spending compares to the rest of the CAA.
The Colonial Athletic Association also competes in the same number of sports as the Big East Conference so every Georgetown team currently in the Big East could compete in the CAA.

A third conference that Georgetown could join is the Atlantic 10 Conference. Figure 7.3 shows how Georgetown compares to Atlantic 10 schools in terms of Athletic spending.
In each of the three conferences above, Patriot League, CAA and Atlantic 10, Georgetown’s current level of athletic spending would place it at the top of the Conference. This would mean that each of Georgetown’s teams would have an ability to win a Conference Championship and make an NCAA tournament. This would be a welcome change for many of the “Participatory” teams but the implications on Men’s Basketball and the other “Competitive” sports would be significant. The loss of revenue from television contracts and NCAA tournament shares will hurt the bottom line.

Perhaps the most substantial change for the “Competitive” teams would be the loss of the draw of the Big East Conference. The Big East is one of the premier athletic conference in the country and premier athletes want to compete in the best conferences. Georgetown will find it much harder to recruit top athletes in a smaller conference.

Figure 7.3. Total Athletic Spending Atlantic 10 Conference in 2010.
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
If Georgetown were to voluntarily leave the Big East Conference it would have to pay an exit fee $5 million to the Big East and wait a period of 27 months before it could leave. The television contracts of the Patriot League, CAA and Atlantic 10 are also much smaller than the Big East Conference. Georgetown would expect to receive in the low six figures per year in revenue from the Patriot, CAA or Atlantic 10 television contract. That is a potential loss of over $5 million dollars in revenue for Georgetown. That loss in revenue would not be the biggest problem with joining a smaller conference. Since Georgetown would be at or near the top in spending in the Patriot, CAA and A10 a loss of $5 million would not have a dire effect on competition. Georgetown would still be in the top five in spending in each Conference. While the loss of money is significant, there is an even bigger issue with the loss of a Big East Television contract, namely, publicity. The Patriot League, CAA and A10 Conferences are not nearly as popular as the Big East. Each of these conferences has very few games on national television. The CAA for example will have 12 conference basketball games televised in 2012-13. That’s 12 games total for the entire conference. During the 2011-12 season Georgetown Men’s Basketball had 32 games televised. As Chapter 4 points out, Men’s Basketball and the exposure and publicity that it brings to the University is worth millions of dollars each year to Georgetown. A move to a smaller conference with less national exposure would seriously diminish Georgetown’s Athletic presence. If Georgetown is no longer in a


premier athletic conference it will have difficulty recruiting the best athletes. This can have an adverse effect on donations and ticket sales.

Each of the four options detailed above are not ideal solutions to Georgetown’s Athletics problems. Remaining with the status quo or dropping sports penalizes the “Participatory” teams. Making every team “Competitive” adds an additional financial burden to a University that is already in debt. Using Georgetown history as a guide a major increase in Athletics spending or importance generally results in a backlash from the University resulting in a deemphasizing of athletics. A move from the Big East to another conference would include a $5 million penalty and a significant loss in television revenue and University exposure. There is, however, another solution, one that recognizes the importance of Men’s Basketball while allowing the “Participatory” teams an opportunity to win.

Absent from all the discussion about conference realignment and television money, is the term “student-athlete.” In the 21st century college athletics has become a purely profit driven enterprise. Universities, including Georgetown, see the benefit of college athletics in promoting their school and helping them stand out among their peer institutions. The reality that Big-Time “Competitive” college athletics is driven by a desire to make money cannot be denied. However, Georgetown’s desire to have a successful Men’s Basketball program should not mean that it has to then have losing programs in Baseball, Field Hockey, Tennis, Swimming, Golf, Softball and Rowing. Georgetown recognizes the importance of having both “Competitive” and “Participatory” teams. Georgetown also needs to recognize that its current athletics model, all teams in the Big East, does not meet the needs of every sport. A Georgetown student-athlete
should not have to endure four years of losing in order for the Men’s Basketball team to continue to make money and help promote Georgetown University. That is however the reality of Georgetown Athletics in 2012.

In order to improve its athletic model Georgetown needs a two prong solution. The first part is to understand that Men’s Basketball is important not just to Athletics but to the University as a whole. Georgetown needs to remain in the Big East for Men’s Basketball and the other “Competitive” sports. If the Big East breaks up Georgetown should look to align itself with a conference that has a television contract that allows Georgetown to make money as well as be on television.

The second part of the solution concerns the “Participatory” sports. The Big East does not meet the needs of the student athletes in these sports. The school with the smallest number of sports in the Big East is DePaul with 13. While the Big East doesn’t require a minimum number of sports to be a member of the conference, a college with 13 Big East teams is allowed to be a member. If Georgetown were to have only 13 teams in the Big East they would be the 13 “Competitive” teams, Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Men’s and Women’s Cross Country, Men’s and Women’s Indoor Track, Men’s and Women’s Outdoor Track, Volleyball, Men’s and Women’s Soccer and Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse. Georgetown should then take the “Participatory” sports and move them to a conference where their current funding would allow them to compete for a conference championship and an NCAA championship tournament berth. The best fit for the “Participatory” teams would be the Patriot League.

