

2026 — Global Sport Business Association Conference



February
9-13, 2026

Our Purpose.

To promote scholarly and applied research in the sport industry with particular emphasis on the global nature of the business of sport, entrepreneurship and innovation, and issues associated with leadership in sport management.

2026: IDEAS IN MOTION

In an era defined by constant change and unprecedented global connectivity, *Ideas in Motion* captures the momentum driving the future of sport business. This year's theme invites scholars, practitioners, and entrepreneurs to explore the transformative ideas shaping the next frontier in global sport.

From emerging technologies to innovative business models, from cross-border partnerships to grassroots ventures, we are witnessing a paradigm shift in how sport is played, consumed, monetized, and governed. The boundaries between sectors—sport, media, health, education, tech, and tourism—are increasingly fluid, offering fertile ground for interdisciplinary innovation.

As we gather at this unique moment in time, *Ideas in Motion* invites each of us to move beyond traditional boundaries, challenge the status quo, and co-create the future of sport business—one bold idea at a time.

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HELLO & WELCOME



Welcome to the 2026 Global Sports Business Association Conference! We are delighted to have you join us for another year of scholarly exchange and professional networking.

This association was founded in 2013 by Warren Whisenant and his colleagues at the University of Miami, with the mission to advance both scholarly and applied research in the sport industry. Over the years, particular emphasis has been placed on the global dimensions of sports business, innovation, and the critical issues surrounding diverse and minority leadership in sport management. Since 2013, our platform has facilitated the presentation of hundreds of scholarly works and fostered meaningful professional relationships.

We are proud to present a strong program of conference sessions and professional development opportunities. We are also excited this year to offer new features, including an engaging Keynote Speaker and Special Interest Discussions designed to connect conference participants around specific topics in the field. We are also pleased to continue the Doctoral/Early Career Consortium, offering additional space for mentorship and engagement among emerging scholars and established members of the GSBA community.

As we continue in 2026 and beyond, we remain committed to expanding the reach and impact of our association. We invite you to actively engage in our upcoming initiatives, including future conferences and the Global Sport Business Journal.

- Jason Reese, Raymond Jones, and Janet Jones
Global Sport Business Association

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9 (DEPARTURE DAY)

Time	Session Title	Location
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Registration	Conference Room B
6:30 PM - 7:30 PM	Opening Remarks	Sky Observation Lounge
7:30 PM	Group Dinner	Opus Dining Room

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 (KEY WEST, FL)

Time	Session Title	Location
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Oral Presentations: Session 1 Experiential Pathways: Students, Events, Careers	Conference Room B
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Group Lunch/Networking	Opus Dining Room
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Special Interest Discussion 1: Emerging Topics & Innovation in Sport Business	Conference Room B
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM	GSBA Causal Collab	TBD
7:30 PM	Group Dinner	Opus Dining Room

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 (BIMINI, BAHAMAS)

Time	Session Title	Location
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Oral Presentations: Session 2 - Policy, Safety, and Governance in Sport	Conference Room B
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Group Lunch/Networking	Opus Dining Room
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Special Interest Discussion #2 - Pedagogy	Conference Room B
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM	GSBA Causal Collab	TBD
7:30 PM	Group Dinner	Opus Dining Room

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12 (CELEBRITY REFLECTION)

Time	Session Title	Location
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Poster Presentations	Conference Room B
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Keynote Speaker: Mike Fingado	Conference Room B
10:00 AM - 12:30 PM	Oral Presentations: Session 3 - AI, Analytics, and Teaching Innovation	Conference Room B
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Group Lunch/Networking	Opus Dining Room
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Oral Presentations: Session 4 - Ownership, Representation, and Fan Identity	Conference Room B
3:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Doctoral/Early Career Consortium	Conference Room B
6:30 PM - 7:30 PM	Finale & Farewell Send-off	Sky Observation Lounge
7:30 PM	Group Dinner	Opus Dining Room

»» CONNECTION OPPORTUNITIES

»» KEYNOTE SPEAKER



MIKE FINGADO

Mike Fingado is an NFL sports agent, angel investor, and sports-tech founder shaping the future of how athletes and institutions create value in a rapidly evolving sports landscape. His work lives at the intersection of athletics, education, and entrepreneurship, where he designs modern ecosystems that prepare athletes not just to compete, but to build, lead, and own beyond sport.

