KEEPING RECREATION IN INTRAMURAL SPORTS
2008 NIRSA National Conference, Austin, Texas

David Peters, Director of Intramural Sports & Sport Clubs, Florida State University
Darrell Hargreaves, Coordinator of Intramural Sports, University of Alabama
Rick Palmieri, Coordinator of Intramural Sports, North Carolina State University

Competitive versus Recreational
Competitive Participants: Committed to Winning, Require Scored/Officiated Contests, Often Intense, Emotional
Recreational Participants: Play for the Fun of the Game, Less Emotionally Attached

★ How Does Your Program Rate?
Mission & Goals: Where Do You Want Your Program?
★ What is Your Most Competitive Sport? Least Competitive Sport?
Learn from Participant Attitudes in Designated Sports
Participant Types: Automatic, Interested, Team Player

Statistics and Surveys
★ Does Your Program Track Participants?
The Facts, Quantitative Data: Participant Demographics; Sport, League, Division Information
★ How Does Your Program Survey Participants and Non-Participants?
The How and Why, Qualitative Data: Why They Play, How They Learn About League, Rules
Who to Ask? Not Just Team Captains, Normal Participants, Potential Participants
When & Where to Ask? Free from Emotional Setting of Competition
What Method to Use? Paper & Pencil, Web-Based, Incentives
How to Ask? Stress You Need Their Help, Appreciate Their Feedback, Note Length & Time Required
★ What Survey Data Have You Collected?
Constructive Responses: Descriptive Choices, Free Response Area
Anonymity Can Lead to More Honest Responses
Respond to Survey Participants, If Possible

Participant Restrictions
★ Does Your Program Restrict or Limit Talented Players in Particular Sports, Leagues, or Divisions?
Regulating Participant Talent Levels: Proven Talents
Varsity Athletes in Related Sports, Unrelated Sports
Scholarship, Practice Squad Members, Former Varsity Athletes in Related Sports
Current Sport Club Members in Related Sports

Leagues and Divisions
★ How Many Leagues and Divisions Do You Offer in Your Major Team Sports?
Sport: Designated Activity – Flag Football, Soccer, Basketball, Softball, etc.
League: Gender / Organization Based – Men’s, Women’s, Co-Rec, Fraternity, Sorority, Res Hall, Faculty/Staff, etc.
Division: Skill-Level Based – Advanced, Beginner or Major, Minor, etc.
Section: Day and Time Based, Group of Teams That Play Each Other – Monday at 7:00 pm

Regular Season Scheduling
★ Do You Use Different Scheduling Methods for Different Divisions?
Recreational Divisions: Shorter or Longer Season, No Playoff Option, Most Rec Teams Still Need Competition
★ Do You Use Different Scheduling Methods for Different Sports?
Traditional Competitive Team Sports: Multiple Game Regular Season and Playoff Tournament
More Recreational Team Sports: Shorter Season and/or Practice Games and Playoff Tournament
Other Recreational Sports: Weekend Tournaments
One Division: Can Ask About Skill Level – Average, Good, Very Good
Week-to-Week Scheduling Can Benefit Smaller Programs, Can Assess Talent Level for More Even Matchups
Playoff Qualification
★ What Criteria Must Teams Meet to Qualify for Postseason Playoffs on Your Campus?
Professional League Approach: Teams Compete in Regular Season for Limited Number of Playoff Spots
Little League Approach: Teams Participate in the Regular Season, All Qualify for Postseason Tournament
Limited Number of Teams Quality: Every Game Impacts Playoff Chances, Increased Competitiveness
All Teams Qualify: Record Less Important, Regular Season Less Competitive, Participants Refocused on Participating
Time & Facility Limitations: With All Teams Qualifying, the First Round Playoff Game Can Count as a Guaranteed Game

Playoff Structure
★ Do You Have Multiple Levels of Playoff Tournament Competition?
One Division, One Bracket: Enhances Competitiveness, Yields Prestigious Single Champion
One Division, Multiple Brackets: Split a Division Based on Record (Skill Level), Two Separate Playoff Brackets, Often Produces More Even Matchups, Helps Avoid Best vs Worst Team Matchups
Multiple Divisions, Multiple Brackets: Pre-Playoff Adjustments, Promotion and Demotion of Teams
★ Do You Automatically Schedule Teams in a Playoff Bracket or Hold a Playoff Draw Meeting?
Seeding: Based on Record, Advantageous for Better Teams
Selection: Based on Playing Day and Time Preference, Selection Order Criteria

Communicating the Recreational Mindset
The Sales Job: Program-Wide Policies & Procedures, Everyday Emphasis
Current Participants: Must Retain This Group of Participants, Serve as Advocates for Your Program
Potential Participants: Create Welcoming Environment for All Talent and Interest Levels
★ What Names Do You Use for Your Divisions?
Making Changes: Educating Old Participants Can Require a Fresh Naming System to Force Them to Adapt,
Educating All Participants Can Be Enhanced With Easy to Understand Descriptions
Naming Sports: Flag Football, Express Soccer, Playground Dodgeball
★ How Do You Educate Your Participants?
Emphasize at Captain’s Meetings, Clear Policies, Utilize Signage for Common Participants
Policy Enforcement: Player Restrictions, Sportsmanship Requirements, Team Promotion
★ How Do You Recognize Recreational Participants?
Championship Awards: All-Campus, League, Division
Other Awards: Sportsmanship

Presentation Materials, Examples, and Survey Results
Available Online at fsu.campusrec.com/nirsa
Survey Results Available Tuesday, April 15th