A G E N D A

National Collegiate Athletic Association

Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet

NCAA National Office
Indianapolis, Indiana

February 9-10, 2009

1. Welcome.

2. Review cabinet roster. [Supplement No. 1]

3. Report from the NCAA Division I Leadership Council Communications and Coordination Group. [Supplement No. 2]

   ***Background*:** The cabinet will review the group's previous minutes.

   ***Anticipated Action*:** None.

4. Discuss communication strategies within conferences.

   ***Background*:** The cabinet will discuss the strategies used within their respective conferences to identify best practices to ensure information is flowing effectively in both directions.

   ***Anticipated Action*:** None.

5. Review cabinet's guiding principles. [Supplement No. 3]

   ***Background*:** As part of the cabinet's normal procedures, it will regularly review its guiding principles at each meeting.

   ***Anticipated Action*:** None.

6. Report from the NCAA Division I Legislative Council. [Supplement No. 4]

   ***Background*:** The cabinet will review the report from the NCAA Division I Legislative Council's October and January meetings.

***Anticipated Action*:** None.

7. Review 2008-09 legislation in the comment period. [Supplement No. 5]

***Background*:** The cabinet will review legislation in the comment period and make additional comments, if necessary.

***Anticipated Action*:** None. The cabinet may make additional comments on the legislation.

8. Update from NCAA enforcement staff. [Supplement No. 6]

***Background*:** The staff will provide an update and summary of recent infractions cases involving recruiting issues. Further, staff will facilitate a discussion on trends in recruiting violations.

***Anticipated Action*:** None.

9. Cabinet priority – review early recruitment issues. [Supplement No. 7]

***Background*:** The staff will provide detail on the discussion document developed in conjunction with the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet about potential cross-over topics related to initial eligibility and recruiting.

***Anticipated Action*:** None.

10. Cabinet priority – review athletics personnel issues. [Supplement No. 8]

***Background*:** The staff will provide detail on the discussion document developed as part of the NCAA Policies and Practices Committee which is reviewing the area of coaching limits.

***Anticipated Action*:** None.

11. Cabinet priority – Review impact of technology on recruiting communication and materials. [Supplement No. 9]

***Background*:** The staff will review a history of the recruiting materials legislation and the impact of technology in NCAA Division I Bylaw 13.4.

***Anticipated Action*:** None. The cabinet may agree to survey different constituents (e.g., prospective student-athletes, coaches, compliance administrators) about the importance of recruiting materials and how the use of technology may facilitate the delivery of this information.

12. Request from Legislative Council to review recreational activities legislation. [Supplement No. 10]

***Background*:** This item was referred by the Legislative Council during its October meeting. Specifically, the cabinet was asked to review the history and intent of the legislation as compared to current practice.

***Anticipated Action*:** None. The cabinet may seek feedback from various groups for input on this issue before determining whether any concerns should be handled interpretively or legislatively.

13. Request from Ivy Group to sponsor emergency legislation in fencing. [Supplement No. 11]

***Background*:** The Ivy Group requests the cabinet sponsor emergency legislation to permit coaches in fencing to observe prospective student-athletes participating in the North American Cup when the event occurs during a dead period. This event occurs in November which is why the request is being forwarded as emergency.

***Anticipated Action*:** The cabinet may agree to sponsor emergency legislation as requested.

14. Request from Women's Hockey Coaches Association to sponsor emergency legislation in women's ice hockey. [Supplement No. 12]

***Background*:** The Women's Hockey Coaches Association has requested the cabinet sponsor emergency legislation to amend the start of the July contact period from July 1 to July 7. The WHCA would like this to be implemented in July 2009 which is why the request is being forwarded as emergency.

***Anticipated Action*:** The cabinet may agree to sponsor emergency legislation as requested.

15. Future agenda items. [Supplement No. 13]

16. Articles of interest. [Supplement No. 14]

17. Future meetings.

    a. June 8-9, 2009 – Newport Beach, California.
    - Sunday, June 7 – Possible travel.
    - Monday, June 8 – Possible morning travel. Meeting 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
    - Tuesday, June 9 – Meeting 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Possible overnight return travel.
    - Wednesday, June 10 – Return travel.

    b. September 21-22, 2009 – Indianapolis, Indiana.
    - Sunday, September 20 – Travel.
    - Monday, September 21 – Meeting 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
    - Tuesday, September 22 – Meeting 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Return travel after 1 p.m.

    c. February, 2010 – TBD.

18. Other business.

19. Key takeaways.

20. Adjournment.

SUPPLEMENT NO. 2-a

REPORT OF

THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

DIVISION I COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

CONFERENCE CALL

Participants: October 15, 2008

Grace Calhoun, Indiana University – (Awards, Benefits and Financial Aid Cabinet)
Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia – (Academics Cabinet)
Joseph D'Antonio, Big East Conference – (Legislative Council)
Damon Evans, University of Georgia – (Leadership Council)
Rob Halvaks, Big West Conference – (Administration Cabinet)
Kerry Kenny, Patriot League – (SAAC)
Petrina Long, UCLA – (Recruiting Cabinet)
Mike Rogers, Baylor University – (Amateurism Cabinet)
Jeff Schemmel, San Diego State University – (Championships/Sports Management Cabinet)
Beth DeBauche, NCAA – recording secretary

NCAA staff: Wayne Burrow, Megan Coyne, Angie Cretors, Diane Dickman, Lynn Holzman, Michelle Hosick, Brad Hostetter, Amy Huchthausen, Kevin Lennon, Steve Mallonee, Delise O'Meally, Carol Reep, Geoff Silver, Jackie Thurnes, Sharon Tufano, and Leeland Zeller also participated on the call.

The conference call was called to order by the chair, Damon Evans, at 2:05 p.m.

1. **Welcome and opening remarks**. Damon Evans welcomed new Legislative Council chair Joseph D'Antonio to the call and thanked the group for their participation. He reminded the group that the purpose of the call is to identify the big issues on the Division I agenda that are of interest to other governance bodies to ensure a higher level of coordination in consideration of the issues.

2. **Reports from September Cabinet meetings**.

a. Academic Cabinet.

(1) Nonlegislative matters. Academic Cabinet chair, Carolyn Callahan reported that, during its first meeting, the Academic Cabinet focused on identifying big issues on the Division I agenda and on taking a proactive approach. She reported that the cabinet has identified a number of priority topics to examine, including:

(a) The academic success of transfer students, especially two-year college transfer students. As part of this examination, the cabinet has asked the Division I Board of Directors and the Committee on Academic Performance to collect more data with regard to the academic performance of two-year college students.

(b) Nontraditional course work. [Note: Committee members noted the membership seems to have a number of questions regarding nontraditional course work generally and Proposal Nos. 2008-32 and 2008-35 more specifically. It was reported that the faculty, especially, seem to have questions regarding these proposals and the group suggested not only would education regarding these proposals be important, but faculty athletics representatives should be encouraged to take the lead on this issue.]

(c) The impact of academic reform on academic support personnel.

(d) Time demands on student-athletes.

(2) Legislative matters. Carolyn Callahan mentioned that, from a legislative standpoint, the cabinet:

(a) Recommends the Legislative Council adopt noncontroversial legislation to specify that institutions are required to submit a final high school transcript for student-athletes who were certified as early academic qualifiers; and that these transcripts must be submitted by November 15 following the individual's initial full-time collegiate enrollment.

(b) Supports Proposal No. 2008-48, which would reduce, in baseball, the maximum number of contests from 56 to 52. The cabinet believes this proposal would likely result in less missed class time.

b. Administration Cabinet.

(1) Nonlegislative matters. Administration Cabinet chair, Rob Halvaks reported that, during its first meeting, the cabinet developed some value-based guiding principles to direct its committee appointment process. The cabinet also identified issues for its agenda and plans to:

(a) Work with the Leadership Council to seek to identify ways to develop a broader and more diverse pool of representatives to serve in the governance structure. [Note: Committee members discussed the fact that

diversity is more than ethnic and gender diversity and must include positional diversity as well. The group discussed the fact that while there are a number of FARs serving in the structure, their service is not distributed well throughout the structure. Identifying ways to achieve more positional balance in the structure must be part of the broader diversity conversation.]

(b) Begin developing an assessment tool for the new Division I governance structure.

(c) Start examining, along with the Championships/Sports Management Cabinet, the current number and structure of sport committee regions.

(d) Assign individual cabinet members to review the progress of reclassifying institutions to determine whether it is appropriate to advance the institution to the next year of the reclassification process.

(2) Legislative Matters. Rob Halvaks reported that, from a legislative standpoint, the cabinet:

(a) Supports Proposal No. 2008-59, which adds sand volleyball as an emerging sport for women and removes archery, badminton, synchronized swimming and team handball as emerging sports for women, but recommends that the proposal be divided to permit the Legislative Council to take one action to include sand volleyball as an emerging sport and one action to eliminate the other sports listed as emerging sports.

(b) Took no position on Proposal Nos. 2008-64, 2008-70 and 2008-71, which are intended to address membership-related issues; recommending that the Division I Legislative Council refer the proposals to the Division I Leadership Council to be considered as part of its broader discussion of Division I membership issues during the moratorium.

c. Amateurism Cabinet.

(1) Nonlegislative Matters. Mike Rogers, chair of the Amateurism Cabinet, reported that the cabinet received a great deal of background education during its first meeting to ensure the members had the requisite understanding of the issues pertaining to amateurism and identified the following matters for future examination:

(a) The issue of agents and advisors interaction with prospective student-athletes and student-athletes and the potential impact on eligibility.

(b) The challenges facing institutions and the Eligibility Center with regard to amateurism certification.

(c) The definition of a professional team and whether the current broad definition unfairly penalizes prospective student-athletes who never intended to professionalize themselves.

(2) Legislative Matters. Mike Rogers also explained that the cabinet supports Proposal No. 2008-13, which is intended, in an individual sport, to permit a student-athlete to accept prize money based on his/her place, finish or performance in an open event during any official vacation period, provided the prize money does not exceed actual and necessary expenses. He explained as this proposal would allow student-athletes participating in individual sports the same opportunity as is currently provided to prospective student-athletes.

d. Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet.

(1) Nonlegislative matters. Chair, Grace Calhoun reported that the cabinet, in seeking to address its charge, made the determination to face the big issues impacting the division head on rather than take a reactive approach. Based on that determination, the cabinet identified the following issues for thorough consideration over the course of the next few years:

(a) Examination of maximum grant-in-aid limitations, including individual and team limits along with equivalency versus head count designations. Grace noted the time appears right to focus on these important issues separate from competitive equity concerns. She also indicated that it may be helpful to gage the Leadership Council's level of interest in this examination.

(b) Multiyear scholarships/presumption of renewal concept.

(c) Educational outreach to financial aid administrators.

(2) Legislative Matters. From a legislative standpoint, Grace Calhoun noted the cabinet:

(a) Offered an alternative to Proposal 2008-25A. This alternative, Proposal No. 2008-25B, specifies that an institution shall not provide a high school,

preparatory school or transfer prospective student-athlete a written offer of athletically related financial aid until he or she has completed the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Grace explained this modification eliminated the reference in Proposal No. 2008-25A to official visits out of concern that requiring the amateurism certification questionnaire to be completed prior to an official visit is cumbersome and could result in a delay of a visit.

(b) Recommends that Proposal Nos. 2008-40 and 2008-41, which calls for an increase in the grant-in-aid limits in women's volleyball and baseball, respectively, be tabled by the Legislative Council to allow for time for the cabinet to conduct a broader examination of maximum grant-in-aid limitations for all sports.

e. Championships/Sports Management Cabinet.

(1) Nonlegislative Matters. Cabinet chair, Jeff Schemmel reported that the cabinet:

(a) Received information on both the increase in travel costs for NCAA championships travel costs and the decrease in flight availability, which impacts the ability to transport teams and individual student-athletes to their championship destinations in a timely and efficient manner. He explained that the cabinet reviewed three tiers of recommendations designed to help address these problems. The first tier of recommendations did not require cabinet approval and are being implemented by staff. The cabinet approved the single recommendation in the second tier, which calls for an increase in the travel policy mileage limitation threshold and an increase in the policy regarding the ground commute from the nearest airport to the championships site. This tier-two recommendation was for fall sports only due to their immanency and the cabinet agreed to consider implementing the change for winter and spring championships after assessing the impact. The cabinet also received a summary of tier-three recommendations and agreed that additional discussion by the membership was needed. The cabinet agreed to solicit feedback from institutions, conferences and sports committees. Jeff noted that the cabinet members are mindful that, as a result of the suggested tier-three changes, cabinet members do not want to impede the progress that has been made in the areas of bracketing and seeding.

(b) In Men's and Women's Track and Field, the cabinet agreed to replace the current regional qualifying system with a two-site, three-day format effective with the 2010 championships.

(2) Legislative Matters. From a legislative standpoint, Jeff Schemmel noted the cabinet:

(a) Recommends the Legislative Council sponsor noncontroversial/emergency legislation to amend NCAA Bylaw 13.02.11 and 13.11.1.1., to specify that in the sport of men's basketball, for purposes of applying recruiting legislation, an individual becomes a prospective student-athlete when the individual begins classes for grade seven.

(b) Supports Proposal No. 2008–48, which, in baseball, reduces the maximum number of contests from 56 to 52. The cabinet believes this proposal will help reduce the challenges related to the compression of baseball schedules and would most likely result in less missed class time.

f. Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Cabinet.

(1) Nonlegislative Matters. Chair, Petrina Long reported that the cabinet, using its guiding principles, successfully reviewed a number of legislative proposals in the 2008-09 cycle. Additionally, she reported the cabinet plans to examine the following issues pertaining to recruiting:

(a) Coaching limits and the number of noncoaching staff members.

(b) Early offers of athletics aid. [Note: The committee discussed the fact the Leadership Council had also expressed concern regarding the issue of early offers. This is an issue that may involve a number of bodies in the Division I governance structure.]

(c) The need to stay abreast with technology due to its impact on recruiting and a willingness to review legislation to ensure it is current with advances in technology.

(2) Legislative Matters. From a legislative standpoint, Petrina expressed concern that a legislative concept originating from the Men's Basketball Issues Committee, which specifies in the sport of men's basketball, for purposes of applying recruiting regulations, an individual becomes a prospective student-athlete when the individual begins classes for grade seven, was only reviewed by the Championships/Sports Management Cabinet and not also by the Recruiting/Athletics Personnel Cabinet.

3. **Lessons learned. What worked well under the new structure and where did you experience challenges**? The chairs all reported they had successful and productive first meetings, hallmarked by enthusiasm and a willingness to address the big issues facing Division I. Committee members indicated a desire to share successful practices in the future and noted that some cabinets had success using a round table discussion format. The chairs noted that together they, along with staff, must strive to identify issues and legislative proposals of interest to more than one governance body.

4. **Preview of the Legislative Council meeting**. Joe D'Antonio reminded the chairs that, under the new governance structure, the Legislative Council has more limited jurisdiction than the former Management Council, as its charge is specifically limited to the examination of legislation. This change in jurisdiction was purposeful as it was designed to bring a higher level of legislative expertise to the division's review of legislation. Joe explained that, at this meeting, the council hopes to provide the membership with more legislative direction in advance of the formal consideration of legislation in January and that as part of this process, the cabinets' positions on legislation will be vetted out. He also mentioned that the council hopes to have a new, simplified reporting format.

5. **Preview of the Leadership Council and Board meeting**. Leadership Council chair, Damon Evan reported that the council, at its meeting on November 5, is scheduled to focus its efforts on beginning its examination of Division I membership standards and continue its discussion regarding ways to enhance the level of diversity serving within the Division I governance structure.

   Board of Directors staff liaison Beth DeBauche reported that, while there are a number of big issues on the Division I agenda, such as the work of the Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Working Group and the Task Force on Commercial Activity in Intercollegiate Athletics, none of the issues are ripe for immediate determination by the Board. She reported the Board is expected to enter into a value–based discussion, receive a report from the Committee on Infractions and Infractions Appeals Committee and receive an update on the work of the Committee on Academic Performance.

6. **Communication and membership outreach efforts**. The group discussed the importance of communication to the ultimate success of the new structure. The chairs discussed the fact there can be a legitimate expectation that those in the membership will read cabinet and Council reports, but that every effort should be made to make the volume and type of information shared with the membership more manageable. The chairs shared communication ideas, including more uniformity in report writing and listing the names of the cabinet and Council members with each report. Beth DeBauche requested that the staff

be given time to work together to seek to identify ways to streamline the report writing process, with the goal of having more uniform and succinct Division I governance reports. The results of the staff work will be shared with the chairs in advance of the February cabinet meetings. Additionally, the Division I governance staff agreed to work with the multisport conferences and affiliate groups to seek to identify communication strategies that best meet their needs.

7. **Updated cabinet and Council meeting schedule**. The cabinet chairs and staff liaisons were encouraged to work with Shorts Travel to identify meeting dates for 2009 and beyond.

8. **Future calls and meeting dates**. The committee members recommended that they have their next conference call in November/December after the Legislative and Leadership Council meetings, but before the NCAA Convention. Additionally, it was confirmed that the Communications and Coordination Committee would meet on January 16 at the NCAA Convention. Specifically, the chairs' schedule will be as follows:

a. Board of Directors, Legislative and Leadership Council luncheon 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

b. Division I Forum 1 – 3 p.m.

c. Meeting and reception 4 – 6 p.m.

9. **Adjournment.** Communications and Coordination Committee chair Damon Evans adjourned the call at 3:15 p.m.

SUPPLEMENT NO. 2-b

REPORT OF

THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

DIVISION I COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

CONFERENCE CALL

Participants: December 15, 2008

Grace Calhoun, Indiana University – (Awards, Benefits and Financial Aid Cabinet)
Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia – (Academics Cabinet)
Joseph D'Antonio, Big East Conference – (Legislative Council)
Damon Evans, University of Georgia – (Leadership Council)
Rob Halvaks, Big West Conference – (Administration Cabinet)
Kerry Kenny, Patriot League – (SAAC)
Petrina Long, UCLA – (Recruiting Cabinet)
Mike Rogers, Baylor University – (Amateurism Cabinet)
Jeff Schemmel, San Diego State University – (Championships/Sports Management Cabinet)
Beth DeBauche, NCAA – recording secretary

NCAA staff: David Berst, Matt Burgemeister, Angie Cretors, Lynn Holzman, Michelle Hosick, Brad Hostetter, Charnele Kemper, Steve Mallonee, Rachel Newman-Baker, Delise O'Meally, Carol Reep, Dave Schnase, Geoff Silver, Jackie Thurnes, and Sharon Tufano, also participated on the call.

The conference call was called to order by the chair, Damon Evans, at 12:20 p.m.