He is Co-Founder of Athletepreneur® and Athlete+®, platforms that power education programs, venture pathways, and financial infrastructure for athletes and colleges. Athlete+® also operates as a banking and payments solution that enables NIL-driven fundraising and new economic models for collegiate athletic programs. Mike’s work across sportstech, edtech, and finance includes collaborations with the NBA Basketball Africa League (BAL), Stephen F. Austin State University, the World Olympians Association, and Florida State University’s Future of NIL Summit.

A former Florida State University student-athlete, Mike holds a Master’s degree in Sports Management from Florida State University and completed Executive Education in Fintech at The Wharton School of Business. He brings actionable insight on growth, innovation, and leadership drawn from building at the intersection of sports, technology, and entrepreneurship.

»» GSBA GROUPME

Scan the QR code below to join our informal GSBA 2026 GroupMe to stay in the loop on everything going on during this years conference.



»» **SPECIAL INTEREST DISCUSSIONS**

An informal, participant-driven session focused on a shared topic, challenge, or emerging area of interest. Rather than formal paper presentations, these sessions emphasize conversation, idea exchange, networking, and identifying opportunities for collaboration across research, teaching, and practice.

These special interest discussions will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 10 and Wednesday, Feb. 11 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Conference Room B.

»» **DOCTORAL/EARLY CAREER CONSORTIUM**

A focused, supportive session where doctoral students and early career scholars receive targeted mentoring and feedback on research, publishing, and career development from experienced faculty.

The doctoral/early career consortium will take place on Thursday, Feb. 12 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m in Conference Room B.

»» **GROUP LUNCH/NETWORKING**

An informal, self-directed meet-up where attendees choose a lunch group and use the time to connect, swap research and pedagogy ideas, and build new collaborations.

The group lunch/networking events will take place every day in the Opus Dining Room following the conclusion of our morning sessions.

»» **GSBA CAUSAL COLLAB**

An informal, participant-led meetup designed for relaxed connection and idea sharing, where attendees can self-organize around activities (e.g., trivia, pickleball, coffee chats) and leave with a few new collaborators.

These sessions will take place Tuesday, Feb. 10 and Wednesday, Feb. 11 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Session 1 - Experiential Pathways: Students, Groups, and Careers

 **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 (KEY WEST, FL)**

 Sport Business Track  Pedagogy Track  Entrepreneurship & Innovation Track

8:05 AM

Conference Room B

From Campus to Career: Experiential Learning Through Pro Day and Internship Symposium

Alan Ledford, Wittenberg University
Michael Smucker, University of Tampa
Michael Flynn, University of Tampa

8:35 AM

Pull Factors of College Selection: The Role of Club Sports in Student Enrollment Decisions

Brett A. Anderson, University of Georgia
Sean Seiler, University of Miami (Ohio)
Thomas Baker, University of Georgia

9:00 AM

Successes and Failures; Lessons Learned Through Experiential Learning

Dene Williamson, University of Tampa

9:30 AM

Maximizing Experiential Learning in Sport Management: Preparedness and Practice Across Domestic and Global Contexts

Michael A. Ross, Shorter University
Reginald F. Overton, Old Dominion University
Robert W. Case, Old Dominion University

10:00 AM

Sport Management Student Career Goals and Job Market Opportunities: A Need for Sport Entrepreneurship Education and Training

Robert W. Case, Old Dominion University
Michael A. Ross, Shorter University
Reginald F. Overton, Private Consultant

