

Press Box

Sports Organizations

Pat Kelleher has been named executive director of USA Hockey, effective June 10. Since 2008, Kelleher has played a key role in guiding USA Hockey's player and membership development efforts. Prior to that, he helped launch what is today known as the United States Ice Rink Association.



PAT KELLEHER

Matthieu Van Veen has been named chief revenue officer for Ironman. In this newly created position, Van Veen will be responsible for global sales, marketing, media and digital activities. He previously served as senior vice-president of sports at AEG Europe.

Major League Baseball has promoted **Chris Park** from senior vice-president for growth, strategy and international to executive vice-president of global marketing and partnerships. Park, who oversaw the 2017 World Baseball Classic, previously worked in MLB's labor relations department and coordinated Commissioner Rob Manfred's expansion of MLB International business development.

The **World Air Sports Federation** (FAI), the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records, has signed an



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agreement with the Australian company Freedom Drone Sports. The two groups will work together to develop drone racing as a global sport, with a focus on pilot licensing, racing rules, certification of drones, track design, social responsibility, gender equality and accredited training of all parties.

The **United Soccer League** has announced plans to launch a third-divi-



Chuck Wielgus had been executive director since 1997.

USA Swimming Loses its Leader

Chuck Wielgus, 67, led the national governing body for 20 years and oversaw a number of key reforms in the organization's events

The longtime executive director of USA Swimming, **Chuck Wielgus**, died April 23 in Colorado Springs after complications from colon cancer. He was 67. Wielgus was the longest current-serving chief executive of any national governing body, having led the organization since 1997. He had also served as chief executive officer of the USA Swimming Foundation since 2004.

During his tenure, USA Swimming's athletes won 156 Olympic medals and the U.S. team has topped both the gold and overall swimming medal counts at each of the five Games since 2000.

"Chuck was one of the finest CEOs in all of sport and his leadership of USA Swimming has made it the premier national governing body in the Olympic movement," said USA Swimming Board of Directors Chair Jim Sheehan. "Chuck's selflessness, compassion and intelligence have been hallmarks of his work with the staff, board of directors, athletes, coaches and volunteers of USA Swimming."

Wielgus led USA Swimming to years of substantial growth, doubling membership to more than 400,000. He also turned the Olympic swimming trials into a showcase indoor event, staging pools inside an arena and attracting thousands of spectators. The 2016 trials in Omaha, Nebraska, sold out with more than 200,000 tickets over 15 sessions at the CenturyLink Center.

Donations in Wielgus' memory can be made to the USA Swimming Foundation, 1 Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. ■

—Jason Gewirtz

sion men's professional league that will begin play in 2019. Branding for the new league as well as more details on the inaugural teams and competition format will be announced this summer.

The **World Cycling League**, an independent indoor track cycling organization, has hired Cadence Solution Partners and its principals, Jeffrey Doyle and Shergul Arshad, to lead its marketing efforts. Cadence will guide the launch of the league's first season, building upon the TeamTrak format introduced at WCL's pilot event in 2016.

Hosts & Suppliers

Rick Evans has been named CEO and executive director of the Minne-

sota Sports Facilities Authority, based in Minneapolis. Evans previously served as the first executive director of the Minnesota Racing Commission. He also has worked with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, Metris Companies and Green Tree Financial.

Lisa Motley has been appointed sports marketing and special events manager of the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority. Motley previously worked as director of marketing for Las Vegas Motor Speedway and as a marketing and digital media specialist for Las Vegas Events.



LISA MOTLEY

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Events DC, the official convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia, has announced a sponsorship agreement with NRG Esports. Events DC will have logos on team jerseys, player streams and the NRG website, and it will host NRG boot camps. Plans also include the construction of a new \$65 million, 4,200-seat arena that is expected to be completed in late 2018 or early 2019.

The Kentucky State Fair Board, a state agency, has rebranded itself as **Kentucky Venues**. The names of the facilities the agency oversees—primarily



the Kentucky Exposition Center and the Kentucky International Convention Center—will not change, nor will the names of the annual events the agency produces, including the Kentucky State Fair, National Farm Machinery Show and North American International Livestock Exposition.

Fast Traffic, a sports, entertainment and event management and consulting firm based in New York City, has announced the launch of **Fast Traffic Australia**.

THE LEADERSHIP COACH

Choosing Wisely

One of the most valuable pieces of advice that a parent, teacher or coach can give to their children is to choose their friends carefully.

