

**July 1, 2014**



An Interview With:

**COMMISSIONER JOHN SWOFFORD  
PRESIDENT JAMES R. RAMSEY  
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR TOM JURICH**

AMY YAKOLA: Good morning. We certainly appreciate everyone joining us today, and before we begin, I'd like to make a few quick announcements. First, please turn off your cell phones or place them in silent mode. It will be greatly appreciated.

This press conference is being streamed live by the ACC Digital Network on theACC.com, and we will also have a transcript available following all of today's remarks and questions and answers. After all of our opening remarks, we will have time for questions, so as soon as we finish with opening remarks, I'll come back up and we'll have time to get to as many of them as we can.

At this time it's my pleasure to introduce the Commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference, John Swofford.

JOHN SWOFFORD: Amy, thank you. Welcome, everybody. It's a pleasure to have you with us today. Today has been a long time in the making, and I'm pleased to be here to officially welcome the University of Louisville as the newest member of the Atlantic Coast Conference.

The ACC was founded over 60 years ago and has long since enjoyed a very rich tradition of balancing academics and athletics at the highest level, and the addition of the University of Louisville further strengthens this great conference.

At 15 members strong, we are well-positioned for the long-term future with a unique balance of public and private institutions. The University of Louisville and its athletic program continues to reach new heights and rank among the nation's most competitive, making it a perfect fit for the ACC.

Geographically, we truly embody the Atlantic Coast with membership spanning the entire Eastern Seaboard and inland with Notre

Dame and now Louisville. Within our footprint, the ACC will have the most television households and the highest population of any conference nationally.

It is also projected that by 2030, 55 percent of the population of the United States will lie within the northeast and southern states, which of course is prime ACC territory.

The combination of our marketplace opportunities along with the population numbers from both current and projected and the quality of our institutions and their athletic programs give the ACC enormous potential as a conference, both now and in the long-term future.

From an athletic perspective, there's much to be excited about in this league. The ACC is coming off a great year, capturing five National Championships, including Florida State winning the final BCS title. In addition, Clemson won its BCS game over Ohio State, becoming the Orange Bowl champion. We had an NCAA record 11 ACC football programs appear in postseason bowl games and finish the year with winning records.

In terms of basketball, I think it's more than fair to say from an historical and success standpoint, we are now the strongest collection of basketball programs that have ever been assembled in one conference. The ACC is home to five of the top 12 and seven of the top 45 winningest basketball programs in the history of men's college basketball, and we will have four of the five active Hall of Fame coaches on the sidelines this year.

With the addition of Louisville, three of the last six national champions in men's basketball come from the Atlantic Coast Conference membership.

ACC women's basketball has also enjoyed a great amount of success and this past season was no exception with eight NCAA Tournament teams and two Final Four participants, and certainly Louisville's women's basketball program knows that territory quite well.

While the addition of Louisville enhances the ACC's highly competitive football and



visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

*Transcript-070114.doc*

basketball programs, it also brings excitement to our Olympic sports programs, which already consistently rank second to none.

Academically, the Atlantic Coast Conference continues to lead all of the Power Five conferences, whether it's in the U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges list, or the NCAA graduation success rates or academic progress rates.

Striving for excellence, both academically and athletically, will continue to remain at the forefront of the ACC and its member institutions.

Now, the University of Louisville brings to the ACC an institution and an athletic program with tremendous upward momentum. It brings a dynamic city and a rabid, large and passionate fan base, and quite frankly, I know of no other collegiate athletic program that has progressed in the last 15 years as much as this one. It takes great leadership and continuity for that to happen.

As I said in the beginning, this day was a long time in the making. I want to sincerely express my gratitude to President Ramsey, to Tom Jurich, to the University of Louisville board, and all of you at the University of Louisville who have worked with the ACC Council of Presidents, our faculty athletic representatives, our athletic directors and administrators of our member institutions in making this happen. It is truly a win-win-win proposition.