10:30 AM

Undergraduate Students' Motivations for Volunteering at the 2026 FIFA World Cup

Rodrigo Feller, Utah Tech University
Yan Gioseffi, The College of Idaho

11:00 AM

The Social Identity of runDisney Participants

Coral Bender, The University of Tampa
Zach Beldon, The University of Tampa
Dmitry Likhogrud, The University of Tampa



ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Session 2 - Policy, Safety, and Governance in Sport

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 (BIMINI, BAHAMAS)

Sport Business Track ■ Pedagogy Track ■ Entrepreneurship & Innovation Track

8:00 AM

Conference Room B

Risk Management: Responsibilities, Challenges, and Application in Collegiate Athletics ■

Yan Gioseffi, The College of Idaho

8:30 AM

Human Rights and Safe Sport: What Sports Operations Need to Know ■

Lizzy Ratcliff, Louisiana State University
John Nauright, Louisiana State University

9:00 AM

Socioeconomic Implications for Stadium Safety: Comparative Analysis of Global South Stadium Disasters ■

John Nauright, Louisiana State University
Hussein Alhassan, Louisiana State University

9:30 AM

Issues Facing DII and DIII Intercollegiate Athletic Directors ■

Eric Forsyth, Bemidji State University
Michael Fraina, Farmingdale State College
Tyler Ratts, University of Dubuque
Lana Huberty, University of Concordia-St. Paul

10:00 AM

Social Movement Theory in Sport: A Literature Review ■

Sam Schmidt, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse
Meg G. Hancock, University of Louisville

10:30 AM

Se Acabó Initiative: Advancing Safety and Accountability in Women's Soccer from the Ground Up ■

Emma S. Steinweiss, Lynn University
Juan Carlos Vazquez-Valderas, Lynn University
Sofia Dajer, Lynn University
Arantza Valencia Espinosa, Lynn University
Nick Bruscarigin, Lynn University
Sherry Andre, Lynn University



POSTER PRESENTATIONS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12 (CELEBRITY REFLECTION)

 Sport Business Track  Pedagogy Track  Entrepreneurship & Innovation Track

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Conference Room B

Cymru - (Re)Branding Wales Through the Invented Traditions of the Men's National Soccer Team

John Vincent, The University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa

Jason W. Lee, The University of North Florida

Reviving the Blue: University of Houston Athletics, Brand Archetypes, and the Houston Blue Movement

Jason W. Lee, The University of North Florida

John Vincent, The University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa

John J. Miller, The University of North Florida

Experiential Marketing in Sport Video Games: A Case of Nike and Electronic Arts

Derek Walton, Stephen F. Austin State University

Amateur Student-Athletes or Employees: The Rapidly Changing Landscape of College Athletics

Marcus Z. Cox, Stephen F. Austin State University

Justin Blount, Stephen F. Austin State University

From Strategy to Spectacle: Evaluating the NFL's Global Expansion Through Madrid 2025

Nickolas K. Bruscarigin, Lynn University

Juan Carlos Vazquez-Valderas, Lynn University

Emma S. Steinweiss, Lynn University

NCAA vs. CHL: Elite Hockey Players' Development Pathway Decisions in the Era of NIL and Eligibility Reform

Brett A. Anderson, University of Georgia

Thomas Baker, University of Georgia

From Prototype to Play: How Research Credits Spark Sports Tech Startups

Raymond J. Jones, III, Stephen F. Austin State University

Janet Jones, Stephen F. Austin State University



ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Session 3 - AI, Analytics, and Teaching Innovation

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12 (CELEBRITY REFLECTION)

■ Sport Business Track ■ Pedagogy Track ■ Entrepreneurship & Innovation Track

9:00 AM

Conference Room B

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Mike Fingado, Co-Founder of Athletepreneur® and Athlete+®