Peers have an enormous influence, especially in the early teen years, which are often a time of turmoil, insecurity and vulnerability. During this time, teens need to have protective shields to counter the temptation to go down the wrong path.

People who are in leadership roles must be ready to help out teens in need. Because many teenagers tune out their parents, the onus



of guidance often falls on teachers and coaches, who can be of enormous help.

Not enough effort these days goes into helping young individuals have a sense of purpose above serving themselves. This is where team sports in particular can contribute valuable lessons for teens. Putting on the same uniform as one's teammates leads to bonding and promotes mutual respect.

Bad associations can lead one down a dark pathway, whereas good associations can help steer a young person toward a positive, rewarding experience—and a fulfilling life. ■

The Leadership Coach is Peter Burwash, founder of Peter Burwash International, which manages tennis instruction programs worldwide. His books are available through the Media Zone at SportsTravelMagazine.com. He can be reached at leadershipcoach@schneiderpublishing.com.

Northstar Acquires SportsTravel & TEAMS

Northstar Travel Group has acquired *SportsTravel*, the TEAMS Conference & Expo, Association News and Meetings Quest from Los Angeles-based **Schneider Publishing**. Timothy Schneider, president and CEO of Schneider Publishing, will join Northstar Travel Group as founder and chairman of the company's new Sports Division as part of the acquisition. The division will be an integral part of Northstar's Meetings Group, which includes *Meetings & Conventions*, *Successful Meetings*, *MeetingNews* and *Incentive*, and the group's integrated data, digital and in-person event platforms.

"Schneider Publishing's *SportsTravel* brand and their TEAMS Conference have built a reputation as a key partner to sports-event organizers and the destinations and hoteliers who serve them," said Tom Kemp, chairman and CEO of Northstar Travel Group. "This acquisition is another important step in the transformation of Northstar into a marketing solutions company serving all key segments of the travel and meetings industries."



SportsTravel is the key source of news and information on sports-related travel, from amateur and youth sports to collegiate and professional sports. *SportsTravel* is read by more than 40,000 sports-industry professionals.

"Finding the right strategic partner with the necessary capabilities over a range of areas—event management, digital media, and database marketing, to name a few—was important to me to scale the business," said Schneider, who founded *SportsTravel* in 1997 and the TEAMS Conference & Expo in 1998. "Working with Tom and the Northstar team, we'll be leverag-

ing Northstar's strengths to enhance and expand our offerings to better serve our customers."

TEAMS is the world's leading conference and expo for the sports-event industry. TEAMS '17 will be held October 30–November 2 in Orlando. TEAMS attracts more than 1,000 attendees from sports organizations, sports commissions and convention bureaus, corporate sponsors, event suppliers and other hospitality-industry leaders. ■

GOVERNING BODY DOSSIER

Pittsburgh Wins Big With NCAA Bids

After receiving in excess of 3,000 bids, the NCAA in April announced more than 600 host sites for championship events through the 2021–2022 season across Divisions I, II and III. No city fared better than Pittsburgh, which landed 22 events, including such prizes as the 2019 Division I wrestling and volleyball championships and the 2021 Frozen Four ice hockey tournament.

The story of how the city fared so well may be a case study for how cities can find success in future bid cycles.

Wide distribution.

The NCAA's mass announcement marked the second time the association has put most of its championship events out to bid at once. In all, host cities were named for 86 of the NCAA's 90 championships, with a total of 613 sites selected for those events. (Of the four events not included, three had existing contracts and a fourth does not select predetermined sites.)

The winning bidders cover a broad geographic range, with 43 states earning events. Pennsylvania landed the most events at 53, with Florida close behind at 51 and Indiana third at 41.

Within that list, several cities that have not hosted rounds of the men's basketball tournament in decades were given the chance to get back in the game. In 2019, the tournament will make a stop in Columbia, South Carolina, which has not hosted since 1970, and Hartford, Connecticut, which last hosted in 1998. In 2022, San Francisco will host for the first time since 1960; Fort Worth, Texas, will host for the first time since 1970; and Cincinnati will host for the first time in 30 years.

Also of note, several cities in North Carolina found success after



the NCAA "reluctantly" lifted a ban on events there just weeks before the sites were selected following the revision of a state law that limited the rights of transgender people. Greensboro, for example, received first- and second-round men's basketball games in 2020 at the Greensboro Coliseum, the first time since 2012 that tournament games will have been played in that venue. Raleigh received first- and second-round games in 2021.