This is a landmark moment for our league and our schools and our alumni and our fan bases, as we extend the warmest welcome to the University of Louisville as they join the Atlantic Coast Conference. Two men that I have such great respect for I'd like to come up and stand by the easel here to commemorate this moment and this day. You know, I mentioned President Ramsey and Athletic Director Jurich, where this University and where this program has come under the leadership of these two gentlemen, it has truly been phenomenal to watch, and for the longest time I was watching it and appreciating it from afar. Now I and everybody else in the Atlantic Coast Conference get to watch it and appreciate it with you as a member of our family.

We have a plaque to present to the two of you to commemorate this July 1st, 2014, as the day that the University of Louisville joins the Atlantic Coast Conference in an official capacity. Welcome.

It's my distinct pleasure now to turn the podium over to President Ramsey.

JAMES RAMSEY: Thank you, John, and this truly is a landmark day for the University of Louisville. As John has indicated, without question the Atlantic Coast Conference is a premier athletic conference. The institutions that are members of the Atlantic Coast Conference, as John has also indicated, are premier academic institutions. We at the University of Louisville have been given a statutory mandate by the people of our state, by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to be a premier nationally recognized metropolitan research university. As we continue on our upward momentum, or John, as we like to say, trajectory, both athletically and academically, I can think of no greater home or neighborhood that we would like to be associated with and be part of than the Atlantic Coast Conference.

We know that this is a challenging time for higher education and for the academy. We face fiscal challenges, financial challenges and state budget cuts, we face market challenges, we face increasing expectations on the academy, and as John has alluded to, we face with intercollegiate athletics a number of challenges, including rulings by the National Labor Relations Board court decisions that have been handed down and the whole issue of the structure of the NCAA.

I can think of no conference, I can think of no leadership greater than the ACC and the leadership of John Swofford that is positioned to lead us as an institution and this conference forward, and so John, we thank you for your leadership. John is an individual that has been part of the academy throughout his career. He's been on the college campus, understands college life. John has been longtime commissioner of the conference and has led the conference and positioned the conference for change, and as we say in sports, skating to where the puck is going to be, and positioning the ACC for that.

John is a person of vision. John is a person of integrity. And so John, we thank you for your leadership. We thank the entire ACC for believing in the University of Louisville and for giving us this amazing opportunity, and we also thank you for all that you have done over the past year in reaching out to the University of Louisville and including us in the discussions and activities of the ACC since that decision was first made.

With regard to our students, we've had students that have participated in student leadership conferences at Boston College. We've

had students that have traveled with other ACC students to Washington, D.C., to lobby public policy makers on higher education issues. We've had students participate in international service learning programs with other ACC schools. And this fall, our student government here at the University of Louisville will host the student government leadership from all the other ACC schools.

I see Pam here from our faculty and our faculty Senate, and we've had faculty partnerships and research and discussions. Our provost Dr. Willihnganz is here. She's been included in conversations with other provosts from ACC schools, and again, the welcoming reach from the ACC has touched every area of the University. Our finance people have been included in discussions with other ACC finance representatives, and next April will be hosting all the chief financial officers from all the ACC schools here at the University of Louisville.

So this is truly a landmark day. This is an outstanding conference athletically. It's an outstanding conference academically, and moving forward, the University of Louisville will continue on its upward trajectory without missing a beat.

It's now my pleasure to introduce a person that certainly in this community needs no introduction, a person who believed in the University of Louisville, came to the University of Louisville with the goal of building a comprehensive first-class athletic program, committed to financial stability, committed to integrity, committed to making sure that every student athlete at the University of Louisville has the opportunity to be academically successful as well as athletically successful, an individual that's been committed to sender equity and success on the field, the finest athletic director in the country, Tom Jurich.

TOM JURICH: Well, since Terrilynn can't be with us, John, I'll introduce your wife. Nora, thank you for coming. It's been great to get to know you over the last 18 months, and we're so excited to have not only John and Nora but the entire ACC family, and so many people that make such a big difference in where we're going to.

This banner, wow, that's incredible. It really didn't sink in to me, John, until this morning at 5:00. I watched the news, and it says that we were in the league because I was in bed before midnight, and it really hit hard, and the appreciation for you and all the Council of Presidents and all of our colleagues and athletic

directors, I can't thank you enough for making this moment possible.