1. <u>Reports from Council meetings</u>.

a. <u>November 5 Leadership Council meeting</u>. Leadership Council chair Damon Evans explained that the Council has started its examination of two agenda items assigned to it by the Board of Directors, namely Division I membership standards and how to enhance the level of division serving in the Division I governance structure. He noted given the complexity of these issues, the examination will take time and he encouraged the chairs to be mindful of these important issues as they continue their work. During the course of the discussion, Administration Cabinet chair Rob Halvaks noted that enhancing the level of diversity in the structure is a guiding principle for that cabinet's work. Further, the group discussed the fact that as efforts are made to enhance cost efficiencies, the governance structure needs to be mindful of the impact on student-athletes.

b. <u>October 20 – 21 Legislative Council meeting</u>. Legislative Council chair Joe D'Antonio reported that the first meeting of the Legislative Council was a success. He noted that the Council members seemed very well prepared and engaged as they systematically reviewed all of the proposals in the cycle. He discussed the importance of having a high level of coordination among the various Division I governance bodies and noted that

being aware of important themes on the cabinet, Leadership Council and Board of Directors agendas was helpful to the Legislative Council as it examined legislation.

2. **Discussion of key legislative proposals in the 2008-09 cycle in preparation for the initial consideration of legislation in January**. In advance of the Legislative Council's consideration of the 76 proposals in the 2008-09 cycle, committee members were given an opportunity to share thoughts on proposals. During the conversation, a number of committee members mentioned there appear to be a variety of strong opinions in the membership regarding Proposal Nos. 2008-32 and 2008-35 pertaining to nontraditional course work.

3. **2009 NCAA Convention**.

   a. Review of Division I meetings schedule and events involving the committee. The members of the Communications and Coordination Committee were invited to attend the following events scheduled for the 2009 NCAA Convention:

   Thursday, January 15

   - Leadership Council/Legislative Council/CCA Luncheon 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
   - Leadership Council meeting – 1 – 3:30 p.m.

   Note: Committee members should plan to share information with the Leadership Council regarding their cabinets'/councils' guiding principles and agenda priorities. Additionally, committee members will also be asked to participate in a conversation regarding efforts to develop a more coordinated Division I governance agenda.

   Friday, January 16

   - SAAC/Leadership Council/Legislative Council breakfast – 8 – 9:30 a.m.
   - Division I Issues/Legislative Forum 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 1 – 3 p.m.
   - Division I Business Session – Membership's consideration of the override request on Proposal No. 2007-30-c.
   - Communications and Coordination Committee in-person meeting. 4 – 6 p.m.

   b. Preparation for the panel discussion during the Division I Issues/Legislative Forum. The committee was informed that the structure for the forum is based on the Division I governance structure, it being suggested that the membership would like a "roadmap" of the new structure. The chairs of both the Leadership Council and the Legislative Council have been asked to participate in the forum, with the Leadership Council chair being asked to engage the membership in a review of the big issues on the

Division I agenda and the Legislative Council chair being asked to provide an overview of that council's legislative actions. The cabinet chairs have been invited to participate on a panel where members will be provided time to review their cabinet's charge, guiding principles and agenda priorities. The cabinet chairs were asked to identify the key initiatives that they would like to highlight during the panel discussion and to note any issues that may require additional time for discussion. Once that information is shared with the Division I governance staff, the staff will develop a guiding outline to help structure the panel discussion. The members noted the importance of trying to engage the membership in discussion.

c. Identification of possible agenda items for the January 16, 2009, in-person meeting. The committee discussed potential agenda topics for the in-person meeting. In addition to the issues identified by staff, which included an update on championships travel and an amateurism update, the group suggested a conversation focused on communication. This conversation would include issues pertaining communication with the conference offices, communication within conferences, communication between governance bodies and coordination with the Board of Directors agenda.

d. Brief preview of the January Leadership Council, Legislative Council and Board of Directors meeting agendas. The committee was provided copies of the agendas for the Division I governance meetings held in conjunction with the 2009 NCAA Convention. The members were encouraged to review the information to help prepare for the Convention.

4. Future call dates. The committee agreed that the in-person meeting on January 16 should be used to help prepare for the February series of cabinet meetings. During the in-person meeting, the committee will seek to identify future call dates.

5. Adjournment. The call was adjourned at 1:20 EST.

####

Supplement No. 2-c
will be distributed after the NCAA Convention, January 2009.

NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet
Guiding Principles

NCAA Division I Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet guiding principles identified, in order of significance, for consideration when reviewing legislative proposals or other recruiting issues:

a. Adherence to the principle governing recruiting set forth in NCAA Constitution 2.11. Specifically, that the recruiting process involves a balancing of the interests of prospective student-athletes, their educational institutions and the Association's member institutions and that recruiting regulations be designed to promote equity among member institutions in its recruiting of prospective student-athletes and to shield them from undue pressures that may interfere with the scholastic or athletics interests of the prospective student-athletes or their educational institutions;

b. Commitment to student-athlete well-being and coaches' quality of life (e.g., time commitment) issues;

c. Ensure legislation is written in a simple, clear and direct manner;

d. Consideration of cost implications to institutions;

e. Consideration of whether or not sport-specific legislative proposals can be expanded to include other sports;

f. Consideration of the amount of time legislation has been in effect in order to assess the full impact before supporting a legislative change to the same bylaws;

g. Whenever possible ensure feedback has been solicited from appropriate external groups (e.g., coaches associations, national governing bodies) on issues, particularly when reviewing legislative proposals that are sport specific;

h. Examine potential unintended consequences when reviewing legislation, particularly proposals designated as noncontroversial or emergency;

i. Consideration of flexibility with regard to issues involving communication (e.g., telephone calls, written and electronic correspondence, contacts) with prospective student-athletes who have signed an National Letter of Intent (NLI) or for those institutions not using the NLI, a written offer of financial aid and/or offer of admission; and

j. Consideration of legislative proposals that focus recruiting practices on scholastic activities.

REPORT OF THE OCTOBER 20-21, 2008, NCAA DIVISION I LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

***ACTION ITEM*.**

- **Legislative Item - Request for Action by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors.**

  - **NCAA Proposal No. 2008-75 Eligibility -- Freshmen Academic Requirements -- Eligibility for Financial Aid, Practice and Competition -- Qualifier -- Exception -- Early Academic Certification -- Submission of Transcript [Attachment A]**

    (1) Recommendation. The NCAA Division I Legislative Council recommends that the Board of Directors sponsor Proposal No. 2008-75 into the current 2008-09 legislative cycle.

    (2) Effective Date. August 1, 2009.

    (3) Rationale. Proposal No. 2008-75 was sponsored by the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet and recommended to the Legislative Council for adoption as noncontroversial legislation. The Legislative Council defeated a motion to consider the proposal as noncontroversial legislation; however, the Legislative Council agreed that the proposal merits consideration by the membership in the 2008-09 legislative cycle. The Legislative Council recognizes the vital importance of collecting the academic data on the final transcripts of prospective student-athletes who meet the early academic certification exception and that at the time the exception was adopted, there was an understanding that a process would be developed to ensure the collection of final transcripts. By including the proposal in the regular legislative cycle, issues related to the potential burden on institutions and specificity of application of the proposal may be fully vetted without delaying its potential implementation.

    (4) Estimated Budget Impact. None to minimal, as institutions generally receive a final high school transcript for admissions purposes.

    (5) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS*.**

1. Legislative Actions.

a. Legislation Recommended as Emergency or Noncontroversial. A list of the Legislative Council's actions are in Attachment B, and voting results are in Attachment C.

[Note: Per NCAA Constitution 5.3.2.2.4.1, legislation adopted by the Legislative Council shall be subject to possible review by the Board of Directors at its next meeting. At its discretion, the Board of Directors may ratify, amend or defeat legislation adopted by the Legislative Council.]

b. Actions, Preliminary Positions, Points to Consider, Comments and Mootnicity Implications Related to 2008-09 Legislative Cycle Proposals. The voting results related to the Legislative Council's sponsorship of alternative proposals are listed in Attachment C. Reference Attachment D for details regarding the actions, positions, points to consider, comments and mootnicity implications related to legislation scheduled for initial consideration in January 2009.

2. Report of NCAA Division I Legislative Review/Interpretations Committee.

a. The Legislative Council approved minutes from the following 2008 Teleconference Nos. 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 17 as distributed.

b. The council used its authority pursuant to Constitution 5.4.1.1 to reverse a previously approved official interpretation and issue the following official interpretation:

Baseball and Softball are Separate Sports for Purposes of Amateurism and Outside Competition Legislation. (I) The Legislative Council determined that baseball and softball are considered separate sports for purposes of amateurism and outside competition legislation. [References: NCAA Bylaws 12.1.1 (amateur status), 12.1.3 (amateur status if professional in another sport), 14.7.1 (outside competition – sports other than basketball), official interpretations (3/11/96, Item No. 2 and 7/2/08, Item No. 2) and staff interpretation (1/26/94, item a), which have been archived.]

c. The Legislative Council discussed issues related to prospective student-athletes participating in recreational activities on an institution's campus during official or unofficial visits. It was noted that in many instances, although an institution does not advertise or publicize a prospective student-athlete's visit to its campus, the media are often apprised of details regarding such visits, including plans for the prospective student-athlete to participate in recreational activities (e.g., pick-up games) with enrolled student-athletes. The NCAA membership services staff has previously advised the membership to take steps to avoid allowing permissible recreational activities to become public spectacles (e.g., closing facilities, restricting recreational activities during particular times, such as immediately before or after intercollegiate athletics contests). The council recommended that the NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet review the issue and recommend possible interpretive or legislative solutions.

3. Report of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group. The Legislative Council received a report and discussed the continuing work of the Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group. The Legislative Council recommends that the Board of Directors allow the final recommendations and proposals presented by the working group to be fully reviewed through the governance structure and legislative process, including feedback from the NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. It was noted that the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Issues Committee is working on an academic access model involving both summer school attendance and access for women's basketball student-athletes on initial enrollment at the certifying institution. The Legislative Council noted that the same process for review recommended for the men's basketball recommendations and proposals should apply to any women's basketball recommendations or proposals.

4. Legislative Council Policies and Operating Procedures. The Legislative Council approved formal policies and operating procedures to provide direction and clarity regarding council authority, individual member responsibilities, operational procedures, governance reporting structures and related guidelines. The Legislative Council did not approve specific deadlines for submission of materials, except for legislated deadlines. The Legislative Council directed the staff to establish deadlines as close to the scheduled meetings as logistically possible and to include provisions in the policies and procedures by which flexibility may be used to address additional issues as circumstances require. In addition, the Legislative Council recommended that information related to the legislative sunset provision be included in the policies and procedures.

5. Future Meeting Dates.

a. January 14-15, 2009, in conjunction with the NCAA Convention, Washington, D.C.

b. April 20-21; Indianapolis.

c. October 19-20; Indianapolis.

Council Chair: *Joseph D'Antonio, Big East Conference*
Council Liaisons: *Lynn Holzman, Membership Services*
Amy Huchthausen, Membership Services
Steve Mallonee, Membership Services
Leeland Zeller, Membership Services

REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 14-15, 2009

ACTION ITEM.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Legislative Actions.** A list of the NCAA Division I Legislative Council's legislative actions may be found in Attachment A and detailed voting results may be found in Attachment B.

[Note: Per NCAA Constitution 5.3.2.2.4.1, legislation adopted by the Legislative Council shall be subject to possible review by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors at its next meeting. At its discretion, the Board of Directors may ratify, amend or defeat legislation adopted by the Legislative Council.]

2. **Report of NCAA Division I Legislative Review/Interpretations Committee.** (Voting results may be found in Attachment B.)

a. The Legislative Council approved the minute from the October 15, 2008, conference call (No. 19) as distributed.

b. The Legislative Council did not approve the minute from the October 29, 2008, teleconference (No. 21). The Legislative Council issued the following interpretation:

Advertising an Institutional Camp or Clinic. (I) The Legislative Council determined that an institution may advertise or promote an institutional camp or clinic in any way, provided any camp or clinic advertisement or promotion (e.g., camp brochure, Web site, newspaper or magazine advertisement) stipulates that the camp or clinic is open to any and all entrants (limited only by number, age, grade level and/or gender). [References: Bylaws 13.4.1.1-(c) (summer-camp advertisements), 13.12.1.2 (attendance restriction) and an official interpretation (10/29/08, Item No. 1), which has been archived)]

c. The Legislative Council used its authority pursuant to Constitution 5.4.1.1 to modify a previously approved official interpretation (10/18/06, Item No. 1) and issue the following official interpretation:

National Team Tryouts and Exception to Outside Competition Regulations. (I) The Legislative Council determined that in order for a student-athlete to use the U.S. national team exception to the outside competition regulations to participate as a member of an outside team in an official national team or junior national team tryout, the official tryout must be one in which all student-athletes (as opposed to all athletes) are directly selected to a national team or are required to participate in order to qualify for a subsequent event from which participants will be named to a national

team or junior national team that will represent their nation in international competition. The exception is applicable to an official tryout that is structured as a series of events in which student-athletes must participate in each event (or at least one event in each level) of the series in order to be selected to the national team. The exception does not apply to events in which student-athletes are only identified for further evaluation at unrelated events for a future national team, such as league competition or events in which no elimination of potential national team participants occurs. For example, the exception applies to an official tryout in which student-athletes must participate in Event A in order to participate in Event B (or in one of several events at the Event A level in order to participate at the Event B level), and participants in Event B are selected to the national team that will participate in international competition; however, the exception does not apply to participation in Event A if student-athletes are not selected to the national team or if participation in Event A (or other events on the same level) is not required for participation in Event B. An event still may qualify as an official tryout if the appropriate national governing body has established exemptions based on objective standards (e.g., former Olympic medalists, current World Champion) by which a student-athlete who qualifies for such an exemption is not required to participate in that particular event (or level of events). [References: Bylaws 14.7.3.1-(d) (U.S. national team) and 30.8.1 (national-team criteria) and official interpretations (10/18/06, Item No. 1 and 10/15/08, Item No. 1), which have been archived]

4. Legislative Council Policies and Operating Procedures. The Legislative Council approved revised policies and operating procedures related to deadlines for submission of materials. The established deadlines specify that agenda items and appeals of interpretations issued by the Legislative Review/Interpretations Committee must be submitted eight weeks prior to the next Legislative Council meeting. Agenda items and appeal requests submitted after the eight week deadline may be added to the Legislative Council's agenda, subject to the chair's approval.

5. Future Meeting Dates.

a. April 20-21, 2009, Indianapolis, Indiana.

b. October 19-20, 2009, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Council Chair: *Joseph D'Antonio, Big East Conference*
Council Liaisons: *Lynn Holzman, Academic and Membership Affairs*
Amy Huchthausen, Academic and Membership Affairs
Steve Mallonee, Academic and Membership Affairs
Leeland Zeller, Academic and Membership Affairs

Proposal Number: 2008-12

Title: PERSONNEL — LIMITATIONS ON NUMBER OF OFF-CAMPUS RECRUITERS AT ANY ONE TIME — EXCEPTION — BASKETBALL — JULY EVALUATION PERIODS

Intent: In basketball, to specify that during the July evaluation periods, a coach replaced for the purpose of off-campus recruiting activities is not required to return to the institution's campus before engaging in additional recruiting activities, provided no more than three coaches engage in off-campus recruiting activities each day.

Bylaws: Amend 11.7.4.3, as follows:

11.7.4.3 Off-Campus Recruiting — At Any One Time. It is permissible for a coach to leave campus to engage in off-campus contact or evaluation before another coach who is off campus actually returns to campus, provided the total number of coaches recruiting on behalf of the institution at any time do not exceed the permissible number. The coach being replaced must complete his or her recruiting activities before another coach may begin any off-campus recruiting activity. Further, the replaced coach may not engage in additional recruiting activities until after he or she has returned to the institution's campus.

11.7.4.3.1 Exception — Basketball — July Evaluation Periods. During the July evaluation periods, a replaced coach is not required to return to the institution's campus before engaging in additional recruiting activities, provided no more than three coaches engage in off-campus recruiting activities each day.

Source: Big East Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: During the July evaluation periods, basketball coaches travel the country in order to identify prospective student-athletes. Only three of the four coaches are permitted to recruit at any one time, and this is regulated by requiring a coach who comes "off the road" to return to campus before being permitted to resume recruiting activities. Due to the intense nature of the July evaluation periods, it is preferable that the three-coach limit be regulated by permitting only three coaches to engage in off-campus recruiting each day, and by permitting a coach who is replaced as an off-campus recruiter to resume recruiting without returning to campus first. This proposal would allow three coaches to evaluate while the fourth coach travels from one certified event directly to the location of another. Under the current rule, coaches must take turns flying back to campus, creating needless expenses and using valuable time.

Budget Impact: Potential decrease in recruiting travel expenses.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet supports the proposal. The cabinet agrees with the sponsor's rationale statement. Although the cabinet discussed whether this proposal should be expanded to other time periods and other sports, the cabinet agreed the membership should first consider the current proposal.

Women's Basketball Issues Committee: The committee took no formal position on this proposal, but stressed the importance of the governance substructure continuing to examine issues surrounding the number of coaches who may recruit off campus at any one time and the associated travel challenges and expenses. Additionally, the committee recommends that this proposal receive initial support by the governance structure to encourage further review and discussion of the broader concept by both the governance structure and the Division I membership through the comment and amendment-to-amendment period.

History

Jul 11, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Aug 18, 2008: Women's Basketball Issues Committee, No Formal Position

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Approval

Oct 16, 2008: Modified to apply to men's basketball in addition to women's basketball. Original version applied only to women's basketball.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-15-B

Title: RECRUITING — DEFINITIONS AND APPLICATIONS — PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE — INSTITUTIONAL ORIENTATION SESSION

Intent: To specify that a recruited prospective student-athlete who has signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) [or, for an institution that does not use the NLI in a particular sport or for a prospective student-athlete who is not eligible to sign an NLI (e.g., four-year college transfer), the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid] and has reported to an institutional orientation session that is open to all incoming students within 14 calendar days prior to the opening day of classes of a regular academic year term shall not be subject to the contact restrictions in Bylaw 13 and shall be considered a student-athlete for purposes of Bylaw 16 as of the opening day of the orientation session.

Bylaws: Amend 13.02.11, as follows:

13.02.11 Prospective Student-Athlete. A prospective student-athlete is a student who has started classes for the ninth grade. In addition, a student who has not started classes for the ninth grade becomes a prospective student-athlete if the institution provides such an individual (or the individual's relatives or friends) any financial assistance or other benefits that the institution does not provide to prospective students generally. An individual remains a prospective student-athlete until one of the following occurs (whichever is earlier):

[13.02.11-(a) through 13.02.11-(c) unchanged.]

[13.02.11.1 unchanged.]

