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College Baseball Popularity Traced To ESPN Coverage

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0.17	6. Brian Deaton, G. Carolina								
0.17	7. Tom Hickox, Stetson	Jr	38	67.3	3.07	12			
0.17	8. Phillip Stidham, Arkansas	So	31	54.0	0.83	11			
0.17	9. Mike Ericson, Mich. St.	Sr	19	24.6	2.19	11			
0.16	10. Brad Gregory, Fla. St.	Sr	29	76.0	2.25	11			
0.15	11. Robert Teague, E. Ky.	Jr	30	48.0	3.56	11			
0.15	12. Alan Levine, S. Ill.	Jr	26	38.6	3.72	11			
0.15	13. Jeff Williams, Wichita St.	Jr	27	36.0	1.75	10			
0.15	14. Derek Wallace, Pepperdine	Fr	28	38.3	2.82	10			
0.14	15. Todd Bush, Miami, Fla.	Jr	28	37.3	2.89	10			
0.13									

Team Leaders

BATTING AVERAGE								
Rank	Team	G	W	L	T	AB	HITS	Avg.
1.	LIU-Brooklyn	38	27	11	0	1285	467	.363
2.	New Mexico St.	59	40	19	0	1908	655	.343
3.	Loyola Marymount	60	45	15	0	2221	759	.342
4.	Central Mich.	55	38	17	0	1586	534	.337
5.	Maine	59	41	18	0	1941	651	.335
6.	Long Beach St.	59	36	22	1	2052	687	.335
7.	Louisiana St.	63	47	16	0	2144	717	.334
8.	Southern Ill.	59	47	12	0	1981	658	.332
9.	Illinois	60	41	19	0	1965	649	.330
10.	E. Carolina	53	46	7	0	1663	549	.330

SCORING							
Rank	Team	G	W	L	T	RUNS	Avg.
1.	New Mexico St.	59	40	19	0	541	9.17
2.	Loyola Marymount	60	45	15	0	508	8.47
3.	Washington St.	63	46	17	0	533	8.46
4.	Oklahoma St.	65	49	16	0	547	8.42
5.	LIU-Brooklyn	38	27	11	0	319	8.39
6.	Louisiana St.	63	47	16	0	528	8.38
7.	East Carolina	53	46	7	0	443	8.36
8.	Stanford	62	52	10	0	507	8.18
9.	Illinois	60	41	19	0	490	8.17
10.	Clemson	62	42	20	0	505	8.15

EARNED RUN AVERAGE									
Rank	Team	G	W	L	T	IP	R	ER	ERA
1.	Miami, Fla.	60	49	11	0	534.3	178	149	2.51
2.	South Alabama	59	41	18	0	496.0	206	144	2.61
3.	Jackson St.	50	33	16	1	394.6	186	118	2.69
4.	Central Florida	60	40	20	0	528.0	242	164	2.80
5.	Texas A&M	60	47	13	0	485.3	187	151	2.80
6.	Southwestern La.	63	47	16	0	512.0	227	165	2.90
7.	S.W. Mo. St.	57	42	15	0	455.0	200	147	2.91
8.	McNeese St.	55	35	20	0	425.3	199	138	2.92
9.	Nicholls St.	54	36	17	1	467.3	204	152	2.93
10.	Texas	63	48	15	0	539.3	258	177	2.95

FIELDING PERCENTAGE									
Rank	Team	G	W	L	T	PO	A	E	Pct.
1.	Northwestern La.	51	38	13	0	1125	403	30	.981
2.	Loyola Marymount	60	45	15	0	1564	709	63	.973
3.	Sam Houston St.	57	34	22	1	1232	944	64	.971
4.	Stanford	62	52	10	0	1677	623	69	.971
5.	Southern Illinois	59	47	12	0	1460	653	65	.970
6.	Long Beach St.	59	36	22	1	1564	661	70	.969
7.	New Hampshire	37	18	19	0	826	346	37	.969
8.	Davidson	51	27	23	1	1234	497	55	.969
9.	Miami, Fla.	60	49	11	0	1603	708	74	.969
10.	Cal. St. Fullerton	53	32	21	0	1403	618	65	.969

