

Jim Delany Updates: B1G Media Days



CHICAGO — The 2018 Big Ten Football Media Days began Monday with conference commissioner Jim Delaney's press conference kicking things off.

What follows are updates from Delaney's presser.

- The commissioner said he believes last year's football season was among the best in Big Ten history, despite the conference not having a team in the College Football Playoff for the first time.
- Delany noted that the Big Ten was the only Power 5 conference to increase in-stadium attendance in 2017. He also cited other plaudits, including five teams in the top 21 of the final rankings.
- In terms of competitive balance in the Big Ten divisions, Delany said maintaining geographic scheduling - keeping rivalries intact - is more important to fans. He pointed out that the previous divisions (Legends and Leaders) were meant to provide competitive balance but were not well-received. He said he does not expect any changes to the current East and West Divisions.
- Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith suggested earlier this summer that teams should be required to release an injury report each week. To that, Delany said he thinks there's a need for a nationwide "availability report," which would note when players are unavailable via injury, eligibility issues or other transgressions.
- Delany on legalized sports gambling and vulnerability of college athletes to it: "I don't think they're more vulnerable today than they were before (the Supreme Court ruling). Second, we have to double-down on education." He added that the Big Ten would prefer a federal framework that would prohibit college sports gambling at the state level. Short of that, he'd like to see a uniform set of rules.
- Delany said he is in favor of the NBA and NBA Players Association ending the one-and-done rule in basketball. "That prohibition deprives players of choice." He said he believes players should have the choice to do what they want coming out of high school. While saying he feels basketball prospects should have the option to go straight to the NBA, he also noted that high school athletes aren't physically ready to go straight to the NFL.
- Delany punted on a question about players profiting off name/image/likeness until the court case in California is finalized later this year. He said it's premature to make a final comment but did say, "Can we make our own rules and can we maintain collegiate athletics the way we've known it over 100 years?"
- Delany on the new transfer rules that have given players a little more freedom: "I think the direction we have gone and the changes we've made are good ones."

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