13.02.11.2 Institutional Orientation Session. A recruited prospective student-athlete who has signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) [or, for an institution that does not use the NLI in a particular sport or for a prospective student-athlete who is not eligible to sign an NLI (e.g., four-year college transfer), the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid] and has reported to an institutional orientation session that is open to all incoming students within 14 calendar days prior to the opening day of classes of a regular academic year term shall not be subject to the contact restrictions in Bylaw 13 and shall be considered a student-athlete for purposes of Bylaw 16 as of the opening day of the orientation session.

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Not all institutions require incoming students to attend orientation sessions. This alternative proposal provides greater flexibility to apply the provisions of the legislation to any institutional orientation period available to all incoming students, rather than limiting the application to required orientation sessions.

Budget Impact: Minimal.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-15-A.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-19

Title: RECRUITING — CONTACTS AND EVALUATIONS — FOOTBALL — ONE CONTACT WITH JUNIORS OR SENIORS — SPRING EVALUATION PERIOD

Intent: In football, to specify that during the spring evaluation period, an institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athletes in their junior year) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution; further, to specify that an institution may use an additional evaluation in conjunction with the contact.

A. Bylaws: Amend 13.02.4.2, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.02.4.2 Evaluation Period. An evaluation period is a period of time when it is permissible for authorized athletics department staff members to be involved in off-campus activities designed to assess the academic qualifications and playing ability of prospective student-athletes. No in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts shall be made with the prospective student-athlete during an evaluation period.

13.02.4.2.1 Exception — Spring Evaluation Period — Football. In football, an institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athlete's in their junior year per Bylaw 13.1.1.1.1) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution during the spring evaluation period.

B. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.1.1, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.1.1 High School Prospective Student-Athletes. Off-campus recruiting contacts shall not be made with a prospective student-athlete or the prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardians before July 1 following the prospective student-athlete's completion of the junior year in high school (July 15 in women's gymnastics). U.S. service academy exceptions to this provision are set forth in Bylaw 13.16.1.

13.1.1.1.1 Exception — Football. In football, it is permissible to make one in-person, off-campus recruiting contact with a prospective student-athlete or a prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardians at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution during the spring evaluation period of the prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school (subject to applicable recruiting calendar restrictions).

C. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.6.2, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.6.2 Football. In football, **contacts shall be permitted as follows:**

(a) Contact Period. During the contact period [per Bylaw 30.10.3.-(b)], each institution shall be limited to six in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts per prospective student-athlete at any site and shall include contacts made with the prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardians, but shall not include contacts made during an official visit per Bylaw 13.6.

(b) Spring Evaluation Period. During the spring evaluation period [per Bylaw 30.10.3-(f)], each institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athletes in their junior year per Bylaw 13.1.1.1.1) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution. It is not necessary for the contact to occur in conjunction with an evaluation; however, if the contact occurs in conjunction with an evaluation (on the same day), the institution shall be charged with both a contact and an evaluation for that prospective student-athlete (see Bylaws 13.1.8.4 and 13.1.8.4.1).

D. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.4, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.8.4 Limitations on Number of Evaluations — Football. In football, institutional staff members shall be limited to three evaluations during the academic year during which the prospective student-athlete competes or practices on any team. Not more than one evaluation may be used during the fall evaluation period and not more than two evaluations may be used during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period per Bylaw 30.10.3. An authorized off-campus recruiter may use one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's athletics ability and one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's academic qualifications during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period. If an institution's coaching staff member conducts both an athletics and an academic evaluation of a prospective student-athlete on the same day during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period, the institution shall be charged with the use of an academic evaluation only and shall be permitted to conduct a second athletics evaluation of the prospective student-athlete on a separate day during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period.

13.1.8.4.1 Exception — Additional Spring Evaluation in Conjunction with Contact. During the spring evaluation period, an institution may use an additional evaluation (third spring evaluation; fourth evaluation for the academic year) in conjunction with an off-campus contact per Bylaw 13.1.6.2-(b). If an academic evaluation is used in conjunction with the contact (on the same day), the institution shall be permitted to conduct two athletics evaluations of the prospective student-athletes during the period (for a total of three evaluations during the period).

E. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.9.2, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.8.9.2 Limitations on the Number of Spring Evaluations. In football, institutional staff members shall not visit a prospective student-athlete's educational institution on more than ~~two~~ **three** calendar days during the spring evaluation period. A visit to a prospective student-athlete's educational institution that only includes contact with a signed prospective student-athlete during the spring evaluation period shall be considered one of the institution's ~~two~~ **three** permissible days at that institution.

F. Administrative: Amend 30.10.3, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

30.10.3 Football. The following recruiting periods shall apply to football:

[30.10.3-(a) through 30.10.3-(e) unchanged.]

(f) Four weeks (excluding Memorial Day and Sundays) during April 15 through May 31 selected at the discretion of the member institution and designated in writing in the office of the director of athletics [as provided in (1) below **and with exception in (2) below**]: Evaluation Period

(1) An authorized off-campus recruiter may use one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's athletics ability and one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's academic qualifications during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period. If an institution's coaching staff member conducts both an athletics and an academic evaluation of a prospective student-athlete on the same day during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period, the institution shall be charged with the use of an academic evaluation only and shall be permitted to conduct a second athletics evaluation of the prospective student-athlete on a separate day during this evaluation period. **In addition, an institution may use an additional evaluation (a third spring evaluation; fourth evaluation for the academic year) in conjunction with an off-campus contact per Bylaw 13.1.6.2-(b). If an academic evaluation is used in conjunction with the contact (on the same day), the institution shall be permitted to conduct two athletics evaluations of the prospective student-athlete during the period (for a total of three evaluations during the period).**

(2) An institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athletes in their junior year per Bylaw 13.1.1.1.1) on the campus of the prospective student-athlete's educational institution. It is not necessary for the contact to occur in conjunction with an evaluation; however, if the contact occurs in conjunction with an evaluation (on the same day), the institution shall be charged with both a contact and an evaluation for that prospective student-athlete.

[30.10.3-(g) unchanged.]

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Between NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate considerations, off-field behavioral expectations, and trends such as increased mid-year enrollment by high school prospective student-athletes, there has never been more pressure to have an early, accurate assessment of a prospective student-athlete's ability to succeed academically and assimilate culturally in a collegiate environment. Permitting an additional recruiting opportunity per prospective student-athlete during the spring evaluation period will enhance a coaching staff's assessment of the character and academic qualifications of a prospective student-athlete. The additional recruiting opportunity would permit a contact with a prospective student-athlete (including juniors) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution or a contact plus an evaluation in conjunction with that contact on the same day. At most, the additional recruiting opportunity would result in one additional visit to a prospective student-athlete's educational institution during the spring evaluation period. In addition to improving the accuracy of a staff's assessment of a prospective student-athlete earlier in the recruiting process, another benefit of this proposal is that impermissible contacts ("bumps") with juniors and seniors during the spring evaluation period would be reduced. Finally, confining the additional recruiting opportunity to the prospective student-athlete's educational institution is consistent with and furthers the effort to focus recruiting on the scholastic environment.

Budget Impact: One additional visit to a high school during the spring evaluation period.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet supports the proposal. The cabinet agreed with the sponsor's rationale statement and noted this legislation would not increase the number of coaches permitted to recruit off campus at one time or permit the head coach to have contact with prospective student-athletes during the spring evaluation period.

History

Jul 15, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Approval

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-20-A

Title: RECRUITING — FOOTBALL EVALUATIONS — SCHOLASTIC AND NONSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES — EVENTS ORGANIZED AND CONDUCTED BY SCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS GOVERNANCE BODIES — OTHER EVALUATION EVENTS

Intent: In football, to specify that live athletics evaluations are permissible at events organized and conducted solely by a scholastic athletics governing body (e.g., state high school athletics association, junior college athletics association); further, to specify that institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.9.4, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote]

13.1.8.9.4 Scholastic and Nonscholastic Activities. In football, all live athletics evaluations shall be limited to:

(a) Regularly scheduled high school, preparatory school and two-year college contests and practices; ~~and~~

(b) Regular scholastic activities involving prospective student-athletes enrolled only at the institution at which the regular scholastic activities occur**; and**

(c) Events that are organized and conducted solely by a scholastic athletics governing body (e.g., state high school athletics association, junior college athletics association).

13.1.8.9.4.1 Other Evaluation Events. In football, institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event (other than those permitted pursuant to Bylaw 13.1.8.9.4) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Source: Southeastern Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: This proposal seeks to permit coaches' attendance at coaching clinics, all-star game practices and competitions that are solely conducted and organized by a state high school athletics association or by a junior college athletics association. In addition, the current limitations on evaluations apply only to live athletics activities. This proposal would preclude attendance at recruiting events (other than the permissible live events) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available, but it would not preclude an institution's coach from engaging in other individual evaluation activities (e.g., individually meeting with a high school coach to discuss a prospective student-athlete athletics or academic credentials).

Budget Impact: Potential for costs related to attendance at events organized and conducted by a scholastic athletics governing body; eliminates costs related to other evaluation events.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet supports the proposal. The cabinet agreed with the sponsor's rationale statement and noted this proposal further emphasizes the scholastic environment in recruiting

activities.

History

Jul 15, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Approval

Oct 26, 2008: Proposal renumbered as Proposal No. 2008-20-A. An alternative is Proposal No. 2008-20-B.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-20-B

Title: RECRUITING — FOOTBALL EVALUATIONS — SCHOLASTIC AND NONSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES — OTHER EVALUATION EVENTS

Intent: In football, to specify that institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.9.4, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote]

13.1.8.9.4 Scholastic and Nonscholastic Activities. In football, all live athletics evaluations shall be limited to:

(a) Regularly scheduled high school, preparatory school and two-year college contests and practices; and

(b) Regular scholastic activities involving prospective student-athletes enrolled only at the institution at which the regular scholastic activities occur.

13.1.8.9.4.1 Other Evaluation Events. In football, institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event (other than those permitted pursuant to Bylaw 13.1.8.9.4) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Source: NCAA Division I Legislative Council.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: The current limitations on evaluations apply only to live athletics activities. This alternative proposal would preclude attendance at recruiting events (other than the permissible live events) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available, but it would not preclude an institution's coach from engaging in other individual evaluation activities (e.g., individually meeting with a high school coach to discuss a prospective student-athlete athletics or academic credentials). Evaluations of live athletics activities should not be expanded beyond regularly scheduled scholastic contests and practices and other regular scholastic activities. Although Proposal No. 2008-20-A seeks to expand evaluations of live athletics activities to events that are organized and conducted solely by a scholastic athletics governing body, concern has been expressed regarding the potential involvement or attempted influence of nonscholastic entities on events on such events and the scholastic athletics governing bodies. If such events do not currently exist, the scholastic athletics governing bodies may be pressured to establish them.

Budget Impact: Eliminates costs related to other evaluation events.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 21, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-20-A.

Oct 21, 2008: Legislative Council, Sponsored

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-25-D

Title: RECRUITING — LETTER OF INTENT PROGRAMS — REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFERS OF ATHLETICALLY RELATED FINANCIAL AID — COMPLETION OF AMATEURISM CERTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE — DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE

Intent: To specify that an institution shall not provide a high school, preparatory school or transfer (if applicable) prospective student-athlete a written offer of athletically related financial aid until he or she has completed the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

Bylaws: Amend 13.9, as follows:

13.9 LETTER-OF-INTENT PROGRAMS, FINANCIAL AID AGREEMENTS

13.9.1 ~~*NCAA Eligibility Center Registration and Institutional Request List*~~ **Requirements for Offer of Athletically Related Financial Aid**. ~~*An institution shall not provide a high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete a written offer of athletically related financial aid (per Bylaw 15.3.2.3) until he or she has registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center and the institution has placed the prospective student-athlete on its institutional request list (IRL) with the NCAA Eligibility Center.*~~ **The following requirements must be met before an institution may provide a written offer of athletically related financial aid (per Bylaw 15.3.2.3) to a prospective student-athlete:**

(a) A high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center;

(b) A high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete must be placed on the institution's institutional request list (IRL) with the NCAA Eligibility Center; and

(c) A high school, preparatory school or transfer (if applicable) prospective student-athlete must complete the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

[Remainder of 13.9 unchanged.]

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date:

Rationale: Although the sponsor of Proposal No. 2008-25-B has indicated that the effective date of August 1, 2009 will provide adequate notice to institutions and prospective student-athletes, delaying the effective date until 2010 will provide additional time for the NCAA to educate prospects and institutions on this additional requirement, which will result in a smoother transition for the membership.

Budget Impact: None.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-25-B.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-29

Title: RECRUITING — TRYOUTS — EXCEPTIONS — VOLUNTARY SUMMER CONDITIONING — SPORTS OTHER THAN FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL

Intent: In sports other than football and basketball, to specify that a prospective student-athlete may engage in voluntary summer workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach with department-wide duties and may receive workout apparel (on an issuance and retrieval basis), provided he or she is enrolled in the institution's summer term prior to the student's initial full-time enrollment at the certifying institution; further, to specify that an institution may finance medical expenses for a prospective student-athlete who sustains an injury while participating in such workouts.

A. Bylaws: Amend 13.2.8, as follows:

13.2.8 Medical Expenses — ~~*Basketball*~~ **Sports other than Football**. In ~~*basketball*~~ **sports other than football**, an institution may finance medical expenses (including rehabilitation and physical therapy expenses) for a prospective student-athlete who sustains an injury while participating in voluntary summer workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach with department-wide duties (see ~~*Bylaw*~~ **Bylaws** 13.11.3.9 **and 13.11.3.10**).

B. Bylaws: Amend 13.11.3, as follows:

13.11.3 Tryout Exceptions.

[13.11.3.1 through 13.11.3.9 unchanged.]

13.11.3.10 Voluntary Summer Conditioning — Sports Other Than Football and Basketball. In sports other than football and basketball, a prospective student-athlete may engage in voluntary summer workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach with department-wide duties and may receive workout apparel (on an issuance and retrieve basis), provided he or she is enrolled in the institution's summer term prior to the student's initial full-time enrollment at the certifying institution.

13.11.3.10.1 Mandatory Medical Examination. Prior to participation in any weight-training or conditioning workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach, a prospective student-athlete who will be a first-time participant shall be required to undergo a medical examination or evaluation administered or supervised by a physician (e.g., family physician, team physician). The examination or evaluation must have been administered within six months prior to participation in any weight-training or conditioning activity.

[13.11.3.10 renumbered as 13.11.3.11, unchanged.]

Source: Southeastern Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Current legislation permits football and basketball prospective student-athletes to participate in voluntary conditioning activities during the summer with the institution's strength and conditioning coach, provided the prospective student-athletes are enrolled in the institution's summer term. This proposal extends the same opportunity to incoming student-athletes in all other sports. Currently, incoming student-athletes in other sports who elect to enroll in summer school prior to initial full-time enrollment may not work out with their future teammates and are forced to lift weights and condition on their own, and in some cases, without proper guidance from a skilled strength and conditioning coach. This proposal will allow all incoming student-athletes the opportunity to receive proper instruction and to work with their future teammates.

Budget Impact: Potential increase in costs associated with additional prospective student-athletes involved in weight-training and conditioning activities.

Impact on S-A's Time: Opportunity for involvement in voluntary conditioning activities.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet opposes the proposal. Although the cabinet is supportive of addressing sport-equity issues regarding the current legislation, it expressed concern with increased costs and demands on athletics staff members (e.g., strength and conditioning coaches and athletic trainers) associated with having a greater number of prospective student-athletes on campus during the summer. Additionally, the cabinet noted the requirements for participation in voluntary summer activities would be different for football and basketball compared to all other sports under this proposal.

History

Jul 15, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Defeat

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-67

Title: ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS — RECRUITING CALENDARS — SOFTBALL — CONTACT PERIOD AUGUST 1 THROUGH THE DAY PRIOR TO THANKSGIVING DAY

Intent: In softball, to establish a contact period from August 1 through the day prior to Thanksgiving Day.

Administrative: Amend 30.10.4, as follows:

30.10.4 Softball. The following recruiting periods shall apply to softball:

(a) August 1 through ~~*Labor Day*~~ **the day prior to Thanksgiving day [except for (1) below]**:	Contact Period
~~*(b) The day after Labor Day through Thanksgiving day [except for (1) and (2) below]:*~~	~~*Contact only (no evaluations)*~~
~~*(1) The second Friday in October through the first Sunday of November:*~~	~~*Contact Period*~~
(~~2~~**1**) Monday through Thursday of the week that includes the initial date for the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent:	Dead Period
(~~c~~**b**) ~~*The day after*~~ Thanksgiving day through January 1 [except for (1) below]:	Quiet Period
(1) 12:01 a.m. on the day of registration for the national convention of the National Fastpitch Coaches Association to 12:01 a.m. on the day after adjournment of the convention:	Dead Period

[30.10.4-(d) through 30.10.4-(f) relettered as 30.10.4-(c) through 30.10.4-(e), unchanged.]

Source: Big East Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Under the current softball recruiting calendar, fall evaluations are limited to a narrow window of time (second Friday in October through the first Sunday in November). The short duration of this period presents several problems for the fall recruiting process. Prospective student-athlete well-being was a primary reason for the structure of the current calendar. However, the truncation of the fall evaluation period has put more stress on prospective student-athletes by causing an increase in missed class time due to tournaments being held for longer periods during the permissible evaluation weekends, in addition to the proliferation of events taking place during weekdays. Additionally, the short time period for evaluations in the fall has created increased pressure on coaches to recruit as much as possible within the allowable timeframe, thereby decreasing time spent on campus with current student-athletes. Moreover, if a single tournament is canceled due to weather conditions or other reasons, a considerable recruiting opportunity is lost. The recruiting calendar should allow for greater flexibility to use the 50 permissible evaluation days instead of limiting the time period in which it is permissible to evaluate prospective student-athletes.

Budget Impact: None.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet expressed concern that the current legislation has only been effective for approximately one year and the cabinet believes more time is necessary to assess its impact before considering changes. Further, the cabinet noted the National Fastpitch Coaches Association is opposed the proposal for this same reason.

History

Jul 02, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Defeat

Jan 15, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-68-B

Title: ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS — RECRUITING CALENDARS — WOMEN'S LACROSSE — FALL EVALUATIONS — LIMITATION ON EVALUATIONS OF LACROSSE ACTIVITIES

Intent: In women's lacrosse, to specify that during the fall contact period, evaluations of prospective student-athletes participating in lacrosse activities are limited to the three weekends prior to Thanksgiving.

Administrative: Amend 30.10.8, as follows:

30.10.8 Lacrosse, Women's. The following recruiting periods shall apply to women's lacrosse:

[30.10.8-(a) through 30.10.8-(e) unchanged.]

(f) September 1 through the Tuesday before Thanksgiving [except for (1) **and (2)** below]: — Contact Period

(1) Monday through Thursday of the initial week of the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent: — Dead Period

(2) Evaluations of prospective student-athletes participating in lacrosse activities are limited to the three weekends (Saturday and Sunday) prior to Thanksgiving.