10:05 AM

Personos: An Innovative, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Based, Pedagogical Tool to Enhance Group Dynamics Within the Sport Management Classroom ■

Jay Martyn, Metropolitan State University of Denver
Peyton Stensland, University of Cincinnati
Kyle Brannigan, East Stroudsburg State University
Logan Schuetz, Metropolitan State University of Denver
Lincoln Davie, Metropolitan State University of Denver

10:30 AM

Activating Learning with AI: Early Evidence from Undergraduate Sports Management ■

Sherry Andre, Lynn University

11:00 AM

Creating AI Sales Simulations: A Gamified Experiential Learning Activity for Deepening Student Understanding of the Sport Sales Process ■

Derek Walton, Stephen F. Austin State University

11:30 AM

Beyond Moneyball ■

Wendy T. Jewell, Virginia Union University

12:00 PM

Utilizing Case Studies in Sport Management Courses; Blending Applicable Strategies to Curriculum ■

Dene Williamson, University of Tampa
Janet R. Jones, Stephen F. Austin State University



ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Session 4 - Ownership, Representation, and Fan Identity

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12 (CELEBRITY REFLECTION)

 Sport Business Track  Pedagogy Track  Entrepreneurship & Innovation Track

1:30 PM

Conference Room B

Elbows Up: The Business Implications of Canadian Sporting Nationalism

Sara Zipp, York University
Maggie Mac Neil, University of London
Kirsty Spence, Brock University
John Nauright, Louisiana State University

2:00 PM

Investor Fans in College Athletics: The Vestible Case

Jason D. Reese, Stephen F. Austin State University

2:30 PM

Behind the Negotiations: The Gendered Challenges of Female Sports Agents

James Weiner, The University of Tampa
Sara Gramata, The University of Tampa
Olivia Nichols, The University of Tampa

3:00 PM

Owning the Game: Multi-Club Ownership and the Battle for Competitive Integrity in Global Football

Juan Carlos Vazquez-Valderas, Lynn University
Emma S. Steinweiss, Lynn University
Sherry Andre, Lynn University
Nickolas K. Bruscarigin, Lynn University

CALL FOR PAPERS: SPECIAL ISSUE FROM THE 2026 GSBA CONFERENCE

The Global Sports Business Journal invites submissions for a Special Issue featuring high-quality scholarship presented at the 2026 GSBA Conference. This Special Issue aims to capture the conference theme, Ideas in Motion: The Next Frontier of Sport Business, by publishing work that advances theory and practice across sport business, entrepreneurship, innovation, and pedagogy.



SAVE THE DATE

2027 GSBA CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 18-21, 2027

THURSDAY - SUNDAY

ORLANDO | NASSAU | OCEAN KAY

Aboard the "MSC Seashore"



Abstract Submissions Open: May 1 - August 31, 2026

Conference Tracks (Oral and Poster):

- Sport Business (includes marketing, management, finance, economics, etc.)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation (includes sport entrepreneurship and innovation, NIL, startup, equity funding, etc.)
- Pedagogy (includes teaching cases, classroom activities, program development, etc.)

Doctoral/Early Career Consortium

Faculty Research Grants

CONTACT US

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STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship

DISCOVER YOUR VISION



ABOUT US

Open to all majors, the Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship at SFA helps students discover their vision by providing hands-on learning, mentorship and real-world experiences to bring their ideas to life.

GET INVOLVED



Competitions

Turn your idea into reality and compete for \$40K+ in funding through competitions including Pop-up Pitch, the Sprinkles Baking Competition and the Lumberjack Entrepreneurship Competition!



Workshops

Refine your entrepreneurial skills at our ACE workshops, where you'll tackle business challenges, build solutions, sharpen marketing and financial skills and perfect your pitch for growth and success.



Student Organization

Embrace the spirit of entrepreneurship by joining our student organization, the Society for Entrepreneurial Advancement! Participate in field trips, networking events, workshops and more.



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