You know, I always thought the most fruitful phone call I ever made was to call you and ask you to consider us, and you did, and you looked at everything, and I always believed we were a great fit, and I know we are, and I remember saying a couple words to you, that we would make you proud, and that's our goal here. I mean, we're not the biggest, we're not the best, but we're going to work our butts off to make you very, very proud in every step of the organization that we have. I don't think anybody could be more proud than I am to say we're a part of this conference, and it's so exciting for this entire institution, this entire city, the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Everybody thanks you, and I mean that.

Then to be a part of this for 18 months and how you've embraced us, because it's awful, awful difficult -- I've gotten pretty good at this, this lame duck situation. This is our fourth conference in my 17 years here, but it's difficult, and you're out there on an island by yourself. Not me, but our university is, and to see how you included everybody and from day one just made us feel so welcome, and we've been a member of the ACC for 18 months in my opinion. Today obviously is the day it's official, but in our opinion it's been 18 months.

I do want to thank the people that have come before us, John: The commissioner Mike Slive, who was our commissioner in Conference USA, and Britt Banowsky; then as we moved to the Big East in Mike Tranghese and John Marinatto; and then we went into our home last year at American with Mike Aresco. They're all big fans of yours, John, and the ACC, and they all wish us a lot of luck.

But those people helped us grow, too. It wasn't just us, it was all the people that we've been able to compete with to align ourselves with and all the wonderful universities that have pushed us up. I stand here, and we're very, very grateful and very thankful that all this came together for us.

The staff that you put together is absolutely amazing. We love to talk about at the University of Louisville how we're a family. We operate as a family. We love being little brother. We love calling ourselves Avis, little brothers for the other school down the road. But Avis is "we try harder." We love that culture, and we always love to say that little brother is up to 6'5" and 295 now

and he's running a 4.6, so we want to keep going with that trajectory and to keep going.

But we always love the culture we have with our 23 sports ... that we roll up our sleeves. We want to outwork people. We don't have to have the most of everything, but we want to do the best use with the money that we do have, and I think we've been able to do things like that.

We've got an unbelievable president in Dr. Ramsey. He's been a great leader for us. He's not only a great president, he's a great fan, and you'll come to see that very, very quickly. Him and his wife Jane are at all our events. They support us in everything. Never, ever had an issue where Dr. Ramsey wouldn't get involved to try to help us make it possible. Elaine Wise, our faculty rep, unbelievable; Bob Hughes, the president of our trustees; Everybody is supportive here, and you'll see I think the one common ground and common bond we have here is we're this. It's not a we versus they. We're not a university that's siloed off. We're all together, and that's what's so special about this place.

There's a lot of great institutions around the country. I'm very biased. I think this is the greatest there is in the country.

John, the thing that makes me the most proud is I've got four children, and all four have graduated from this institution, which they can proudly say they graduated from an ACC institution, so thank you very much, and welcome, and to your wonderful wife Nora. I know we're going to see you again on September 1, and thank you for putting us in that opener against Miami on national TV that Monday night, and I think any time we get an opportunity to show off this wonderful community of Louisville, we want to do it, so thank you very much. It's an honor.

AMY YAKOLA: While we get everybody set up here, we do have a couple mic holders in the room. Please raise your hand, let us get you the mic, and if you could give us your name and affiliation, that is very helpful up here.

**Q. Dr. Ramsey, just your thoughts about the impact academically as well as athletically, what this really means and the quantum leap.**

JAMES RAMSEY: We like to say at the University of Louisville we're on an amazing trajectory in terms of the quality of students, our graduation rate, our funded research. We know we have more to do. As I said, what greater academic neighborhood to live in than the ACC.

You have great public schools, great private schools, some of the top public and private schools absolutely in the United States.

So it's a sense of pride for us, number one. Number two, it takes us into new recruiting markets. Number three, it offers us collaborations. We've already announced a collaboration with regard to emergency medicine with regard to the University of Pittsburgh, and we're included in all kinds of conversations now and opportunities now that we haven't really had before. I think we're just at the tip of the iceberg.

But this is the academic neighborhood that we want to be associated with and affiliated with as we continue to work as hard as we can every year to get academically better and better and better.