[30.10.8-(g) unchanged.]

Source: Ivy Group.

Effective Date:

Rationale: Women's lacrosse coaches are concerned that prospective student-athletes are incurring travel expenses and withdrawing from other activities in order to be seen at fall tournaments by college coaches. Evaluating prospects in the spring with their scholastic teams and in the summer with club teams are substantial evaluation opportunities, and the recruiting process should not unnecessarily impose on prospects' time in the fall. Limiting the times when prospects may be evaluated to the three weekends prior to Thanksgiving will allow them to participate in fall sports and other activities in September and October while still giving them the opportunity to be evaluated by college coaches looking to begin the recruiting process. This proposal is not intended to prohibit other types of evaluations (e.g. academic evaluations, evaluations of prospects participating in other sports) during the fall contact period.

Budget Impact: Potential cost reduction with fewer evaluation opportunities.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 23, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-68-A.

Jan 15, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Position Statements for NCAA Division I Proposal Nos. 2008-15, 2008-25 and 2008-68

Proposal No. 2008-15

Position Statement(s):

NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet. The cabinet supports the proposal as modified.

NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet expressed concern that only a limited number of institutions have required orientation sessions within 14 days of the opening day of classes and believes the waiver process is the most appropriate avenue to address these situations.

Proposal No. 2008-25

Position Statement(s):

Student-Athlete Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet recommends the sponsor modify the proposal to specify that a high school, preparatory school or transfer (if applicable) prospective student-athlete must complete the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center before an institution may provide a written offer of athletically related financial aid. The cabinet is concerned that requiring the amateurism certification questionnaire to be completed prior to an official visit is cumbersome and could result in a delay of the visit. It was noted that despite adequate planning, many official visits are arranged or changed at the last minute due to schedule changes or other complications. The cabinet agreed the appropriate timing for the completion of the amateurism certification questionnaire is prior to issuing a written offer of athletically related financial aid. The cabinet agreed that this timing may address the concerns related to late registrations by prospective student-athletes currently experienced by the Eligibility Center, while still supplying institutions with important amateurism information before financial aid commitments are made. The cabinet would support the proposal if modified. Further, in the event the sponsor does not accept the cabinet's recommended modification, the cabinet will sponsor an alternative proposal. Finally, the cabinet recommends further clarification be provided regarding what is meant by "complete" the amateurism certification questionnaire.

Proposal No. 2008-68

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet recognizes the effort and intent of the Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association in its attempt to address early recruitment concerns in their sport. However, the cabinet is unclear how common "senior only" tournaments are in the sport and whether scholastic lacrosse seasons in all states are in the spring. Additionally, the cabinet noted the potential increase in the number of inadvertent secondary violations if participants' grade levels are not known. Finally, the cabinet noted this issue has been identified by the NCAA Board of Directors and the NCAA Division I Leadership Council as an issue that requires further examination in all sports; therefore, the cabinet believes it would be premature to adopt sport-specific legislation at this time.

The National Collegiate Athletic Conference
January 22, 2009 CMK:jsp

Proposal Number: 2008-12

Title: PERSONNEL — LIMITATIONS ON NUMBER OF OFF-CAMPUS RECRUITERS AT ANY ONE TIME — EXCEPTION — BASKETBALL — JULY EVALUATION PERIODS

Intent: In basketball, to specify that during the July evaluation periods, a coach replaced for the purpose of off-campus recruiting activities is not required to return to the institution's campus before engaging in additional recruiting activities, provided no more than three coaches engage in off-campus recruiting activities each day.

Bylaws: Amend 11.7.4.3, as follows:

11.7.4.3 Off-Campus Recruiting — At Any One Time. It is permissible for a coach to leave campus to engage in off-campus contact or evaluation before another coach who is off campus actually returns to campus, provided the total number of coaches recruiting on behalf of the institution at any time do not exceed the permissible number. The coach being replaced must complete his or her recruiting activities before another coach may begin any off-campus recruiting activity. Further, the replaced coach may not engage in additional recruiting activities until after he or she has returned to the institution's campus.

11.7.4.3.1 Exception — Basketball — July Evaluation Periods. During the July evaluation periods, a replaced coach is not required to return to the institution's campus before engaging in additional recruiting activities, provided no more than three coaches engage in off-campus recruiting activities each day.

Source: Big East Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: During the July evaluation periods, basketball coaches travel the country in order to identify prospective student-athletes. Only three of the four coaches are permitted to recruit at any one time, and this is regulated by requiring a coach who comes "off the road" to return to campus before being permitted to resume recruiting activities. Due to the intense nature of the July evaluation periods, it is preferable that the three-coach limit be regulated by permitting only three coaches to engage in off-campus recruiting each day, and by permitting a coach who is replaced as an off-campus recruiter to resume recruiting without returning to campus first. This proposal would allow three coaches to evaluate while the fourth coach travels from one certified event directly to the location of another. Under the current rule, coaches must take turns flying back to campus, creating needless expenses and using valuable time.

Budget Impact: Potential decrease in recruiting travel expenses.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet supports the proposal. The cabinet agrees with the sponsor's rationale statement. Although the cabinet discussed whether this proposal should be expanded to other time periods and other sports, the cabinet agreed the membership should first consider the current proposal.

Women's Basketball Issues Committee: The committee took no formal position on this proposal, but stressed the importance of the governance substructure continuing to examine issues surrounding the number of coaches who may recruit off campus at any one time and the associated travel challenges and expenses. Additionally, the committee recommends that this proposal receive initial support by the governance structure to encourage further review and discussion of the broader concept by both the governance structure and the Division I membership through the comment and amendment-to-amendment period.

History

Jul 11, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Aug 18, 2008: Women's Basketball Issues Committee, No Formal Position

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Approval

Oct 16, 2008: Modified to apply to men's basketball in addition to women's basketball. Original version applied only to women's basketball.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-15-B

Title: RECRUITING — DEFINITIONS AND APPLICATIONS — PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE — INSTITUTIONAL ORIENTATION SESSION

Intent: To specify that a recruited prospective student-athlete who has signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) [or, for an institution that does not use the NLI in a particular sport or for a prospective student-athlete who is not eligible to sign an NLI (e.g., four-year college transfer), the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid] and has reported to an institutional orientation session that is open to all incoming students within 14 calendar days prior to the opening day of classes of a regular academic year term shall not be subject to the contact restrictions in Bylaw 13 and shall be considered a student-athlete for purposes of Bylaw 16 as of the opening day of the orientation session.

Bylaws: Amend 13.02.11, as follows:

13.02.11 Prospective Student-Athlete. A prospective student-athlete is a student who has started classes for the ninth grade. In addition, a student who has not started classes for the ninth grade becomes a prospective student-athlete if the institution provides such an individual (or the individual's relatives or friends) any financial assistance or other benefits that the institution does not provide to prospective students generally. An individual remains a prospective student-athlete until one of the following occurs (whichever is earlier):

[13.02.11-(a) through 13.02.11-(c) unchanged.]

[13.02.11.1 unchanged.]

13.02.11.2 Institutional Orientation Session. A recruited prospective student-athlete who has signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) [or, for an institution that does not use the NLI in a particular sport or for a prospective student-athlete who is not eligible to sign an NLI (e.g., four-year college transfer), the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid] and has reported to an institutional orientation session that is open to all incoming students within 14 calendar days prior to the opening day of classes of a regular academic year term shall not be subject to the contact restrictions in Bylaw 13 and shall be considered a student-athlete for purposes of Bylaw 16 as of the opening day of the orientation session.

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Not all institutions require incoming students to attend orientation sessions. This alternative proposal provides greater flexibility to apply the provisions of the legislation to any institutional orientation period available to all incoming students, rather than limiting the application to required orientation sessions.

Budget Impact: Minimal.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-15-A.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-19

Title: RECRUITING — CONTACTS AND EVALUATIONS — FOOTBALL — ONE CONTACT WITH JUNIORS OR SENIORS — SPRING EVALUATION PERIOD

Intent: In football, to specify that during the spring evaluation period, an institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athletes in their junior year) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution; further, to specify that an institution may use an additional evaluation in conjunction with the contact.

A. Bylaws: Amend 13.02.4.2, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.02.4.2 Evaluation Period. An evaluation period is a period of time when it is permissible for authorized athletics department staff members to be involved in off-campus activities designed to assess the academic qualifications and playing ability of prospective student-athletes. No in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts shall be made with the prospective student-athlete during an evaluation period.

13.02.4.2.1 Exception — Spring Evaluation Period — Football. In football, an institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athlete's in their junior year per Bylaw 13.1.1.1.1) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution during the spring evaluation period.

B. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.1.1, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.1.1 High School Prospective Student-Athletes. Off-campus recruiting contacts shall not be made with a prospective student-athlete or the prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardians before July 1 following the prospective student-athlete's completion of the junior year in high school (July 15 in women's gymnastics). U.S. service academy exceptions to this provision are set forth in Bylaw 13.16.1.

13.1.1.1.1 Exception — Football. In football, it is permissible to make one in-person, off-campus recruiting contact with a prospective student-athlete or a prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardians at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution during the spring evaluation period of the prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school (subject to applicable recruiting calendar restrictions).

C. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.6.2, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.6.2 Football. In football, **contacts shall be permitted as follows:**

(a) Contact Period. During the contact period [per Bylaw 30.10.3.-(b)], each institution shall be limited to six in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts per prospective student-athlete at any site and shall include contacts made with the prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardians, but shall not include contacts made during an official visit per Bylaw 13.6.

(b) Spring Evaluation Period. During the spring evaluation period [per Bylaw 30.10.3-(f)], each institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athletes in their junior year per Bylaw 13.1.1.1.1) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution. It is not necessary for the contact to occur in conjunction with an evaluation; however, if the contact occurs in conjunction with an evaluation (on the same day), the institution shall be charged with both a contact and an evaluation for that prospective student-athlete (see Bylaws 13.1.8.4 and 13.1.8.4.1).

D. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.4, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.8.4 Limitations on Number of Evaluations — Football. In football, institutional staff members shall be limited to three evaluations during the academic year during which the prospective student-athlete competes or practices on any team. Not more than one evaluation may be used during the fall evaluation period and not more than two evaluations may be used during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period per Bylaw 30.10.3. An authorized off-campus recruiter may use one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's athletics ability and one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's academic qualifications during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period. If an institution's coaching staff member conducts both an athletics and an academic evaluation of a prospective student-athlete on the same day during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period, the institution shall be charged with the use of an academic evaluation only and shall be permitted to conduct a second athletics evaluation of the prospective student-athlete on a separate day during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period.

13.1.8.4.1 Exception — Additional Spring Evaluation in Conjunction with Contact. During the spring evaluation period, an institution may use an additional evaluation (third spring evaluation; fourth evaluation for the academic year) in conjunction with an off-campus contact per Bylaw 13.1.6.2-(b). If an academic evaluation is used in conjunction with the contact (on the same day), the institution shall be permitted to conduct two athletics evaluations of the prospective student-athletes during the period (for a total of three evaluations during the period).

E. Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.9.2, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

13.1.8.9.2 Limitations on the Number of Spring Evaluations. In football, institutional staff members shall not visit a prospective student-athlete's educational institution on more than ~~*two*~~ **three** calendar days during the spring evaluation period. A visit to a prospective student-athlete's educational institution that only includes contact with a signed prospective student-athlete during the spring evaluation period shall be considered one of the institution's ~~*two*~~ **three** permissible days at that institution.

F. Administrative: Amend 30.10.3, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote.]

30.10.3 Football. The following recruiting periods shall apply to football:

[30.10.3-(a) through 30.10.3-(e) unchanged.]

(f) Four weeks (excluding Memorial Day and Sundays) during April 15 through May 31 selected at the discretion of the member institution and designated in writing in the office of the director of athletics [as provided in (1) below **and with exception in (2) below**]: Evaluation Period

(1) An authorized off-campus recruiter may use one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's athletics ability and one evaluation to assess the prospective student-athlete's academic qualifications during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period. If an institution's coaching staff member conducts both an athletics and an academic evaluation of a prospective student-athlete on the same day during the April 15 through May 31 evaluation period, the institution shall be charged with the use of an academic evaluation only and shall be permitted to conduct a second athletics evaluation of the prospective student-athlete on a separate day during this evaluation period. **In addition, an institution may use an additional evaluation (a third spring evaluation; fourth evaluation for the academic year) in conjunction with an off-campus contact per Bylaw 13.1.6.2-(b). If an academic evaluation is used in conjunction with the contact (on the same day), the institution shall be permitted to conduct two athletics evaluations of the prospective student-athlete during the period (for a total of three evaluations during the period).**

(2) An institution may make one in-person, off-campus contact per prospective student-athlete (including prospective student-athletes in their junior year per Bylaw 13.1.1.1.1) on the campus of the prospective student-athlete's educational institution. It is not necessary for the contact to occur in conjunction with an evaluation; however, if the contact occurs in conjunction with an evaluation (on the same day), the institution shall be charged with both a contact and an evaluation for that prospective student-athlete.

[30.10.3-(g) unchanged.]

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Between NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate considerations, off-field behavioral expectations, and trends such as increased mid-year enrollment by high school prospective student-athletes, there has never been more pressure to have an early, accurate assessment of a prospective student-athlete's ability to succeed academically and assimilate culturally in a collegiate environment. Permitting an additional recruiting opportunity per prospective student-athlete during the spring evaluation period will enhance a coaching staff's assessment of the character and academic qualifications of a prospective student-athlete. The additional recruiting opportunity would permit a contact with a prospective student-athlete (including juniors) at the prospective student-athlete's educational institution or a contact plus an evaluation in conjunction with that contact on the same day. At most, the additional recruiting opportunity would result in one additional visit to a prospective student-athlete's educational institution during the spring evaluation period. In addition to improving the accuracy of a staff's assessment of a prospective student-athlete earlier in the recruiting process, another benefit of this proposal is that impermissible contacts ("bumps") with juniors and seniors during the spring evaluation period would be reduced. Finally, confining the additional recruiting opportunity to the prospective student-athlete's educational institution is consistent with and furthers the effort to focus recruiting on the scholastic environment.

Budget Impact: One additional visit to a high school during the spring evaluation period.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet supports the proposal. The cabinet agreed with the sponsor's rationale statement and noted this legislation would not increase the number of coaches permitted to recruit off campus at one time or permit the head coach to have contact with prospective student-athletes during the spring evaluation period.

History

Jul 15, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Approval

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-20-A

Title: RECRUITING — FOOTBALL EVALUATIONS — SCHOLASTIC AND NONSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES — EVENTS ORGANIZED AND CONDUCTED BY SCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS GOVERNANCE BODIES — OTHER EVALUATION EVENTS

Intent: In football, to specify that live athletics evaluations are permissible at events organized and conducted solely by a scholastic athletics governing body (e.g., state high school athletics association, junior college athletics association); further, to specify that institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.9.4, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote]

13.1.8.9.4 Scholastic and Nonscholastic Activities. In football, all live athletics evaluations shall be limited to:

(a) Regularly scheduled high school, preparatory school and two-year college contests and practices; ~~*and*~~

(b) Regular scholastic activities involving prospective student-athletes enrolled only at the institution at which the regular scholastic activities occur**; and**

(c) Events that are organized and conducted solely by a scholastic athletics governing body (e.g., state high school athletics association, junior college athletics association).

13.1.8.9.4.1 Other Evaluation Events. In football, institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event (other than those permitted pursuant to Bylaw 13.1.8.9.4) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Source: Southeastern Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: This proposal seeks to permit coaches' attendance at coaching clinics, all-star game practices and competitions that are solely conducted and organized by a state high school athletics association or by a junior college athletics association. In addition, the current limitations on evaluations apply only to live athletics activities. This proposal would preclude attendance at recruiting events (other than the permissible live events) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available, but it would not preclude an institution's coach from engaging in other individual evaluation activities (e.g., individually meeting with a high school coach to discuss a prospective student-athlete athletics or academic credentials).

Budget Impact: Potential for costs related to attendance at events organized and conducted by a scholastic athletics governing body; eliminates costs related to other evaluation events.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet supports the proposal. The cabinet agreed with the sponsor's rationale statement and noted this proposal further emphasizes the scholastic environment in recruiting

activities.

History

Jul 15, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Approval

Oct 26, 2008: Proposal renumbered as Proposal No. 2008-20-A. An alternative is Proposal No. 2008-20-B.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-20-B

Title: RECRUITING — FOOTBALL EVALUATIONS — SCHOLASTIC AND NONSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES — OTHER EVALUATION EVENTS

Intent: In football, to specify that institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Bylaws: Amend 13.1.8.9.4, as follows:

[Federated provision, FBS and FCS, divided vote]

13.1.8.9.4 Scholastic and Nonscholastic Activities. In football, all live athletics evaluations shall be limited to:

(a) Regularly scheduled high school, preparatory school and two-year college contests and practices; and

(b) Regular scholastic activities involving prospective student-athletes enrolled only at the institution at which the regular scholastic activities occur.

13.1.8.9.4.1 Other Evaluation Events. In football, institutional staff members shall not attend a recruiting event (other than those permitted pursuant to Bylaw 13.1.8.9.4) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available.

Source: NCAA Division I Legislative Council.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: The current limitations on evaluations apply only to live athletics activities. This alternative proposal would preclude attendance at recruiting events (other than the permissible live events) in which information (e.g., athletics or academic credentials, highlight or combine video) related to prospective student-athletes is presented or otherwise made available, but it would not preclude an institution's coach from engaging in other individual evaluation activities (e.g., individually meeting with a high school coach to discuss a prospective student-athlete athletics or academic credentials). Evaluations of live athletics activities should not be expanded beyond regularly scheduled scholastic contests and practices and other regular scholastic activities. Although Proposal No. 2008-20-A seeks to expand evaluations of live athletics activities to events that are organized and conducted solely by a scholastic athletics governing body, concern has been expressed regarding the potential involvement or attempted influence of nonscholastic entities on events on such events and the scholastic athletics governing bodies. If such events do not currently exist, the scholastic athletics governing bodies may be pressured to establish them.

Budget Impact: Eliminates costs related to other evaluation events.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 21, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-20-A.