WON-LOSS PERCENTAGE					
Rank	Team	W	L	T	Pct.
1.	East Carolina	46	7	0	.868
2.	Stanford	52	10	0	.839
3.	Miami, Fla.	49	11	0	.817
4.	North Carolina	49	12	0	.803
5.	Florida St.	53	13	0	.803
6.	Southern Ill.	47	12	0	.797
7.	Notre Dame	46	12	0	.793
8.	Arkansas	47	13	0	.783
9.	Arizona St.	49	14	0	.778
10.	The Citadel	41	12	0	.774

Avg.	0.51
0.50	
0.48	
0.47	
0.46	
0.44	
0.44	
0.44	
0.43	
0.43	
0.43	
0.42	
0.42	
0.42	
0.41	
Avg.	1.43
1.41	
1.38	
1.38	
1.32	
1.31	
1.30	
1.29	
1.28	
1.27	
1.27	
1.24	
1.23	
1.22	
1.21	
Avg.	1.07
1.00	
.98	
.94	
.93	
.93	
.88	
.88	
.84	
.81	
.80	
.79	
.78	
.78	
.78	
ERA	0.83
0.83	
0.94	
1.05	
1.11	
1.29	
1.46	
1.54	

Division I next season

College Baseball Popularity Traced To ESPN Coverage

By MICHAEL L. HILT
Special To Collegiate Baseball

OMAHA, Neb. — The College World Series began in 1947. But it did not have a national television contract until 1980, when ESPN agreed to carry some of the games.

Since then college baseball, and specifically the College World Series, has experienced a popularity explosion. That popularity increase can be directly attributed to ESPN.

ESPN, in turn, may not have reached its position in broadcasting without the experience it received in producing and airing college baseball games.

ESPN and College World Series

For the past 10 years the College World Series has been a featured event on ESPN. The popularity of college baseball in general, and the College World Series in particular, can be measured through attendance, and comments from those close to the situation.

The evidence gathered indicates that while the College World Series' growth during the past 10 years would have continued, it could not have reached its current stature without ESPN. There also is evidence that ESPN may not have reached its position in broadcasting without the experience it received producing and airing college baseball games.

Brief History of ESPN

ESPN took to the air in September 1979 promising 24-hour sports. The

network's principle source was the NCAA, with about 65 percent of it programming coming from college athletics.

College basketball and college baseball were two of the sports around which ESPN built its programming schedule. Both sports have enjoyed a decade of growth in popularity, unparalleled in sports history, and ESPN is responsible, to a degree, for this popularity explosion. But while the network earned its reputation with college basketball, it had to be convinced that college baseball would attract an audience.

CWS since 1980

In the beginning ESPN questioned the interest in college baseball, and thought the cost of televising the games was prohibitive. The network also was concerned with the threat of inclement weather, because Rosenblatt Stadium in Omaha, the site of the College World Series, is an open-air stadium with natural grass.

At the time Jerry Miles was director of men's championships with the NCAA. He is now the executive director of the ABCA. Miles has been involved with college baseball for nearly 20 years, and helped negotiate the NCAA's first contract with ESPN.

"We tried to tell them at that time that one of the premier events, we thought a sleeping giant, was the College World Series," Miles said.

He pushed the network to carry some of the games, and ESPN finally agreed to televise five CWS games.

11th CWS Year For ESPN

BRISTOL, Conn. — ESPN's eleventh consecutive year of televising the NCAA College World Series will begin with live coverage of the first game Friday, June 1 at 4 p.m. EDT from Rosenblatt Stadium in Omaha, Neb.

The network will televise as many as 14 games leading up to the championship game. ESPN's coverage will include up to ten live games: doubleheaders June 2, 4 and 8 (if necessary) and single games June 1, 3, 5 and 7.

CBS will carry the championship game scheduled for 1 p.m. Eastern time on Saturday, June 9. Announcers will be Greg Gumble and Jim Kaat for the national telecast.

ESPN's Mike Patrick (first CWS) and Tim Brando (second CWS) will share the play-by-play duties. Jim Kaat (fifth CWS), a 25-year Major League veteran, and Larry Sorensen (first CWS), a former Major League pitcher with Milwaukee and Cleveland, will provide analysis.