**Q. Tom, when you took over this athletic program and you took over a football program that was struggling at that time, how crazy is it that 17 years later you're taking this program into this conference? Is that even beyond your wildest dreams?**

TOM JURICH: Yes, it is, there's no question about it. But the great thing is there's been a lot of great people that have made that possible, fantastic coaches, unbelievable student athletes. We've had a lot of success, but the one thing about it is we're not happy with that. We want to continue to get better and better. We're not content. We want to grow. We want to help this conference as much as we possibly can. They've got world-renowned schools in there. They've got the national champion in there. It's going to be very, very competitive, but it's something we've always welcomed. We've always welcomed that competitiveness.

**Q. Tom, you mentioned being used to the lame duck kind of issue. How much of your time the last decade or more has your department had to spend on these conference issues, and what's it going to mean to have that basically taken off your plate and be able to focus on some other things?**

TOM JURICH: Well, that's a good question. We've had to be very fluid. That's just the nature of the job, and it's pretty much been the nature of our environment in the collegiate atmosphere. But I think now things have stabilized. I think one thing that the commissioner understates all the time that I will overstate it for

him is I think the move he made to get the grant of rights by the ACC is probably one of the greatest moves that any college commissioner has ever made. You see that's basically stopped expansion and expansion talks in its tracks by that one move, and Commissioner, you are to be congratulated; to get everybody on the same page to do something like that is phenomenal.

For us when the commissioner called us November 28 of 2012 to invite us into the league, we started that day. We started preparing that day in every sport, because we didn't just want to come in the league. We knew the challenges that were in front of us, but we wanted to make sure we were set with our resources, set with our coaches, our support staffs, our academic training to make sure we could come in and compete. I'm not naïve enough to think we're going to go in and win handfuls and handfuls of championships, although that's going to be our goal, but we want to make sure that we're prepared to compete.

**Q. Commissioner Swofford, when you first took that first phone call from Tom, how quickly did you know that this was going to be a good fit for the ACC?**

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, as I said in my remarks, I and many others have been watching Louisville and the progression for a number of years, and with everything that was going on over the last decade in terms of changes in conference membership and potential growth and so forth, our institutions, we put together what we called a four-four-four committee. It was four presidents, four faculty reps and four athletic directors so that our governance bodies were connected. They were charged with keeping an eye on a regular ongoing basis on expansion, and considering and analyzing what institutions might be a good fit under certain circumstances if those circumstances were to occur and if we ever reached a point where we wanted to expand further or needed additional members for whatever reason.

Much to their credit and our athletic directors, Council of Presidents and faculty reps collectively, I think we were very well prepared in terms of what we would do next under any given particular set of circumstances. It was pretty evident that Louisville was a school that would be a tremendous fit to our conference, a tremendous addition to our conference, and it worked out where that opportunity arose.

But when that opportunity arose, we were not starting from ground zero by any stretch of the imagination.

**Q. Tom, when you got the call that the ACC was going to accept you, just take us through the moment and what was said on that call and your emotions?**

TOM JURICH: Well, from my standpoint, I was talking with Dr. Ramsey, and when John called him, the thing for me was there was relief, because it was a tense time. I mean, those 11 days from when I got a phone call from Pat Forde asking me about if the University of Maryland, if those rumors were true, and I didn't know it, but Pat had good sources and we figured we'd better get started, and we went to work quite rapidly, so those 11 days were very, very tough. There was really the weight of the world on our shoulders because of conference expansion. We wanted a home. We knew we deserved a home and we knew we deserved a great place like the ACC.

The league is so tradition rich, so prestigious, and we felt that was the best fit for us at all times. From getting that call, I don't know what Dr. Ramsey would say, but I'd tell you it was a great, great relief and a great privilege and honor just to be even hearing those words.

**Q. Tom, when you got here in 1997, what was the inventory of what you inherited, your budget, how many sports you had, what kind of facilities you had, and compare that to 2014.**

TOM JURICH: I should ask you that question. You were here longer than I was. You've seen it all.