Oct 21, 2008: Legislative Council, Sponsored

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-25-D

Title: RECRUITING — LETTER OF INTENT PROGRAMS — REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFERS OF ATHLETICALLY RELATED FINANCIAL AID — COMPLETION OF AMATEURISM CERTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE — DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE

Intent: To specify that an institution shall not provide a high school, preparatory school or transfer (if applicable) prospective student-athlete a written offer of athletically related financial aid until he or she has completed the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

Bylaws: Amend 13.9, as follows:

13.9 LETTER-OF-INTENT PROGRAMS, FINANCIAL AID AGREEMENTS

13.9.1 ~~*NCAA Eligibility Center Registration and Institutional Request List*~~ **Requirements for Offer of Athletically Related Financial Aid**. ~~*An institution shall not provide a high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete a written offer of athletically related financial aid (per Bylaw 15.3.2.3) until he or she has registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center and the institution has placed the prospective student-athlete on its institutional request list (IRL) with the NCAA Eligibility Center.*~~ **The following requirements must be met before an institution may provide a written offer of athletically related financial aid (per Bylaw 15.3.2.3) to a prospective student-athlete:**

(a) A high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center;

(b) A high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete must be placed on the institution's institutional request list (IRL) with the NCAA Eligibility Center; and

(c) A high school, preparatory school or transfer (if applicable) prospective student-athlete must complete the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

[Remainder of 13.9 unchanged.]

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date:

Rationale: Although the sponsor of Proposal No. 2008-25-B has indicated that the effective date of August 1, 2009 will provide adequate notice to institutions and prospective student-athletes, delaying the effective date until 2010 will provide additional time for the NCAA to educate prospects and institutions on this additional requirement, which will result in a smoother transition for the membership.

Budget Impact: None.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-25-B.

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-29

Title: RECRUITING — TRYOUTS — EXCEPTIONS — VOLUNTARY SUMMER CONDITIONING — SPORTS OTHER THAN FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL

Intent: In sports other than football and basketball, to specify that a prospective student-athlete may engage in voluntary summer workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach with department-wide duties and may receive workout apparel (on an issuance and retrieval basis), provided he or she is enrolled in the institution's summer term prior to the student's initial full-time enrollment at the certifying institution; further, to specify that an institution may finance medical expenses for a prospective student-athlete who sustains an injury while participating in such workouts.

A. Bylaws: Amend 13.2.8, as follows:

13.2.8 Medical Expenses — ~~*Basketball*~~ **Sports other than Football**. In ~~*basketball*~~ **sports other than football**, an institution may finance medical expenses (including rehabilitation and physical therapy expenses) for a prospective student-athlete who sustains an injury while participating in voluntary summer workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach with department-wide duties (see ~~*Bylaw*~~ **Bylaws** 13.11.3.9 **and 13.11.3.10**).

B. Bylaws: Amend 13.11.3, as follows:

13.11.3 Tryout Exceptions.

[13.11.3.1 through 13.11.3.9 unchanged.]

13.11.3.10 Voluntary Summer Conditioning — Sports Other Than Football and Basketball. In sports other than football and basketball, a prospective student-athlete may engage in voluntary summer workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach with department-wide duties and may receive workout apparel (on an issuance and retrieve basis), provided he or she is enrolled in the institution's summer term prior to the student's initial full-time enrollment at the certifying institution.

13.11.3.10.1 Mandatory Medical Examination. Prior to participation in any weight-training or conditioning workouts conducted by an institution's strength and conditioning coach, a prospective student-athlete who will be a first-time participant shall be required to undergo a medical examination or evaluation administered or supervised by a physician (e.g., family physician, team physician). The examination or evaluation must have been administered within six months prior to participation in any weight-training or conditioning activity.

[13.11.3.10 renumbered as 13.11.3.11, unchanged.]

Source: Southeastern Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Current legislation permits football and basketball prospective student-athletes to participate in voluntary conditioning activities during the summer with the institution's strength and conditioning coach, provided the prospective student-athletes are enrolled in the institution's summer term. This proposal extends the same opportunity to incoming student-athletes in all other sports. Currently, incoming student-athletes in other sports who elect to enroll in summer school prior to initial full-time enrollment may not work out with their future teammates and are forced to lift weights and condition on their own, and in some cases, without proper guidance from a skilled strength and conditioning coach. This proposal will allow all incoming student-athletes the opportunity to receive proper instruction and to work with their future teammates.

Budget Impact: Potential increase in costs associated with additional prospective student-athletes involved in weight-training and conditioning activities.

Impact on S-A's Time: Opportunity for involvement in voluntary conditioning activities.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet opposes the proposal. Although the cabinet is supportive of addressing sport-equity issues regarding the current legislation, it expressed concern with increased costs and demands on athletics staff members (e.g., strength and conditioning coaches and athletic trainers) associated with having a greater number of prospective student-athletes on campus during the summer. Additionally, the cabinet noted the requirements for participation in voluntary summer activities would be different for football and basketball compared to all other sports under this proposal.

History

Jul 15, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Defeat

Jan 14, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-67

Title: ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS — RECRUITING CALENDARS — SOFTBALL — CONTACT PERIOD AUGUST 1 THROUGH THE DAY PRIOR TO THANKSGIVING DAY

Intent: In softball, to establish a contact period from August 1 through the day prior to Thanksgiving Day.

Administrative: Amend 30.10.4, as follows:

30.10.4 Softball. The following recruiting periods shall apply to softball:

(a) August 1 through ~~*Labor Day*~~ **the day prior to Thanksgiving day [except for (1) below]**:	Contact Period
~~*(b) The day after Labor Day through Thanksgiving day [except for (1) and (2) below]:*~~	~~*Contact only (no evaluations)*~~
~~*(1) The second Friday in October through the first Sunday of November:*~~	~~*Contact Period*~~
(~~2~~**1**) Monday through Thursday of the week that includes the initial date for the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent:	Dead Period
(~~c~~**b**) ~~*The day after*~~ Thanksgiving day through January 1 [except for (1) below]:	Quiet Period
(1) 12:01 a.m. on the day of registration for the national convention of the National Fastpitch Coaches Association to 12:01 a.m. on the day after adjournment of the convention:	Dead Period

[30.10.4-(d) through 30.10.4-(f) relettered as 30.10.4-(c) through 30.10.4-(e), unchanged.]

Source: Big East Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Rationale: Under the current softball recruiting calendar, fall evaluations are limited to a narrow window of time (second Friday in October through the first Sunday in November). The short duration of this period presents several problems for the fall recruiting process. Prospective student-athlete well-being was a primary reason for the structure of the current calendar. However, the truncation of the fall evaluation period has put more stress on prospective student-athletes by causing an increase in missed class time due to tournaments being held for longer periods during the permissible evaluation weekends, in addition to the proliferation of events taking place during weekdays. Additionally, the short time period for evaluations in the fall has created increased pressure on coaches to recruit as much as possible within the allowable timeframe, thereby decreasing time spent on campus with current student-athletes. Moreover, if a single tournament is canceled due to weather conditions or other reasons, a considerable recruiting opportunity is lost. The recruiting calendar should allow for greater flexibility to use the 50 permissible evaluation days instead of limiting the time period in which it is permissible to evaluate prospective student-athletes.

Budget Impact: None.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet: The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet expressed concern that the current legislation has only been effective for approximately one year and the cabinet believes more time is necessary to assess its impact before considering changes. Further, the cabinet noted the National Fastpitch Coaches Association is opposed the proposal for this same reason.

History

Jul 02, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Defeat

Jan 15, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Proposal Number: 2008-68-B

Title: ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS — RECRUITING CALENDARS — WOMEN'S LACROSSE — FALL EVALUATIONS — LIMITATION ON EVALUATIONS OF LACROSSE ACTIVITIES

Intent: In women's lacrosse, to specify that during the fall contact period, evaluations of prospective student-athletes participating in lacrosse activities are limited to the three weekends prior to Thanksgiving.

Administrative: Amend 30.10.8, as follows:

30.10.8 Lacrosse, Women's. The following recruiting periods shall apply to women's lacrosse:

[30.10.8-(a) through 30.10.8-(e) unchanged.]

(f) September 1 through the Tuesday before Thanksgiving [except for (1) **and (2)** below]:	Contact Period
(1) Monday through Thursday of the initial week of the fall signing of the National Letter of Intent:	Dead Period
(2) Evaluations of prospective student-athletes participating in lacrosse activities are limited to the three weekends (Saturday and Sunday) prior to Thanksgiving.	

[30.10.8-(g) unchanged.]

Source: Ivy Group.

Effective Date:

Rationale: Women's lacrosse coaches are concerned that prospective student-athletes are incurring travel expenses and withdrawing from other activities in order to be seen at fall tournaments by college coaches. Evaluating prospects in the spring with their scholastic teams and in the summer with club teams are substantial evaluation opportunities, and the recruiting process should not unnecessarily impose on prospects' time in the fall. Limiting the times when prospects may be evaluated to the three weekends prior to Thanksgiving will allow them to participate in fall sports and other activities in September and October while still giving them the opportunity to be evaluated by college coaches looking to begin the recruiting process. This proposal is not intended to prohibit other types of evaluations (e.g. academic evaluations, evaluations of prospects participating in other sports) during the fall contact period.

Budget Impact: Potential cost reduction with fewer evaluation opportunities.

Impact on S-A's Time: None.

Position Statement(s)
none

History
Oct 23, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-68-A.

Jan 15, 2009: Leg Council Init Review, Forwarded for Membership Comment

Jan 18, 2009: Comment Period; Start of Comment Period

Mar 18, 2009: Comment Period; End of Comment Period

Position Statements for NCAA Division I Proposal Nos. 2008-15, 2008-25 and 2008-68

Proposal No. 2008-15

Position Statement(s):

NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet. The cabinet supports the proposal as modified.

NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet expressed concern that only a limited number of institutions have required orientation sessions within 14 days of the opening day of classes and believes the waiver process is the most appropriate avenue to address these situations.

Proposal No. 2008-25

Position Statement(s):

Student-Athlete Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet recommends the sponsor modify the proposal to specify that a high school, preparatory school or transfer (if applicable) prospective student-athlete must complete the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center before an institution may provide a written offer of athletically related financial aid. The cabinet is concerned that requiring the amateurism certification questionnaire to be completed prior to an official visit is cumbersome and could result in a delay of the visit. It was noted that despite adequate planning, many official visits are arranged or changed at the last minute due to schedule changes or other complications. The cabinet agreed the appropriate timing for the completion of the amateurism certification questionnaire is prior to issuing a written offer of athletically related financial aid. The cabinet agreed that this timing may address the concerns related to late registrations by prospective student-athletes currently experienced by the Eligibility Center, while still supplying institutions with important amateurism information before financial aid commitments are made. The cabinet would support the proposal if modified. Further, in the event the sponsor does not accept the cabinet's recommended modification, the cabinet will sponsor an alternative proposal. Finally, the cabinet recommends further clarification be provided regarding what is meant by "complete" the amateurism certification questionnaire.

Proposal No. 2008-68

Position Statement(s)

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet recognizes the effort and intent of the Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association in its attempt to address early recruitment concerns in their sport. However, the cabinet is unclear how common "senior only" tournaments are in the sport and whether scholastic lacrosse seasons in all states are in the spring. Additionally, the cabinet noted the potential increase in the number of inadvertent secondary violations if participants' grade levels are not known. Finally, the cabinet noted this issue has been identified by the NCAA Board of Directors and the NCAA Division I Leadership Council as an issue that requires further examination in all sports; therefore, the cabinet believes it would be premature to adopt sport-specific legislation at this time.

The National Collegiate Athletic Conference
January 22, 2009 CMK:jsp

SUPPLEMENT NO. 6

Summary of 2008 Major Infractions Cases
Involving Recruiting Violations

Prairie View A&M University, January 2008

Sport: Women's basketball.

Summary: Women's basketball coaches observed prospective student-athletes participating in summer pick-up games with enrolled women's basketball student-athletes. The Division I Committee on Infractions (COI) found that these violations occurred partly as a result of the institution's failure to provide adequate and comprehensive NCAA rules education to a newly hired head women's basketball coach.

Recruiting penalties: Reduction of official paid visits for women's basketball from the institution's average of four to two for one year.

Texas Christian University, February 2008

Sport: Men's tennis.

Summary: Men's tennis coaches made 105 impermissible phone calls to 24 prospective student-athletes during the four years from the summer of 2002 through the spring of 2006. More than 70 of the calls were made by the former head coach. The former head coach justified a number of the calls when he claimed that a number of calls were "dropped" calls or a continuation of another call. The COI found that these violations occurred partly as a result of the institution's and the former head coach's failure to monitor telephone calls to prospective student-athletes.

Recruiting penalties: The institution discontinued all international expense-paid recruiting visits for one year, discontinued all international off-campus recruiting activities for one year, and discontinued all domestic off-campus recruiting activities except for evaluation purposes only (no in-person contact) for one year. Further, the former head coach was prohibited from serving on any committees of the Association for two years.

Long Beach State University, March 2008

Sport: Men's basketball.

Summary: Men's basketball staff members paid for or arranged for payment to register six two-year college transfers in classes, paying or arranging for payment of fees so that transcripts of the transfers' course work could be obtained, providing impermissible tutoring and transportation, and making impermissible phone calls. Most of those courses were completed by the two-year college transfers the summer prior to their enrollment and included correspondence courses. Also, an assistant coach obtained a correspondence exam for one of the prospective student-athletes, allowed the young man to complete it without a proctor, then forged the name of his friend as the proctor and returned the exam to the issuing institution. The COI found that these

violations occurred partly as a result of unethical conduct by two assistant coaches and the institution's and head coach's failure to monitor the men's basketball program and the two-year college transfers.

Recruiting penalties: A prohibition from recruiting two-year college transfers or permitting such transfers to participate in men's basketball for those student-athletes entering the institution for one year, a reduction in the number of official visits to nine (from the maximum of 12) for two years, and a reduction to two (from the maximum of three) in the number of coaches who can be recruiting off campus during one summer. Further, a four-year show cause order was imposed for one assistant coach and a five-year show cause order was imposed for the other assistant coach.

Brigham Young University, March 2008

Sport: Men's volleyball.

Summary: Men's volleyball student-athletes provided impermissible transportation, housing and meals to an international prospective student-athlete who had moved to the institution's locale prior to enrollment, and the mother of one of the student-athletes provided an impermissible loan and meals to the same young man. Further, a representative of the institution's athletics interests provided impermissible recruiting inducements to the same young man, as well as another international prospective student-athlete, including, but not limited to, cash, housing, clothing, use of an automobile and payment of legal fees. The COI found that these violations occurred partly as a result of the head coach's failure to monitor the first prospective student-athlete after he moved to the institution's locale prior to enrollment and to monitor the representative's involvement with both of the prospective student-athletes and partly as a result of the institution's failure to monitor the first prospective student-athlete after becoming aware that the young man had moved to the institution's locale prior to enrollment.

Recruiting penalties: A limit of five official visits in the sport of men's volleyball for one year and six for the next year, and a limit of 23 in the number of days the coaching staff in the sport of men's volleyball can engage in off-campus recruiting activities during one year and 34 days during the next year.

Southeast Missouri State University, June 2008

Sport: Women's basketball.

Summary: Women's basketball coaches arranged for prospective student-athletes' transportation to the institution's locale the summer prior to their enrollment, and at times, provided them rides around the institution's locale. Women's basketball student-athletes then provided some of the prospective student-athletes free housing during the summer. The prospective student-athletes moved to the institution's locale in part to begin workouts with the enrolled women's basketball

student-athletes, and at times, the women's basketball coaches observed their participation in basketball activities. The COI found that the violations occurred partly as a result of the institution's and head coach's failure to monitor the local activities of the prospective student-athletes during the summer prior to their enrollment.

Recruiting penalties: A reduction by five in the number of recruiting days in women's basketball (from 85 to 80) for one year, and a prohibition on off-campus recruiting by the former head coach during the July evaluation period.

University of New Mexico, August 2008

Sport: Football.

Summary: Two assistant football coaches arranged for three two-year college prospective student-athletes to enroll in correspondence courses prior to their enrollment; all three young men subsequently received academic credit for the correspondence courses, even though they did not complete any course work. The COI found that the violations occurred partly as a result of unethical conduct by the two assistant football coaches.

Recruiting penalties: Restricted the number of two-year college signees who were nonqualifiers out of high school by 50 percent for a two-year period, from a four-year average of nine to four in one year and to five the next year; reduced the number of coaches permitted to recruit off campus by one, from seven to six, for the two years; and capped the number of official paid visits provided to prospective football student-athletes for three years. Further a three-year show cause order was imposed for both assistant coaches.

JAT:jlm

Division I Secondary Violation Recruiting Statistics for 2008

Bylaw	Description of Violation	Number of Cases	Percentage of Total (1559)
13.02.4	**Recruiting Periods**	**106**	**7%**
13.1.1	**Contactable Individuals (impermissible contacts)**	**92**	**6%**
13.1.2	Permissible Recruiters	47	3%
13.1.3	**Telephone Calls**	**195**	**13%**
13.1.5	Visit to Prospect's Educational Institution	8	1%
13.1.6	Contacts (permissible number of)	8	1%
13.1.7	Contact Restrictions at Specified Sites	30	2%
13.1.8	Limitations on Number of Evaluations	34	2%
13.2	**Offers and Inducements**	**73**	**5%**
13.3	Admissions and Graduation Data, Banned Drugs, etc.	5	<1%
13.4	**Recruiting Materials (including 126 text mess. vio.'s)**	**268**	**17%**
13.5	Transportation	26	2%
13.6	**Official (Paid) Visit** 13.6.2 – Limitations on Official Visits (11) **13.6.3 – Requirements for Official Visit (73)** 13.6.4 – Length of Official Visit (20) **13.6.7 – Entertainment/Tickets on Official Visit (98)**	**210**	**13%**
13.7	Unofficial (Nonpaid) Visit	36	2%
13.8	Entertainment, Reimbursement and Employment of High School/College-Preparatory School/Two-Year College Coaches	21	1%
13.9	Letter of Intent Programs, Financial Aid Agreements	52	3%
13.10	**Publicity**	**87**	**6%**
13.11	**Tryouts**	**77**	**5%**
13.12	Sports Camps and Clinics	43	3%
13.15	Precollege Expenses	20	1%

The National Collegiate Athletic Association
January 21, 2009 JAT:jsp

Summary of Responses to the Report of the NCAA Division I Recruiting/ Early Scholarship Offers Working Group

Executive Summary

In July, the NCAA Division I Recruiting/Early Scholarship Offers Working Group sought feedback relative to the issue of early offers of athletics grants-in-aid. Input was requested from Division I conference offices and coaches associations in response to three concepts developed by the group:

1. Establish a model that integrates the review of a prospect's academic credentials earlier in the recruiting process and prior to a written offer of institutional athletics aid;

2. Establish earlier signing dates for the National Letter of Intent (NLI); and

3. Consequences for actions contrary to Concept No. 1.

Ten conference offices and six coaches associations responded to the report of the working group. In general, responses from both groups indicated some support for the idea of curtailing the prevalence of early scholarship offers; however, reservations were expressed regarding the effective implementation of the concepts presented, especially Concept No. 1. Specifically, it was suggested that increased workloads to complete the required academic evaluations and the practical challenges involved in monitoring a prohibition against verbal offers make the achievement of Concept No. 1 challenging.

