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Jones Chairing SEC Working Group On Concussions

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Jones Chairing SEC Working Group On Concussions

JUNE 5, 2012 BY SEAN CARTELL, SEC DIGITAL NETWORK

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Eight-Person Committee Will Focus On All Sports

DESTIN, Fla. – The Southeastern Conference has assembled a working group, chaired by Ole Miss Chancellor Dr. Dan Jones, to research and evaluate sports-related concussions as it relates to the SEC. It was announced Friday by Florida President Dr. Bernie Machen, the chair of the SEC Presidents and Chancellors.

“I think we’re all aware that issues associated with concussions sustained during athletic competition are becoming increasingly matters of concern, both in our league and at the national level,” Machen said. “To deal with that, we are appointing a working group, charged with reviewing all the available research, evaluating the diagnosis and guidelines, looking at

standards of practice and bringing recommendations back to the league for further consideration.” According to Machen, the group will consist of Jones, a physician, two specialists with expertise in head trauma associated with SEC medical schools, two team doctors from SEC institutions and two athletic trainers from SEC institutions.

“We think that this is timely, we think that this is important and we are urging fast progress by this working group,” Machen said. “We are focused on our league and the injuries that we see and the concern our member institutions have over these concussion-related issues. It’s time for us to step up and see what we can do together with this issue.”

Machen said the group will be primarily research based and will focus on all sports.

“What we’re going to start with is looking at what schools are now doing, both within the league and elsewhere,” Machen said. “We will look at professional sports as well to find out what the standards of care are out there. For example, some SEC institutions are now requiring brain scans for all entering students so they would then have a baseline for further evaluation. There are a whole host of things happening all over the country and we’re just going to try to take advantage of that and put it together. This is about sharing information so we can all do what is best for our student-athletes.”

SEC Commissioner Mike Slive, speaking Friday, echoed Machen’s sentiments regarding the working group and concussion-related issues.

“We want to make sure we know everything that’s going on about concussions because we deal with it in playing rules, we deal with it in terms of how we officiate and we deal with it in terms of how the conference holds players accountable by suspensions and otherwise, and now we need to know more about baseline medical research,” Slive said. “This is a group that will do this for us. We want to make sure we are doing everything that we possibly can to protect our student-athletes.

“The nation is addressing the issue and we want to make sure that we are doing our part,” Slive continued. “The bottom line is, how do we protect our student-athletes? That’s what we’re trying to do here.”

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