

# Sports

AT WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Brian S. Katten  
Sports Information Director  
Freeman Athletic Center  
Wesleyan University  
Middletown, Connecticut 06459  
Phone: (860) 685-2887 Fax: (860) 685-2691  
email: bkatten@wesleyan.edu  
Web Site: www.wesleyan.edu/athletics

## JUGGLING THE "OTHER" RESPONSIBILITIES

Table Topic - ECAC-SIDA Workshop, Oneonta, N.Y., Wednesday, June 7, 2006

What does S.I.D. stand for? While most of us know it's Sports Information Director, sometimes, it seems more often than not to mean "Send In Duties." Our job usually becomes a catch-all for anything athletic at our college, short of coaching and playing. We are part receptionist, secretary, proof-reader, statistician, graphic designer, ad salesman, promoter, photographer, and in my case, baker, among other things.

So what is "juggling the other responsibilities?" A lot of it comes from the tremendous ability we, as SIDs, have to plan our day, meet our goals and roll with the punches. Often we will enter a day with a list of tasks we'd like to complete. Invariably, a dozen items not even close to our list will pop up and demand our time and attention, often with ASAP attached to them.

Examples - 1) A member of the class of 1974 sent me an email asking if I have a photo of the 1972-73 men's basketball team I can send him. He wants to show his family that he really was on the team and he really was 70 pounds lighter back then. I put on my thinking cap. I know there is a photo of the team mounted on the wall of your athletic center, but to get it down would be worth your life. There might be a photo in the 1972-73 yearbook stored in archives at the library, but I know they won't let me remove the book and I never know how fast they can scan something and get it out to me. Oh wait. I have some old game programs and media guides from that era in some files in the office. How about that. There is a team photo with a roster right in the middle of the 1972-73 media guide and even a posed action shot of the player in question on page 11. I scan the pages, make viable jpegs out of the scans, store them on my computer and email them off with my best wishes. Maybe he'll make a bigger donation to the annual fund this year.

2) The men's lacrosse team had its most successful season ever in terms of NCAA tournament advancement. The news director asks me to write a 750-1000 word summary of the season for the online campus newsletter and give him a couple of action photos to go with it. He needs it in three days. Piece of cake.

3) The yearbook doesn't do its job very well in covering sports. The editor sends me an email to see if I can provide team photos across the board and two action shots for them to use. I quickly check my job description and though I do not see sports editor of the *Olla Podrida* on it, I comply.

4) I just got the email from CoSIDA saying the ballots are ready for the 2006 track & field Academic All-Americans. Time to spend half-an-hour or more perusing a hundred talented athlete resumes and pick the top ones from your region. Fortunately I have a kid on both the men's and women's ballot. Otherwise what does my college gain from this allocation of my valuable time? Nada!



So what do we learn from this? Your day never goes as planned. If it did, it would scare the pants off you. Constantly review what needs to be done first, get to it and don't forget what's on the back burner. Make sure you take care of the jobs that are most visible and carry the most weight. Make a list. Don't lose the list. Little things can slip by. And if the deadline passes, oh heck, too late now. You did the best you could. Don't try to be an SID 24/7. It's not worth it.

Which brings us to the other "other" responsibilities - LIFE! An SID is entitled to have one outside the office.

Some of us are actually married (or at least used to be married) and even have little SIDs running around the house (or big ones). Even if we don't have a significant other, there needs to be time for recreation, relaxation and fun (not to mention ECAC-SIDA workshops!). Factor these into your lives. Maybe it won't go off exactly as planned, but it was good to plan it anyway. I made plans to go to Cancun with my fiancée' back in February. We were flying out of Hartford May 26. Did I expect my men's lacrosse team to get within one goal of a trip to Philly on May 28 for the NCAA Division III Championship? Uh, NO! But did it? Uh, YES! I spent the week prior to the semi-finals trying to rearrange my schedule to add a trip to Philly into the mix. I got it done. My consolation for losing to Cortland in OT was three extra days in Mexico. A much better investment. The point is not to avoid even making plans because you MIGHT have an event to attend. Have a life. I'll never forget back in May of 1987 when we named Kevin Spencer from Ithaca College as our head coach in football. The announcement, earth-shaking as it was, was scheduled for 11 a.m. on a Friday. It was also reunion weekend and I was signed up to play in the alumni golf tournament starting at 10 a.m. I was told by my boss that I would have to skip the tournament to get the release ready. I was pissed. Would the world stop revolving if the papers didn't hear about our new coach until 3 p.m. instead of 11 a.m.? Not in my mind (remember, this is in the days well before the Internet and even wide use of fax machines). My intern this year was a specialist in trying to figure out how she could do the work I needed her to do and still make all the games her women's club hockey team had scheduled, including the playoffs, and get her 3-4 hours a day of prime workout time in the fitness center. While I occasionally felt put off by her unwillingness to do things just as I said, I came to appreciate that things are not etched in stone and most of the time you can have your cake and eat it, too.

This year I did more work from home than ever before. Admittedly until last June, I lived a block away from my office so the commute wasn't a hassle. Then I moved five miles away and while that's not exactly in the next state, at \$1.50 a round trip for gas, why make more trips than you have to. It also allowed for more time with loved ones. At least I was under the same roof with them. Make arrangements to get cable connections at home (my college pays for half of our annual fees). While it's not quite as easy and you might not have every fact and figure at your disposal, you can get a reasonable amount done from your own backyard and get a home-cooked meal to boot (as long as you're willing to cook).

And if you happen to be single, be sure to use that cable connection to get yourself onto some really good dating web sites! That's where I met my fiancée' three years ago. Don't rule out members of your department as potential long-term mates (our men's and women's soccer coaches met in our office six years ago and are now married with a 1-1/2 year old son).

Have I told you anything you don't already know? Probably not. But it's good to see it on paper, I guess. Will you heed my advice? If you're anything like my son, you won't even read it.....

#####