Conference offices expressed mixed reactions to Concept No.1 but were generally not supportive of creating earlier NLI signing dates (Concept No. 2). Responses from coaches associations produced no clear consensus relative to the concepts but a slight majority appeared to support both proposed concepts.

Supporters of earlier academic reviews and a prohibition against verbal offers of athletics aid note that more information, academic and athletic, can be gathered before decisions are made and less pressure is placed on prospects to make a decision as early. Opponents cite implementation difficulties, both within and outside athletics, and satisfaction with the status quo.

Proponents of earlier signing periods contend they would provide reduced pressure on prospects and allow coaches to focus on their current team if recruiting has been concluded. Opponents of the concept note a reduced time frame for the prospect and institution to learn about one another, the opportunity for change with the prospect or program, potential inequities for prospects

who cannot afford unofficial visits and smaller institutions that lack the resources and prestige to recruit as early as larger institutions.

Regarding Concept No. 3, suggested consequences ranged from minimal to significant. Proposed penalties include letters of admonishment, loss of scholarships and off-campus recruiting opportunities, monetary fines and loss of a prospect's eligibility at the involved institution.

Detailed Summary

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT EARLY OFFERS AND COMMITMENTS

General comments about early offers of financial aid and early commitments by prospects were provided by three of the six coaches associations that responded to the request. The American Volleyball Coaches Association and Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association indicated that most of their coaches would prefer not to offer scholarships early but feel compelled to do so in order to keep up with competitors who do offer early scholarships. A majority of respondents from the Women's Basketball Coaches Association supported the status quo allowing the practice of early verbal and written scholarship offers. Some proponents of early scholarship offers noted that they should not be permissible prior to a certain date (e.g., end of junior year or July 1 following junior year, first date of senior year).

The following are some of the benefits of early offers and commitments identified by the three associations:

- Reduce pressure on prospects who know what institution they want to attend and no longer wish to be recruited;
- Provide comfort to coaches to know that recruiting is over and allow them to focus on coaching their current team rather than recruiting for future years;
- Allows small schools to secure "sleepers" by identifying them before large schools;
- Early commitments allow coaches to use money otherwise spent on official visits to enhance other aspects of their programs; and
- Mitigate the role of "advisors" in the recruiting process.

Comments not supportive of early offers included the following:

- It is getting out of control;
- Verbal offers should be precluded because they are not worth anything;
- Early offers place too much pressure on prospects and families to make a decision sooner;
- Early decisions are often not fully informed and lead to poor decisions and can be linked to the recent increase in transfers;
- Do not want to offer early, but have to be competitive; and
- Too many things can change between offer and enrollment (e.g., coaching change, injury, change of interests).

CONCEPT NO. 1: Establish a model that integrates the review of a prospect's academic credentials earlier in the recruiting process and prior to a written offer of institutional athletics aid.

Conference Offices

Among conference offices, responses to the proposal were split nearly evenly. Those who support the proposal primarily cite the extra time for both parties to gather information and make a decision as their rationale. Additionally, the added value of a sixth-semester academic evaluation was noted in support of the concept.

Some who supported the proposal to limit written and verbal offers of aid also noted that they would support legislative changes to permit earlier contact between coaches and prospects. Rationale for this suggestion is to increase the level of information that is shared and evaluation that is completed, as well as reducing the role of advisors and other outside influences that have contact with prospects before coaches are allowed to.

Most who were opposed to the concept indicated that the status quo is acceptable or preferred to the concepts. Two primary concerns emerged related to the concept. The first is that a prohibition on verbal offers may be unenforceable and futile. Second, a number of responses, both in favor and opposed to the concept, expressed concern regarding the personnel that would be needed to complete the academic evaluation of prospects. Some concern related to the increasing workload on compliance offices,

especially during the early summer. Additionally, concern was expressed related to the increased demand on admissions and registrars offices and the inability to handle the increased number of evaluations, especially related to last minute and timely requests for evaluations.

Some who opposed the concept were in favor of curbing the prevalence of verbal offers and commitments but felt that the concepts currently under consideration were not the appropriate solution.

Coaches Associations

Four coaches associations responded directly to the concepts proposed in the working group executive summary. The National Field Hockey Coaches Association, National Fastpitch Coaches Association and Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association supported Concept No. 1, while the National Soccer Coaches Association of America opposed it by a narrow margin.

Among the benefits of the proposal cited in the responses was earlier knowledge of the academic eligibility of a prospect and hopefully reduction of the pressure on prospects to make a verbal commitment. Further, many who supported the proposal indicated that verbal and written offers should not be permissible prior to a certain date; however, the suggested date ranged from the start of the junior year to the start of the senior year.

Those opposed to the proposal primarily cited the difficulty enforcing a prohibition against verbal offers and commitments, potential resistance from the offices responsible for academic evaluations of incoming students and general opposition to further regulation. Also mentioned were potential problems for prospects who take a standardized test later than normal.

CONCEPT NO. 2: Establish earlier signing dates for the (NLI).

Conference Offices

Many responses acknowledged the presence of legitimate pros and cons related to earlier NLI signing dates; however, the majority of conferences were not supportive of establishing an earlier signing period.

Arguments against earlier signing periods included:

- Will contribute to less-informed decisions, more confusion and mistakes, more attempts to break/void NLI.;

- Many things can change with the prospect and current team;
- Will pressure the entire recruiting process to move earlier;
- Will disadvantage those students who cannot afford to make unofficial visits, unless recruiting rules are also altered;
- Would provide an advantage to bigger schools who have the personnel and prestige to recruit prospects earlier; and
- Legitimizes the current trend of earlier recruiting, offers of scholarship aid and commitments.

Those who support earlier NLI signing periods provided the following rationale:

- Reduces pressure on student-athletes;
- Protects the individual and institution by creating a binding agreement;
- Does not hurt anything, the prospect knows where they are going; and
- Provides coaches with peace of mind regarding incoming classes.

Some respondents advocated for later NLI signing dates, rather than earlier ones. Among the cited benefits are:

- More communication between prospect and coach;
- More informed decisions because prospects would be able to complete an official visit to the institution; and
- Institutions could complete a seventh-semester evaluation of academic credentials.

Coaches Associations

Of the four associations that responded directly to the concepts, two supported and two opposed Concept No. 2. The two associations that favored the concept are fall sports that do not have a fall/early signing period. The two associations that opposed the concept are spring sports that do have a fall signing period.

Comments in support of earlier NLI signing periods suggest that it would reduce pressure on student-athletes who know where they want to go and can submit to a binding commitment and end the recruiting process.

Those who do not support an earlier signing period commented that it would make the situation worse than it currently is, noting that prospects will make less-informed decisions, leading to more confusion and mistakes.

Similar to the responses from conference offices, a small number of individuals also suggested having later signing periods with the intent of institutions having more academic information about prospects and prospects having more information about the institution.

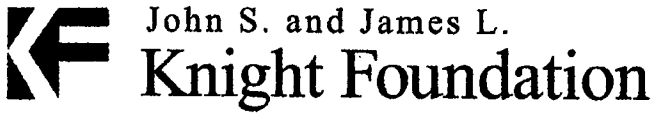
CONCEPT NO. 3: Consequences for actions contrary to Concept No. 1.

Suggested consequences for actions contrary to Concept No. 1 covered as broad a spectrum as did the responses to the concepts, ranging from limited to severe and from institutional only to including coaches and prospects. Those favoring substantial penalties noted that a verbal offer or commitment cannot be inadvertent and that the structure needed to be significant enough to prevent violations. There was more variation within the groups of conference offices and coaches associations than between them.

Some respondents felt that violations should be institutional only and not affect the prospective student-athlete's eligibility because coaches and institutions are charged with rules compliance. Others felt that prospects and parents should also be held accountable as willing and knowledgeable participants in the process; this sanction may be dependent on the prospects role in the violation. Among the specific penalties suggested in the responses were letters of admonishment, loss of scholarships and off-campus recruiting opportunities, monetary fines and loss of prospect's eligibility at the involved institution.

Others suggested that a prohibition against verbal offers and commitments is unenforceable and would be a futile effort to identify and impose penalties.

Lastly, some respondents suggested that ethics and education are needed to bring about change in this area, rather than regulations and penalties.



July 15, 2008

Myles Brand
President
NCAA
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Dear Myles,

At the Knight Commission's June 17 meeting, the Commission discussed the emerging practice of coaches offering scholarships to 8th and 9th graders. We have taken a public stand against this practice and are writing to request that the NCAA consider an acceptable standard for verbal scholarship offers.

We understand that this practice impacts a number of sports. While it is currently limited in scope within each sport, the practice will most likely escalate unless action is taken.

While the NCAA has made great strides in raising the academic standards and expectations, it is disconcerting that coaches can offer athletics scholarships to prospects who have not yet established a high school academic record.

Ideally, every institution would require prospects to engage with admissions and academic officials prior to receiving written or verbal scholarship offers. The NCAA's requirement that a prospect register for the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to receiving a written scholarship offer is a good step in this direction. However, the absence of a standard for verbal scholarship offers short-circuits the full intent of this provision.

We commend the action taken by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) to establish a standard in men's basketball. However, we believe that NCAA rules should establish an appropriate standard for verbal scholarship offers for all sports instead of leaving this issue up to various coaches' associations. We recommend incorporating verbal scholarship offers into the existing legislation that specifies the time period during which written scholarship offers can be made. At a minimum, verbal scholarship offers should be prohibited prior to the time coaches can begin writing to prospects in each sport.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Respectfully,

William E. Kirwan
Co-Chairman
Chancellor
University System of Maryland

R. Gerald Turner
Co-Chairman
President
Southern Methodist University

c: James Barker, chair, NCAA Board of Directors
David Berst, vice president for Division I, NCAA
Members of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics
3520 Prestwick Drive, Fayetteville, NC 28303
(910) 864-5782 www.knightcommission.org

Academic Requirements During the Recruiting Process

Purpose.

The purpose of this document is to describe existing academic requirements applicable to prospective student-athletes and institutions during the recruiting process and their associated goals, and to identify potential recommendations to address outcomes not achieved by previous legislation.

Background.

Among the many important elements of the recruiting process are the opportunities for prospective student-athletes to identify institutions that match their academic and athletics interests, for prospective student-athletes to learn about NCAA initial-eligibility requirements and for institutions to evaluate the academic preparedness of the prospective student-athlete that the institution is recruiting. Central to these objectives is communication and the exchange of information between prospective student-athletes and institutions.

The recruiting process also provides an opportunity for the NCAA Eligibility Center to begin collecting academic and amateurism information about prospective student-athletes and to educate prospective student-athletes regarding eligibility standards. Earlier collection of information allows an earlier start to the eligibility certification process; earlier certification creates efficiencies and can reduce the bottleneck of certifications that typically occur at the beginning of each academic year.

In April 2007, the Division I membership adopted NCAA Division I Proposal No. 2006-46-A, which was intended to accelerate the process of prospective student-athletes registering with the Eligibility Center and to improve the information shared between prospective student-athletes, institutions, and the Eligibility Center. Proposal No. 2006-46-A specified that an institution may not provide an official visit or a written offer of athletically related financial aid to a high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete until he or she has registered with the Eligibility Center and is placed on the institution's Institutional Request List (IRL). Legislation already in existence requires that a prospective student-athlete must provide an institution with an academic transcript and standardized test score prior to taking an official visit. Proposal No. 2006-46-A noted that prospective student-athletes are best served by early notification of their eligibility status and that late registration with the Eligibility Center leads to an inability to properly advise student-athletes.

Recent data from the Eligibility Center indicates that the legislation may not be having its intended impact. For example:

1. More than 40,000 prospective student-athletes are added to an IRL for the first time after June 1 following their senior year in high school.

2. Thousands of National Letters of Intent (NLI) are signed after prospective student-athletes have graduated from high school during the summer before their initial college enrollment.

3. Each year, initial-eligibility waivers are submitted asserting that the prospective student-athlete, particularly those who were not recruited or are from a country other than the United States, was not aware of initial-eligibility requirements prior to their arrival at a Division I institution.

In addition, recent media reports suggest that some prospective student-athletes are receiving verbal offers of athletically related financial aid and are verbally committing to participate for a particular institution at an early point in their educational career – occasionally before beginning the ninth grade – before the institution can evaluate the academic profile and qualifications of the prospective student-athlete.

Late registration with the Eligibility Center and late exchange of information between prospective student-athletes, institutions and the Eligibility Center, in addition to early commitments by prospective student-athletes and institutions, can result in uninformed recruiting decisions where both the prospective student-athlete and institution are not fully aware of the prospective student-athlete's eligibility status until just before the prospective student-athlete's initial-collegiate enrollment.

Objectives of Potential Recommendations.

The Division I membership has recently adopted legislation to encourage earlier registration and improve the exchange of information between prospective student-athletes, institutions, and the Eligibility Center. Since the official visit and written offer of aid/NLI may not occur early enough in the recruiting process to begin collecting information about prospective student-athletes, it is appropriate to identify other alternatives to achieve the desired outcomes. A number of earlier communication points are presented below for consideration by the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet; additional recommendations are then identified in the following section.

Opportunities for Communication.

Current legislation requires that registration with the Eligibility Center and placement on the IRL must occur before a prospective student-athlete takes an official visit or is provided a written offer of athletically related financial aid from the institution. A prospective student-athlete also must submit a transcript and test score to the institution before an official visit. However, the official visit and signing of an offer of aid may occur too close to the prospective student-athlete's initial enrollment for the registration and IRL requirements to have a significant impact on the ability to properly advise a prospective student-athlete. When these events occur during the prospective student-athlete's senior year of high school, it may be difficult or impossible for a prospective student-athlete to modify his or her class schedule to satisfy NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.

The staff reviewed the current recruiting calendar and identified additional opportunities available for communication between the prospective student-athlete, institution and Eligibility Center. There are several initial-contact points to which requirements could be attached, which are identified below with discussion points for the cabinet's consideration.

1. *Institution's first written correspondence (e-mail/letter) to a prospective student-athlete* – Current legislation for most sports allows for written correspondence to begin September 1 at the beginning of the prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school. Requiring submission of six-semester academic records is not possible until subsequent to a prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school. Further, a requirement for Eligibility Center registration at this point could potentially cast a wider net then desired and require prospective student-athletes to register that do not have a legitimate probability of participating at a Division I institution. Many prospective student-athletes receive correspondence from institutions who do not subsequently participate at the Division I level. Additionally, such a recommendation would significantly increase the monitoring burden on institutional staff members.

2. *Institution's first phone call to a prospective student-athlete* – Phone calls are generally permitted beginning July 1 after the completion of the prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school. A requirement for registration with the Eligibility Center prior to the first phone call would more closely align with the prospective student-athlete's completion of six semesters of high school coursework. The concept would likely result in increased monitoring and capturing more prospects than intended. In addition, contact with a prospective student-athlete could be delayed due to the timing of high school grades from the spring term being reported and the vacation schedules of high school staff.

3. *Verbal Offer of Aid* – Requiring registration with the Eligibility Center and/or submission of academic transcript(s) prior to a verbal offer of aid would serve a dual purpose of both: (1) Setting a specific date for the first opportunity for an institution to make a verbal offer of financial aid; and (2) Allowing coaches a longer opportunity to evaluate a prospective student-athlete's academic history prior to making a verbal offer of aid. Currently, there is no legislation regulating the verbal offer of aid at any time. The ability to evaluate a prospective student-athlete's academic record would provide institutions with the opportunity for more informed recruiting decisions before making a verbal commitment.

4. *Official Visit* – Current legislation requires an institution to have on file a high school transcript and test score (SAT/ACT) prior to providing a prospective student-athlete with an official visit. A prospective student-athlete who does not take an official visit until the spring semester of his or her senior year is too late in their academic career to make appropriate changes if he or she is not meeting initial-eligibility requirements. In addition, many prospective student-athletes have not taken a standardized test before the early (fall) signing period for the National Letter of Intent.

5. *National Letter of Intent/Written Offer of Aid* – Based on Eligibility Center data, thousands of prospective student-athletes sign their written offer of aid in the summer prior to matriculation at the institution. At this time, high school coursework has already been completed, and education and advising will have minimal effect. Therefore, requiring registration with the Eligibility Center and placement on the IRL at this time does not have the effect intended by Proposal No. 2006-46-A.

Concepts.

The following concepts are potential additions or amendments to the current academic requirements during the recruiting process. They are presented along with points for the cabinet's consideration.

Legislative Proposals.

1. Require prospective student-athletes to submit high school transcripts and test scores to the Eligibility Center before the institution can provide an official visit and/or a written offer of aid. [Note: Current legislation requires that the transcript and test score be submitted to the institution, not to the Eligibility Center.]

   Points to Consider.

   a. This concept was previously recommended in Proposal No. 2006-46-B, which was defeated by the former NCAA Division I Management Council in January 2007.

   b. The NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet comment on Proposal No. 2006-46 before Proposal No. 2006-46-B was sponsored: The cabinet supports the principles contained in the current proposal, but believes that the receipt of the official high school transcript or transcripts should be an added element. Early academic evaluation is vital to the NCAA initial-eligibility process. The registration and IRL submission will start the process at the clearinghouse, but these steps do not provide for an academic analysis, which is a vital step in determining a prospective student-athlete's preliminary initial-eligibility status and readiness for collegiate academic work.

   c. Concern about turn-around time/delays for Eligibility Center to process and acknowledge receipt of transcripts and test scores.

   d. Many high school students, not just prospective student-athletes, have not taken a standardized test before the start of the senior year (when official visits are first permissible) or the early (fall) signing period.

e. Alternative: Require submission of high school transcripts and test scores to the institution before a written offer of aid.

2. Prospective student-athlete must register with the Eligibility Center and submit academic record and test scores to Eligibility Center before the institution can make a verbal offer of athletically related financial aid.

Points to Consider.

a. Moves required activities earlier in the recruiting process.

b. Potential difficulty monitoring verbal offers of aid and enforcing legislation.

c. Many high school students, not just prospective student-athletes, have not taken a standardized test before the early (fall) signing period.

3. Prospective student-athletes must register with the Eligibility Center and submit academic record and test scores to Eligibility Center before enrollment in an institution's summer term prior to initial full-time enrollment.

Points to Consider.

a. Likely occurs too late in the recruiting process for prospective student-athletes to modify high school class schedule to satisfy initial-eligibility requirements.

b. Could be strengthened by requiring initial-eligibility certification prior to the prospective student-athlete's enrollment in summer school prior to initial full-time enrollment. However, may be difficult if summer term begins shortly after high school graduation.

4. Require a **fifth** semester academic record (either to institution or Eligibility Center) before verbal or written offer of aid.

Points to Consider.

a. Allows information to be submitted and preliminary evaluations to occur during spring of the junior year in high school rather than fall of the senior year.

b. Consider asking Eligibility Center to evaluate whether five-semester academic records will be sufficient for preliminary certifications and whether timing would be beneficial.