Using Baseball, Field Hockey and Men’s and Women’s Tennis as examples, the Patriot League is the best fit for Georgetown’s “Participatory” sports. Figure 7.4 shows
how Georgetown compares to other Patriot League schools in terms of Baseball expenses. Figure 7.5 shows Georgetown Baseball in the CAA and figure 7.6 shows Georgetown in the Atlantic 10. If Georgetown Baseball competed in the Patriot League they would have the second highest total expenses. If Georgetown competed in either the CAA or A10 they would be right in the middle of the conference in terms of Baseball expenses. Clearly, the Patriot League would give Georgetown Baseball the best chance of winning.

Figure 7.4. Total Baseball Expenses for Patriot League and Georgetown in 2010

Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Figure 7.5. Total Baseball Expenses for CAA and Georgetown in 2010
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).

Figure 7.6. Total Baseball Expenses for Atlantic 10 and Georgetown in 2010
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Field Hockey has had the most difficulty finding success in the Big East. With a 33 game losing streak and numerous last place finishes the team has struggled to win in the Big East. Georgetown should look to move the Field Hockey team to a new conference where it can be successful. Figures 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9 show how Georgetown Field Hockey’s expenses compare to teams in the Patriot League, CAA and Atlantic 10 respectively.

Figure 7.7. Total Field Hockey Expenses for Patriot League and Georgetown in 2010.
*Source:* Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Figure 7.8. Total Field Hockey Expenses for CAA and Georgetown in 2010.
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).

Figure 7.9. Total Field Hockey Expenses for A10 and Georgetown in 2010.
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Georgetown Field Hockey ranks at the bottom of the Patriot League, CAA and A10. However, the difference between the top school and Georgetown in terms of expenses is lowest in the Patriot League. In the Big East Georgetown spends over $700,000 a year less in expenses than the conference leaders. In the Patriot League the difference is roughly $400,000. This is not an ideal situation but it is better for the Field Hockey Team.

The Georgetown Men’s and Women’s Tennis teams receive the least amount of money among Georgetown’s 29 Varsity teams. In the Big East Conference Georgetown is near the bottom of the conference in terms of overall expenses. Figures 7.10, 7.11, and 7.12 show how Georgetown’s Tennis expenses compare to teams in the Patriot League, CAA and A10 respectively.

![Total Men's and Women's Tennis Expenses for Patriot League and Georgetown 2010](http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/)

Figure 7.10. Total Men’s and Women’s Tennis Expenses for the Patriot League and Georgetown in 2010. *Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Figure 7.11. Total Expenses for Men’s and Women’s Tennis in CAA and Georgetown in 2010. 
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).

Figure 7.12. Total Expenses for Men’s and Women’s Tennis in A10 and Georgetown in 2010. 
Source: Data from Equities and Disclosure Act, (http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/).
Similar to the situation with Field Hockey, Georgetown Tennis expenses rank near the bottom of the Big East, Patriot League, CAA and A10. The Patriot League would be the best fit since the difference in expenses between the top and bottom teams is much lower than the other conferences. Georgetown Tennis would have more of a chance to win in the Patriot League.

Georgetown will need to find a way to remove its “Participatory” programs from the Big East without that affecting the status of the Men’s Basketball team and the other “Competitive” sports. The by-laws for the Big East Conference require that “Each Member shall compete within the Conference in each varsity sport sponsored by the Conference for which the Member has a Division I team.”\textsuperscript{16} There is however a provision in the by-laws that allows the Conference to suspend the membership of a school in some but not all sports.\textsuperscript{17} Georgetown could ask that its “Participatory” programs be suspended from the Big East. The approval for the suspension would have to come from a vote of Big East Athletics Directors. Georgetown will need to convince the Athletic Directors of the other members that it can no longer allow its “Participatory” teams to finish in last place because they are outspent by their opponents. Georgetown must make the argument that the Big East will still have 13 Georgetown teams who are all capable of winning Conference and NCAA Championships. Georgetown must also argue that it values the “Participatory” sports teams and will not cut any of these sports. Georgetown is a founding member of the Big East with one of the most successful Men’s Basketball programs in Conference history. Having already lost three members this fall, the Big East will be reticent to lose another founding member based solely on that a

\textsuperscript{16} The Big East Conference, \textit{Amended and Restated Bylaws} (October 17, 2011), 2.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 11.
member desires to provide its student-athletes with an opportunity to compete on a level playing field.


Big East Conference. “All-Time Big East Champions.”


Georgetown University. “Georgetown Men's Basketball Official.”


Toma, J.D., and M.E. Cross. “Intercollegiate Athletics and Student College Choice: 
Exploring the Impact of Championship Seasons On Undergraduate Applications.” 