I believe our budget was 14.9 (million), somewhere around there, and I think this year we're going to be somewhere in the 90s -- 86 will be this year. It's grown rapidly, but I think it's all been good growth. I think we've been for the most part a very self-sufficient program. I think we've been able to grow and reinvest in our programs.

The number one thing I wanted to do when I got here is make sure all the programs felt they were as important as the next, whether it's the women's cross country program or the field hockey program or the football or men's basketball program, I wanted them to feel like they were the top program we had at the University, and I think hopefully they all feel that way.

The one thing I wanted to make sure and ensure is that we had great coaches because I think great coaches and the leadership they provide are the key things for us because they mean so much for us. And then I wanted to assemble an administration around myself that could really turn some corners. We had to make a lot of progress academically, and Commissioner, you'd be very proud to know that the leader who's done as good a job as anybody in the world, not in the country, in the world, in academics is sitting right there, about three guys down, and Marvin, will you wave because he's a Wake Forest alum. So I had to go to the ACC to bring him in. But he's done a phenomenal job with our academic programs, and we couldn't be more proud.

But I think the number one thing we had to do was change the culture. We wanted to start with the NCAA and we wanted to make sure that we were very cognizant of all the rules. We wanted to have a culture of clients and we wanted to work very hard to make that work.

**Q. Could you go through the list of facilities then and now?**

TOM JURICH: Well, I think every program added a new facility in the last 10 years, or 12 years now, and I could be off by one or two, but I think some are working on their second. But facilities as you well know are very important because not only do they house or teams but they're also recruiting tools. They've also been a big part of the makeup of this campus, and as this campus continues to grow and grow at exponential numbers, it's going to be -- it's great to be just a small part of it.

**Q. Tom, given the landscape nationally with litigation and the power conferences' search for autonomy, how much more stable is your situation now than it would be if you were not included in the ACC or for those schools that are on the outside looking in?**

TOM JURICH: You know, I never really look at it as being on the outside looking in. What I look at it, I think when you come to the -- talking about litigation and things of the NCAA and Labor Relations Board, I think that's going to affect all the schools in the country. I don't think it's going to be just a handful. And I think any time you go to litigation, there's ramifications for everybody.

**Q. Commissioner Swofford, we've heard from Dr. Ramsey and Tom Jurich about**



...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

**the 11 days they went through and the stress-filled days those were. What were the 11 days like for the ACC and you in ultimately coming to the decision that it was Louisville?**

JOHN SWOFFORD: You're speaking of the period when Maryland informed us that --

**Q. That they were going to leave and you ultimately came to the conclusion that it was Louisville.**

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, we started immediately with discussions with our four-four-four committee that I referenced earlier and then with the Council of Presidents. Because of the previous work that the committee had done and our staff had done internally and other discussions we've had leading up to that, it was a pretty quick turnaround. I mean, when you think about it, you lose a school and you replace them with a school of the quality of Louisville in 11 days, that's pretty remarkable. But I think it gets back to that we weren't starting from ground zero. There was a lot of information there. We knew, quite frankly, everything we needed to know about the situation and about the University of Louisville, and through the course of basically a little over a week, I had probably four or five phone calls of our governance structure. It came together very quickly and it came together unanimously, I might add.

**Q. Commissioner Swofford, before this 11-day period during the conference swap, was the University of Louisville ever on the ACC's radar for an expansion prior to everybody changing conferences and the expansions?**

JOHN SWOFFORD: Well, it had been in the sense of the information that was being put together in terms of potential institutions. It had been there from an ongoing standpoint.

**Q. I guess from the beginning of the conference swaps, not just that 11-day period, but the year or so before that, was the University of Louisville on the radar?**

JOHN SWOFFORD: It was on the radar, and again, had been, and I think the fact that the momentum and trajectory that President Ramsey referenced and that many of you have referenced and that Tom had referenced, when that just continues and continues and continues, ultimately it hits you right in the face, quite honestly.

In the years just prior to that and then the -- well, the year of the invitation you did pretty well, too, I might add, which I appreciated greatly, by the way. You know, it just kept coming.

AMY YAKOLA: Thank you all for being here. Enjoy the rest of your day.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**