5. Prohibit further recruiting communication if a prospective student-athlete has not registered with the Eligibility Center by a certain date.

   Points to Consider.

   a. Prohibition might hamper institution's efforts to encourage the prospective student-athlete to register.

   b. Ability to be recruited may be the best incentive to promote registration with the Eligibility Center.

Operational Policies and Changes.

1. Continue to enhance educational efforts through ncaa.org/eligibility center, ncaastudent.org and the National Federation of State High School Associations and individual state activities associations.

2. Ask the Eligibility Center to evaluate a tiered fee structure or late registration fee to provide a financial incentive for earlier registration.

3. Establish an NCAA or Eligibility Center recruiting service or database.

Summary.

The preceding concepts are intended to initiate the cabinet's consideration of academic requirements during the recruiting process. Implementation of additional requirements, at the appropriate time in the recruiting process, will help prospective student-athletes and member institutions make more informed recruiting decisions. The staff looks forward to receiving feedback from the cabinet regarding the alternatives that should be further developed and evaluated for possible recommendation at the June 2009 meeting.

Summary of Responses to the Report of the NCAA Division I Recruiting/ Early Scholarship Offers Working Group

Executive Summary

In July, the NCAA Division I Recruiting/Early Scholarship Offers Working Group sought feedback relative to the issue of early offers of athletics grants-in-aid. Input was requested from Division I conference offices and coaches associations in response to three concepts developed by the group:

1. Establish a model that integrates the review of a prospect's academic credentials earlier in the recruiting process and prior to a written offer of institutional athletics aid;

2. Establish earlier signing dates for the National Letter of Intent (NLI); and

3. Consequences for actions contrary to Concept No. 1.

Ten conference offices and six coaches associations responded to the report of the working group. In general, responses from both groups indicated some support for the idea of curtailing the prevalence of early scholarship offers; however, reservations were expressed regarding the effective implementation of the concepts presented, especially Concept No. 1. Specifically, it was suggested that increased workloads to complete the required academic evaluations and the practical challenges involved in monitoring a prohibition against verbal offers make the achievement of Concept No. 1 challenging.

Conference offices expressed mixed reactions to Concept No.1 but were generally not supportive of creating earlier NLI signing dates (Concept No. 2). Responses from coaches associations produced no clear consensus relative to the concepts but a slight majority appeared to support both proposed concepts.

Supporters of earlier academic reviews and a prohibition against verbal offers of athletics aid note that more information, academic and athletic, can be gathered before decisions are made and less pressure is placed on prospects to make a decision as early. Opponents cite implementation difficulties, both within and outside athletics, and satisfaction with the status quo.

Proponents of earlier signing periods contend they would provide reduced pressure on prospects and allow coaches to focus on their current team if recruiting has been concluded. Opponents of the concept note a reduced time frame for the prospect and institution to learn about one another, the opportunity for change with the prospect or program, potential inequities for prospects

who cannot afford unofficial visits and smaller institutions that lack the resources and prestige to recruit as early as larger institutions.

Regarding Concept No. 3, suggested consequences ranged from minimal to significant. Proposed penalties include letters of admonishment, loss of scholarships and off-campus recruiting opportunities, monetary fines and loss of a prospect's eligibility at the involved institution.

Detailed Summary

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT EARLY OFFERS AND COMMITMENTS

General comments about early offers of financial aid and early commitments by prospects were provided by three of the six coaches associations that responded to the request. The American Volleyball Coaches Association and Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association indicated that most of their coaches would prefer not to offer scholarships early but feel compelled to do so in order to keep up with competitors who do offer early scholarships. A majority of respondents from the Women's Basketball Coaches Association supported the status quo allowing the practice of early verbal and written scholarship offers. Some proponents of early scholarship offers noted that they should not be permissible prior to a certain date (e.g., end of junior year or July 1 following junior year, first date of senior year).

The following are some of the benefits of early offers and commitments identified by the three associations:

- Reduce pressure on prospects who know what institution they want to attend and no longer wish to be recruited;
- Provide comfort to coaches to know that recruiting is over and allow them to focus on coaching their current team rather than recruiting for future years;
- Allows small schools to secure "sleepers" by identifying them before large schools;
- Early commitments allow coaches to use money otherwise spent on official visits to enhance other aspects of their programs; and
- Mitigate the role of "advisors" in the recruiting process.

Comments not supportive of early offers included the following:

- It is getting out of control;
- Verbal offers should be precluded because they are not worth anything;
- Early offers place too much pressure on prospects and families to make a decision sooner;
- Early decisions are often not fully informed and lead to poor decisions and can be linked to the recent increase in transfers;
- Do not want to offer early, but have to be competitive; and
- Too many things can change between offer and enrollment (e.g., coaching change, injury, change of interests).

CONCEPT NO. 1: Establish a model that integrates the review of a prospect's academic credentials earlier in the recruiting process and prior to a written offer of institutional athletics aid.

Conference Offices

Among conference offices, responses to the proposal were split nearly evenly. Those who support the proposal primarily cite the extra time for both parties to gather information and make a decision as their rationale. Additionally, the added value of a sixth-semester academic evaluation was noted in support of the concept.

Some who supported the proposal to limit written and verbal offers of aid also noted that they would support legislative changes to permit earlier contact between coaches and prospects. Rationale for this suggestion is to increase the level of information that is shared and evaluation that is completed, as well as reducing the role of advisors and other outside influences that have contact with prospects before coaches are allowed to.

Most who were opposed to the concept indicated that the status quo is acceptable or preferred to the concepts. Two primary concerns emerged related to the concept. The first is that a prohibition on verbal offers may be unenforceable and futile. Second, a number of responses, both in favor and opposed to the concept, expressed concern regarding the personnel that would be needed to complete the academic evaluation of prospects. Some concern related to the increasing workload on compliance offices,

especially during the early summer. Additionally, concern was expressed related to the increased demand on admissions and registrars offices and the inability to handle the increased number of evaluations, especially related to last minute and timely requests for evaluations.

Some who opposed the concept were in favor of curbing the prevalence of verbal offers and commitments but felt that the concepts currently under consideration were not the appropriate solution.

Coaches Associations

Four coaches associations responded directly to the concepts proposed in the working group executive summary. The National Field Hockey Coaches Association, National Fastpitch Coaches Association and Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association supported Concept No. 1, while the National Soccer Coaches Association of America opposed it by a narrow margin.

Among the benefits of the proposal cited in the responses was earlier knowledge of the academic eligibility of a prospect and hopefully reduction of the pressure on prospects to make a verbal commitment. Further, many who supported the proposal indicated that verbal and written offers should not be permissible prior to a certain date; however, the suggested date ranged from the start of the junior year to the start of the senior year.

Those opposed to the proposal primarily cited the difficulty enforcing a prohibition against verbal offers and commitments, potential resistance from the offices responsible for academic evaluations of incoming students and general opposition to further regulation. Also mentioned were potential problems for prospects who take a standardized test later than normal.

CONCEPT NO. 2: Establish earlier signing dates for the (NLI).

Conference Offices

Many responses acknowledged the presence of legitimate pros and cons related to earlier NLI signing dates; however, the majority of conferences were not supportive of establishing an earlier signing period.

Arguments against earlier signing periods included:

- Will contribute to less-informed decisions, more confusion and mistakes, more attempts to break/void NLI.;

- Many things can change with the prospect and current team;
- Will pressure the entire recruiting process to move earlier;
- Will disadvantage those students who cannot afford to make unofficial visits, unless recruiting rules are also altered;
- Would provide an advantage to bigger schools who have the personnel and prestige to recruit prospects earlier; and
- Legitimizes the current trend of earlier recruiting, offers of scholarship aid and commitments.

Those who support earlier NLI signing periods provided the following rationale:

- Reduces pressure on student-athletes;
- Protects the individual and institution by creating a binding agreement;
- Does not hurt anything, the prospect knows where they are going; and
- Provides coaches with peace of mind regarding incoming classes.

Some respondents advocated for later NLI signing dates, rather than earlier ones. Among the cited benefits are:

- More communication between prospect and coach;
- More informed decisions because prospects would be able to complete an official visit to the institution; and
- Institutions could complete a seventh-semester evaluation of academic credentials.

Coaches Associations

Of the four associations that responded directly to the concepts, two supported and two opposed Concept No. 2. The two associations that favored the concept are fall sports that do not have a fall/early signing period. The two associations that opposed the concept are spring sports that do have a fall signing period.

Comments in support of earlier NLI signing periods suggest that it would reduce pressure on student-athletes who know where they want to go and can submit to a binding commitment and end the recruiting process.

Those who do not support an earlier signing period commented that it would make the situation worse than it currently is, noting that prospects will make less-informed decisions, leading to more confusion and mistakes.

Similar to the responses from conference offices, a small number of individuals also suggested having later signing periods with the intent of institutions having more academic information about prospects and prospects having more information about the institution.

CONCEPT NO. 3: Consequences for actions contrary to Concept No. 1.

Suggested consequences for actions contrary to Concept No. 1 covered as broad a spectrum as did the responses to the concepts, ranging from limited to severe and from institutional only to including coaches and prospects. Those favoring substantial penalties noted that a verbal offer or commitment cannot be inadvertent and that the structure needed to be significant enough to prevent violations. There was more variation within the groups of conference offices and coaches associations than between them.

Some respondents felt that violations should be institutional only and not affect the prospective student-athlete's eligibility because coaches and institutions are charged with rules compliance. Others felt that prospects and parents should also be held accountable as willing and knowledgeable participants in the process; this sanction may be dependent on the prospects role in the violation. Among the specific penalties suggested in the responses were letters of admonishment, loss of scholarships and off-campus recruiting opportunities, monetary fines and loss of prospect's eligibility at the involved institution.

Others suggested that a prohibition against verbal offers and commitments is unenforceable and would be a futile effort to identify and impose penalties.

Lastly, some respondents suggested that ethics and education are needed to bring about change in this area, rather than regulations and penalties.

JUL 16 2008

John S. and James L.
Knight Foundation

July 15, 2008

Myles Brand
President
NCAA
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Dear Myles,

At the Knight Commission's June 17 meeting, the Commission discussed the emerging practice of coaches offering scholarships to 8th and 9th graders. We have taken a public stand against this practice and are writing to request that the NCAA consider an acceptable standard for verbal scholarship offers.

We understand that this practice impacts a number of sports. While it is currently limited in scope within each sport, the practice will most likely escalate unless action is taken.

While the NCAA has made great strides in raising the academic standards and expectations, it is disconcerting that coaches can offer athletics scholarships to prospects who have not yet established a high school academic record.

Ideally, every institution would require prospects to engage with admissions and academic officials prior to receiving written or verbal scholarship offers. The NCAA's requirement that a prospect register for the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to receiving a written scholarship offer is a good step in this direction. However, the absence of a standard for verbal scholarship offers short-circuits the full intent of this provision.

We commend the action taken by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) to establish a standard in men's basketball. However, we believe that NCAA rules should establish an appropriate standard for verbal scholarship offers for all sports instead of leaving this issue up to various coaches' associations. We recommend incorporating verbal scholarship offers into the existing legislation that specifies the time period during which written scholarship offers can be made. At a minimum, verbal scholarship offers should be prohibited prior to the time coaches can begin writing to prospects in each sport.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Respectfully,

William E. Kirwan
Co-Chairman
Chancellor
University System of Maryland

R. Gerald Turner
Co-Chairman
President
Southern Methodist University

c: James Barker, chair, NCAA Board of Directors
David Berst, vice president for Division I, NCAA
Members of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics
3520 Prestwick Drive, Fayetteville, NC 28303
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NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet
Coaching Limitations Discussion Document

Background.

The NCAA Division I Recruiting and Personnel Issues Cabinet identified issues related to the limitations on the number and duties of coaching staff members as a priority at its September 2008 cabinet meeting. Specifically, the cabinet noted the proliferation of noncoaching staff members with sport-specific duties and the responsibilities of managers. The cabinet will review the issues related to coaching limitations, including noncoaching staff members with sport-specific responsibilities and discuss whether legislative changes should be examined and subsequently, proposed in this area.

History of legislation.

Coaching limitations began with the adoption of legislation during a special convention in August 1975, to limit, effective August 1, 1976, the maximum number of assistant football and basketball coaches who could be employed by Division I institutions. An amendment to limit the number of coaches in other sports was defeated at the special convention. The special convention was held as a result of Special Meeting on Economy held in April 1975. Although the overarching reason for adopting coaching limitations was related to expenses, the issue of fairness was also addressed in the discussion of the legislation.

The legislation permitted institutions "to employ or otherwise utilize the services" of the following number of coaches:

- Football – One head coach, eight assistant coaches, two part-time assistant coaches.
- Basketball – One head coach, two assistant coaches, one part-time assistant coach.

Exceptions were provided for one volunteer coach per sport, undergraduate student-athletes who completed their eligibility and graduates of the institution in their fifth years, pursuant to specific restrictions.

The legislation specified that only individuals specified in the coaching limitations of the bylaw could participate in any manner in the coaching of the intercollegiate team in football or basketball during any game, practice or other organized activity. Questions were soon raised regarding "other organized activity" and the responsibilities of other athletics personnel. Case No. 319 in the 1977-78 NCAA Manual included the following question and answer:

Question: Does any organized staff activity related directly to football or basketball constitute an "other organized activity," thereby resulting in the individual (e.g., recruiting coordinator, academic counselor, dormitory supervisor, weight coach, prospective student-athlete scout) involved in such activity being counted in the football or basketball coaching limitations.

Answer: Yes. However, if the individual performs his responsibilities on a department-wide basis (e.g., a recruiting coordinator who coordinates recruiting for all intercollegiate sports conducted by the institution or an academic counselor who counsels all student-athletes in all sports rather than solely football or basketball), he shall be excluded from the limitations on the number of coaches in football and basketball.

Highlights of Changes to the Legislation since 1976.

- **1985 NCAA Convention Proposal No. 74 adopted**. The proposal specified that strength and conditioning coaches were permitted to conduct stretching, conditioning and warm-up drills prior to games and prior to and during practices.

- **1991 NCAA Convention Proposal No. 36 adopted.** The proposal established coaching categories (including the restricted-earnings coach) and imposed coaching limitations in all sports other than football and reduced the number of countable coaches in basketball. The proposal included the following rationale statement:

  The largest expense item in the athletics budget is personnel. Currently, only football and basketball have limits on the number of coaches who may be employed, and the existing categorical designations of part-time graduate student and volunteer coach have not been effective in reducing the number of full-time paid employees associated with the sport. In addition, the committee (Special Committee on Cost Reduction) recognizes the recent proliferation of part-time personnel associated with many Division I sports. Proposed limitations reflect an effort to: (1) reduce the number of coaches associated with each sport by at least one full-time equivalent position; (2) establish an "unrestricted" head or assistant coach category that will accommodate any type of volunteer, paid, full-time or part-time coach, and (3) establish a "restricted-earnings" category that will encourage the development of new coaches while more effectively limiting compensation to such coaches.

- **1992 NCAA Convention Proposal No. 60 adopted.** Established an exception to the limitations to allow for a volunteer coach in sports other than football and basketball. The rationale for the proposal included the need to address the concerns expressed by many institutions “that a group of unpaid volunteers, such as former student-athletes and local club coaches, would be precluded from providing assistance to student-athletes”.

- **1993 NCAA Convention Proposal No. 65 adopted.** Redefined the individuals who must be included in an institution's coaching limitations in each sport. (Current Bylaw 11.7.1.1.1.1 Noncoaching Activities.) The proposal included the following rationale statement:

At the 1991 Convention, Division I institutions adopted legislation, effective August 1, 1992, to reduce the number of coaching personnel in the sports of football and basketball, and to establish numerical coaching limitations in all other sports. Following the adoption of that legislation, a concern arose that institutions were reassigning individuals who previously counted against coaching limitations in an effort to avoid counting such individuals as coaches in the applicable sports. This practice results in minimal (if any) cost savings and provides an unfair competitive advantage for those institutions that continue to utilize the coaching expertise of such individuals. This result was not contemplated nor intended when the legislation was adopted. Further, there has been additional concern that the absence of a definitive standard of what constitutes "department-wide responsibilities" has permitted individuals to perform duties almost entirely in one sport without being included in an institution's coaching limitations in that sport. This new standard, recommended by the Interpretations Committee and the Council, more accurately reflects the intent of the legislation that established coaching limitations and provides a more workable definition for determining which individuals should be included in an institution's coaching limits.

Interestingly, discussion related to Proposal No. 65 included the following statements: "There is no legislation related to the administrative staff limits and maybe that will be a topic at some later date the Convention will consider. As far as it pertains to the coaching staff limitations, we believe this definition closes the loopholes and makes the limitations more easily understood."

- **1995 NCAA Administrative Committee Action.** Earning restrictions for restricted-earnings coaches deleted.

- **Restricted-earnings designation changed to "restricted" in 1998.**

- **References to "restricted" coaches removed from the Manual via Proposal No. 2001-105**.

Current legislation.

NCAA Division I legislation specifies a limit on the number of countable coaches (e.g., head, assistant) that may participate in coaching activities and who may contact or evaluate prospective student-athletes off-campus at any one time in each sport. Additionally, other coaches and athletics department staff members, including noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities (e.g., administrative assistant, director of basketball operations, video coordinator), volunteer coaches, graduate assistant coaches in the sport of football, and student assistant coaches, are limited by the types of duties they may perform in their respective positions.

Definitions

11.01.2 - Coach, Head or Assistant.
A head or assistant coach is any coach who is designated by the institution's athletics department to perform coaching duties and who serves in that capacity on a volunteer or paid basis.