Steel City Success.

In Pittsburgh, sports leaders were watching the results closely. In the previous cycle of NCAA bids, Pittsburgh focused most of its efforts on the highest-profile Division I championships, a strategy that yielded just one event despite bids for more. "We were forced to pay attention," said Jennifer Hawkins, executive director of sports development for VisitPittsburgh.

This time around, the city revamped its approach. Past bids had been submitted individually for each event. This time, the city formed a bid committee representing more than 20 institutions—including nine host universities, two athletic conferences and nine venues—that presented itself as a group with one package. And the city went after several non-revenue championships in lower divisions to make the overall package more attractive.

The results were the three Division I championships, an opening round of the men's basketball tournament in 2022, a Division II Fall Festival in 2018 featuring six championships in one, and several Division II and III regionals and championships.

"We didn't necessarily know how it would turn out, and we definitely didn't know it would turn out as it did," Hawkins said of the approach. "But we're all believers now." ■

—Jason Gewirtz

Based in Sydney, the firm will be led by Danielle Heptonstall, who directed the National Rugby League's event business from 1999–2016.

Sites & Venues

The **Las Vegas Motor Speedway** has added another Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series to its annual schedule beginning in 2018. The venue will also welcome a second NASCAR Xfinity Series and an additional race for the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, both also beginning in 2018.

The World Long Drive Association has announced a new event, The Clash in the Canyon, in partnership with Golf Mesquite Nevada. The event will be held June 3–6 at the **Mesquite Regional Sports & Event Complex** in Mesquite, Nevada.

The 2018 U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships will be held at **Veterans Memorial Coliseum** in Portland, Oregon, February 22–24. This will be the first time that Portland has hosted the event, which is expected to attract more than 5,000 visitors.

Starting this summer, the **Round Rock Multipurpose Complex**, just north of Austin, Texas, will become home to a branch of FC Barcelona's international youth soccer training program. Known as FCB Escola, the elite program has been developed for boys and girls ages 6–16.

As part of the 2017 SAP NHL Global Series, the National Hockey League's Colorado Avalanche and Ottawa Senators will play two regular-season games in Stockholm, Sweden. The events will be staged at the **Ericsson Globe** November 10–11.



The 2017 USA Ultimate Youth Club Northeastern Championships will be held October 7–8 at **Edinboro University**, just outside Erie, Pennsylvania. The bid to host the event was co-sponsored by the university, Erie Sports Commission and Erie Ultimate League.

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Des Moines, Iowa, has been awarded the 2018 and 2019 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Wrestling National Championships. The wrestling competitions will be staged at the **Iowa State Fairgrounds Jacobson Exhibition Center** March 2–3, 2018, and March 1–2, 2019.

Sponsors & Licensing

Major League Baseball and the **Coca-Cola Co.** have announced a new multiyear partnership making Coca-Cola the official soft drink of MLB. The beverage company will engage with fans using MLB Advanced Media's digital platforms. MLB has also signed an agreement that makes **Nathan's Famous** the official hot dog of the MLB and a supporter of its "Play Ball" initiative. Nathan's Famous is the first official hot dog in the league's history.

The **Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football** (CONCACAF) has partnered with **Post Consumer Brands**. The company and its cereal brands Honey Bunches of Oats, Honeycomb and Malt-O-Meal will have a presence at the 2017 CONCACAF Gold Cup.

The **U.S. Soccer Federation** has extended its partnership with **KT Tape** through 2020. KT Tape will continue to serve as the official kinesiology tape for all U.S. Soccer teams and programs.

USA Baseball and **Panini America**, a sports and entertainment collectibles company, have announced a long-term extension of their partnership, which began in 2012. Panini America will continue to serve as the official baseball card of USA Baseball. Company logos will be added to USA Baseball uniforms worn during international competition. A new product, 2017 Stars & Stripes USA Baseball, has also been launched.

The **United States Olympic Committee** has renewed its partnership with **24 Hour Fitness** through 2020. The agreement includes the

creation of the USOC Certification Program for 24 Hour Fitness' personal trainers.

And Finally...

The **National Bobblehead Hall of Fame & Museum** recently welcomed two new, seven-inch additions. NASCAR's **Tony Stewart** and

Danica Patrick were inducted into the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame.

The Milwaukee attraction features the world's largest collection of bobbleheads as well as dozens of exhibits, a themed restaurant and a retail store. ■

—Edited by Jennifer Lee



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