11.01.3 - Coach, Graduate Assistant -- Bowl Subdivision Football and Women's Rowing.
In bowl subdivision football and women's rowing, a graduate assistant coach is any coach who has received a baccalaureate degree and qualifies for appointment as a graduate assistant under the policies of the institution. The individual is not required to be enrolled in a specific graduate degree program unless required by institutional policy. The following provisions shall apply:

(a) The individual shall be enrolled in at least 50 percent of the institution's minimum regular graduate program of studies. However, an institution may appoint a midyear replacement graduate assistant coach who is enrolled in less than 50 percent of the institution's minimum regular graduate program of studies (or is not yet enrolled), provided the graduate assistant coach has been accepted for enrollment in a graduate program beginning with the next regular academic term;

(b) The individual may not receive compensation or remuneration in excess of the value of a full grant-in-aid for a full-time student, based on the resident status of that individual and the receipt of four complimentary tickets to the institution's intercollegiate football and basketball games;

(c) Graduate and postgraduate financial assistance administered outside the institution (e.g., NCAA postgraduate scholarship) shall be excluded from the individual's limit on remuneration, provided such assistance is awarded through an established and continuing program to aid graduate students and the donor of the assistance does not restrict the recipient's choice of institutions;

(d) The individual may not serve as a graduate assistant coach for a period of more than two years except that if the individual successfully completes 24-semester or 36-quarter hours during the initial two-year period, the individual may serve as a graduate assistant coach for a third year. The NCAA Division I Legislative Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief may approve a waiver of these limitations based on the fact that the student's service as a coach and enrollment as a graduate student were interrupted for reasons that are unrelated to athletics, or to personal or family finances and that are beyond the control of the institution or the coach. Such a waiver may not be granted solely to permit the completion of a graduate program;

(e) Compensation for employment from a source outside the institution during the academic year shall be excluded from the individual's limit on remuneration, provided the

(f) institution does not arrange such employment and the compensation is for work actually performed. The member institution may not arrange on- or off-campus employment opportunities except for summer employment, which is permissible regardless of whether the student remains enrolled in the graduate program over the summer;

(g) A graduate student coach may accept employment benefits available to all institutional employees (e.g., life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance), as well as expenses to attend the conventions of the national coaches associations in football or women's rowing, without the value of those benefits being included;

(h) The institution may provide actual and necessary expenses for the individual's spouse and children to attend a licensed postseason football game or an NCAA championship in football or, in women's rowing, for the season ending tournament(s) specified in Bylaw 17.17.5.3-(b); and

(i) The individual may not evaluate or contact prospective student-athletes off campus, regardless of whether compensation is received for such activities. The individual may not perform recruiting coordination functions (see Bylaw 11.7.1.2); however, it is permissible for a graduate assistant coach to make telephone calls to prospective student-athletes, provided the coach has successfully completed the coaches' certification examination per Bylaw 11.5.1.1.

11.01.4 - Coach, Student Assistant.
A student-coach is any coach who is a student-athlete who has exhausted his or her eligibility in the sport or has become injured to the point that he or she is unable to practice or compete ever again, and who meets the following additional criteria:

(a) Is enrolled at the institution at which he or she participated in intercollegiate athletics;

(b) Is participating as a student-coach within the five-year eligibility period (see Bylaw 14.2);

(c) Is completing the requirements for his or her baccalaureate degree or graduate program;

(d) Is a full-time student (see Bylaws 14.1.8.2 and 14.1.8.2.1.4), unless during his or her final semester or quarter of the baccalaureate program, per Bylaw 14.1.8.2.1.3;

(e) Is receiving no compensation or remuneration from the institution other than the financial aid that could be received as a student-athlete and expenses incurred on road trips that are received by individual team members; and

(f) Is not involved in contacting and evaluating prospective student-athletes off campus or scouting opponents off campus and does not perform recruiting coordination functions (see Bylaw 11.7.1.2).

11.01.5 - Coach, Volunteer.
In sports other than football and basketball, a volunteer coach is any coach who does not receive compensation or remuneration from the institution's athletics department or any organization funded in whole or in part by the athletics department or that is involved primarily in the promotion of the institution's athletics program (e.g., booster club, athletics foundation association). The following provisions shall apply:

(a) The individual is prohibited from contacting and evaluating prospective student-athletes off campus or from scouting opponents off campus and may not perform recruiting coordination functions (see Bylaw 11.7.1.2).

(b) The individual may receive a maximum of two complimentary tickets to home athletics contests in the coach's sport.

(c) The individual may receive complimentary meals incidental to organized team activities (e.g., pre- or postgame meals, occasional meals, but not training table meals) or meals provided during a prospective student-athlete's official visit, provided the individual dines with the prospective student-athlete.

Bylaws

11.7.1.1 - Designation of Coaching Category.
An individual who coaches and either is uncompensated or receives compensation or remuneration of any sort from the institution, even if such compensation or remuneration is not designated for coaching, shall be designated as a head coach, assistant coach, volunteer coach, graduate assistant coach or student-assistant coach by certification of the institution.

11.7.1.1.1 - Countable Coach.
An athletics department staff member must count against coaching limits as soon as the individual participates (in any manner) in the coaching of the intercollegiate team in practice, games or organized activities directly related to that sport, including any organized staff activity directly related to the sport.

11.7.1.1.1.1 - Noncoaching Activities.
Institutional staff members involved in noncoaching activities (e.g., administrative assistants, academic counselors) do not count in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such individuals are not identified as coaches, do not engage in any on- or off-field coaching activities (e.g., attending meetings involving coaching activities, analyzing videotape or film involving the

institution's or an opponent's team), and are not involved in any off-campus recruitment of prospective student-athletes or scouting of opponents. A noncoaching staff member with sport-specific responsibilities may not participate with or observe student-athletes in the staff member's sport who are engaged in nonorganized voluntary athletically related activities (e.g., pick-up games).

11.7.1.2 - Recruiting Coordination Functions.
The following recruiting coordination functions (except related routine clerical tasks) must be performed by the head coach or one or more of the assistant coaches who count toward the numerical limitations in Bylaw 11.7.4:

(a) Activities involving athletics evaluations and/or selection of prospective student-athletes; and

(b) Making telephone calls to or receiving telephone calls from prospective student-athletes (or prospective student-athletes' parents, legal guardians or coaches).

11.7.1.2.1 - Exception -- Graduate Assistant Coach -- Bowl Subdivision Football and Women's Rowing.
In bowl subdivision football and women's rowing, a graduate-assistant coach may perform the functions set forth in Bylaw 11.7.1.2-(a) (on campus only) and 11.7.1.2-(b) if the coach has successfully completed the coaches' certification examination per Bylaw 11.5.1.1.

11.7.1.2.2 - Exception -- Noncoaching Staff Members and Noncountable Coaches -- After National Letter of Intent Signing or Other Written Commitment.
A noncoaching staff member or a coach who does not count toward the numerical limitations in Bylaw 11.7.4 may perform the functions set forth in Bylaw 11.7.1.2-(b) after the calendar day on which the prospective student-athlete has signed a National Letter of Intent. For an institution not using the National Letter of Intent in a particular sport, or for a prospective student-athlete who is not eligible to sign a National Letter of Intent (e.g., four-year college transfer), a noncoaching institutional staff member or a coach who does not count toward the numerical limitations in Bylaw 11.7.4 may perform the functions set forth in Bylaw 11.7.1.2-(b) after the calendar day on which the prospective student-athlete signs the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid.

11.7.4 - Limitations on Number of Coaches and Off-Campus Recruiters.
There shall be a limit on the number of coaches who may be employed by an institution and who may contact or evaluate prospective student-athletes off-campus at any one time in each sport (see specific bylaw for numbers).

11.7.4.2 - Exceptions to Number Limits.
No individual other than coaches designated to fill the coaching categories set forth in Bylaw 11.7.4 may participate in any manner in the coaching of the intercollegiate team of a member institution during any game, practice or other organized activity, with the following exceptions:

11.7.4.2.1 - Weight or Strength Coach.
A weight (strength and conditioning) coach may conduct flexibility, warm-up and physical conditioning activities prior to any game and prior to or during any practice or other organized activities without being included in the limitations on number of coaches.

11.7.4.2.2 - Coach, Student Assistant.
The limits on the number of coaches in this section do not apply to student assistant coaches (see Bylaw 11.01.4).

11.7.4.2.3 - Volunteer Coach.
In sports other than football, basketball, women's equestrian and women's rowing, a member institution may use the services of one volunteer coach (per Bylaw 11.01.5). Indoor track and field, outdoor track and field, and cross country are separate sports for purposes of this provision. In sports in which the NCAA conducts separate men's and women's championships, a combined men's and women's program may use two volunteer coaches.

11.7.4.2.3.1 - Volunteer Coach -- Women's Rowing.
In women's rowing, an institution may use the services of four volunteer coaches.

11.7.4.2.3.2 - Volunteer Coach -- Swimming and Diving.
An institution that conducts separate men's and women's swimming programs with a combined men's and women's diving program may employ three volunteer coaches, one for men's swimming, one for women's swimming and one for diving.

11.7.4.2.3.3 - Volunteer Coach -- Cross Country/Track and Field.
Institutions that conduct cross country, indoor track and field, or outdoor track and field as separate programs may use the services of one volunteer coach for each of the programs that it sponsors who may coach student-athletes in any of the three sports throughout the academic year.

11.7.4.2.3.4 - Volunteer Coach -- Track and Field -- Pole Vault.
An institution that competes in pole vault may use the services of one additional volunteer coach (to coach both genders), limited to coaching pole vault.

11.7.4.2.3.5 - Volunteer Coach -- Women's Equestrian.
In women's equestrian, an institution may use the services of one volunteer coach for the hunt seat riding discipline and one volunteer coach for the western riding discipline.

11.7.4.2.7 - Graduate Assistant Coach -- Women's Rowing.
In women's rowing, an institution may employ one graduate assistant coach (see Bylaw 11.01.3).

11.7.4.3 - Off-Campus Recruiting -- At Any One Time.
It is permissible for a coach to leave campus to engage in off-campus contact or evaluation before another coach who is off campus actually returns to campus, provided the total number of coaches recruiting on behalf of the institution at any time does not exceed the permissible number. The coach being replaced must complete his or her recruiting activities before another coach may begin any off-campus recruiting activity. Further, the replaced coach may not engage in additional recruiting activities until after he or she has returned to the institution's campus.

Current interpretations.

A. Noncoaching Athletics Department Staff Members with Sports-Specific Responsibilities Attending Banquets or Meetings
Date Issued: February 21, 2002
Official Interpretation
Item Ref: 3

A noncoaching staff member (e.g., administrative assistant, director of high school operations) with sport-specific responsibilities may not attend or speak at banquets and meetings that are conducted primarily to recognize prospects (e.g., high school awards banquet, high school all-star banquet).

[References: NCAA Bylaws 11.7.1.1.1 (countable coach), 11.7.1.1.1.1 (noncoaching activities), 11.7.5.2 (banquets or meetings), 13.1.2.1 (general rule), 13.1.2.1.1 (off-campus recruiters), 13.1.9 (banquets and meetings) and a 10/11/00 official interpretation, Item No.1 and a staff interpretation 02/03/93, item a.]

B. Noncoaching Athletics Department Staff Members with Sport-Specific Responsibilities (I)
Date Issued: October 11, 2000
Official Interpretation
Item Ref: 1

A noncoaching athletics department staff member with sport-specific responsibilities (e.g., basketball administrative assistant, director of football operations) may not attend any on- or off-campus athletics event (e.g., high-school contest, evaluation camp) in that sport in which prospective student-athletes are participating unless:

a. The staff member is an immediate family member (or legal guardian) of a prospect involved in the activity; or

b. The activity is a competition (as opposed to a camp) conducted in the locale of the institution.

In the case of (a) and (b) above, the staff member's attendance shall not be for evaluation purposes, the staff member shall not have direct contact with any prospect participating in the activity and the staff member shall not act as an institutional recruiter (e.g., by reporting back to the institution's coaching staff about the performance of a prospect, by speaking to a prospect's parents or coach).

[References: NCAA Bylaws 11.7.1.1.1 (countable coach), 11.7.1.1.1.1 (noncoaching activities), 11.7.4.3 (off-campus contact and evaluation of prospects), 13.1.2.1 (general rule), 13.1.2.1.1 (off-campus recruiters) and 13.1.2.2 (general exceptions)]

C. Countable coaches -- managers, outside consultants
Date Issued: February 11, 1993
Official Interpretation
Item Ref: 9

9. Countable coaches -- managers, outside consultants. A manager does not have to be included in the institution's limitations on countable coaches, provided the individual is a student who performs traditional managerial duties. The committee noted that it is not permissible to employ or utilize a manager for the purpose of being involved only in on-court or on-field activities (e.g., pitching batting practice) without including such an individual in the institution's coaching limitations in that sport. Further, an institution may not employ an outside consultant to observe institutional practice sessions and provide analysis of such sessions to coaching staff members without including the individual in the institution's coaching limitations in that sport.

[References: 11.7.1.1.1.1 (noncoaching activities) and 11.7.1.1.1.3 (use of outside consultants)]

D. Institutional Noncoaching Staff Member Sitting on Institution's Bench
Date Issued: November 19, 1997
Staff Interpretation
Item Ref: b

b. Institutional Noncoaching Staff Member Sitting on Institution's Bench. (I) The membership services staff confirmed that an institution, at its discretion, may permit a noncoaching staff member to sit on the bench during an institution's contest. However, the

institution is responsible for ensuring that the individual does not engage in coaching activities as set forth in NCAA Bylaw 11.7.1.1.1.1.

[Reference: 11.7.1.1.1.1 (noncoaching activities)]

E. Educational Column -NCAA Division I Bylaw 11.7 - Limitations on the Number and Duties of Coaches - Participation of Noncoaching Staff Members in Practice (I)
Date Issued: December 4, 2006
Date Published: December 4, 2006
Item Ref : 1

NCAA Division I institutions should note that any individual who participates in any manner in the coaching of a sport in practice, games or organized activities directly related to that sport must be counted as a coach as stipulated in the limitations for that sport in NCAA Division I Bylaw 11.7. In addition to competitive equity, the intent of the coaching limitations is to restrict the actual coaching of student-athletes to those individuals who are identified as coaches. Other athletics department staff members, including managers and noncoaching staff members with sport-specific responsibilities (e.g., administrative assistants, directors of operations), do not have to be identified as coaches provided they do not engage in any on- or off-field coaching activities and are not involved in recruiting activities.

Managers

The former NCAA Interpretations Committee clarified during its February 11, 1993 meeting that it is not permissible to hire a manager to perform only on-court or on-field activities (e.g., ball shagging, bounce-passing drills, throw batting practice). Nonstudent managers may not perform any on-court or on-field duties that could be considered coaching without counting in the coaching limitations stipulated in Bylaw 11.7. Student managers may perform limited on-court or on-field activities provided they also perform traditional managerial functions (e.g., run clock at practice, laundry, fill water bottles). Finally, under no circumstances can a manager provide skill instruction without being counted in the coaching limitations.

Noncoaching Staff Members with Sport-Specific Responsibilities

These individuals may not perform any on-court or on-field duties that could be considered coaching (e.g., ball shagging, bounce-passing drills, throw batting practice) without counting in the coaching limitations stipulated in Bylaw 11. For example, if a director of softball operations throws batting practice, the director of softball operations must be counted toward the coaching limitations in Bylaw 11 even if no skill instruction is provided. While noncoaching staff members with sport-specific responsibilities should not be involved in any

manner with practice activities, it is permissible for these individuals to observe practice without having to count toward the coaching limitations.

[References: Bylaw 11.7 (limitations on the number and duties of coaches), official interpretation (reference: 2/11/93, Item No. 9), and the 2004 Hot Topic #2]

Current legislative proposals.

2008-11-A PERSONNEL -- LIMITATIONS ON THE DUTIES OF COACHES -- NONCOACHING ACTIVITIES -- EXCEPTION -- STUDENT-MANAGERS -- BASEBALL -- UP TO FOUR -- NO ELIGIBILITY FOR COMPETITION IN THE SAME YEAR

Status: Legislative Council Initial Consideration

Intent: In baseball, to specify that up to four student-managers may be involved in on-field activities (e.g., catching in the bullpen, pitching batting practice, hitting fungoes, shagging balls) without counting in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such a student-manager participates in the activities within five years of his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment and does not provide instruction to student-athletes or engage in other coaching activities; further, to specify that a student-manager shall not be eligible for varsity intercollegiate competition in the same year in which the individual serves as a student-manager.

Bylaws: Amend 11.7.1.1.1, as follows:

11.7.1.1.1 Countable Coach. An athletics department staff member must count against coaching limits as soon as the individual participates (in any manner) in the coaching of the intercollegiate team in practice, games or organized activities directly related to that sport, including any organized staff activity directly related to the sport.

11.7.1.1.1.1 Noncoaching Activities. Institutional staff members involved in noncoaching activities (e.g., administrative assistants, academic counselors) do not count in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such individuals are not identified as coaches, do not engage in any on- or off-field coaching activities (e.g., attending meetings involving coaching activities, analyzing videotape or film involving the institution's or an opponent's team), and are not involved in any off-campus recruitment of prospective student-athletes or scouting of opponents. A noncoaching staff member with sport-specific responsibilities may not participate with or observe student-athletes in the staff member's sport who are engaged in nonorganized voluntary athletically related activities (e.g., pick-up games).

11.7.1.1.1.1.1 Exception -- Student-Managers -- Baseball. In baseball, up to four student-managers may be involved in on-field activities (e.g., catching in the bullpen, pitching batting

practice, hitting fungoes, shagging balls) without counting in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such a student-manager participates in the activities within five years of his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment and does not provide instruction to student-athletes or engage in other coaching activities. A student-manager shall not be eligible for varsity intercollegiate competition in the same year in which the individual serves as a student-manager.

[11.7.1.1.1.2 through 11.7.1.1.1.4 unchanged].

Source: Pacific-10 Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Proposal Category: Amendment

Topical Area: Personnel

Rationale: Routine on-field activities such as catching in the bullpen, pitching batting practice, hitting fungoes and shagging balls have been defined as on-field coaching activities, which must be performed by a countable coach. These duties could be performed by student managers, which would permit coaches to spend more time providing instruction to student-athletes. These activities are not inherently coaching, and no advantage exists if they are performed by a student manager. Similar activities in other sports (e.g., feeding balls to the quarterback in football drills, retrieving balls for shooters in basketball) are performed by student managers. Limiting such on-field activities to student managers who are within five years of their initial full-time collegiate enrollment would alleviate concerns that an institution may have former professional players or other nonstudents become "managers" and engage in countable coaching activities.

Estimated Budget Impact: None.

Impact on Student-Athlete's Time: None.

Position Statement(s):

Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet. The cabinet opposes the proposal. The cabinet expressed concern that the proposal does not limit the number of managers an institution could carry and participate in these activities. Further, the cabinet noted there are no restrictions regarding the eligibility of these individuals in subsequent years; therefore, the cabinet is concerned about potential tryouts for these individuals who could be eligible for competition in subsequent years. The cabinet suggested the sponsor consider establishing a limit on the number of permissible managers, clarifying the future eligibility options (if any) of these individuals and whether it would be appropriate to extend this proposal to include other sports.

History

Jun 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration.
Sep 19, 2008: Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, Recommends Defeat
Oct 14, 2008: Modified to limit the application to four student-managers per academic year and to clarify that a student-manager shall not be eligible for varsity intercollegiate competition in the same year in which the individual serves as a manager. Previously, the proposal had no limit on the number of student-managers.
Oct 26, 2008: Proposal renumbered as Proposal No. 2008-11-A. Alternatives are Proposal Nos. 2008-11-B and 2008-11-C.

2008-11-B PERSONNEL -- LIMITATIONS ON THE DUTIES OF COACHES -- NONCOACHING ACTIVITIES -- EXCEPTION -- STUDENT MANAGER -- BASEBALL -- NO MORE THAN TWO -- NO ELIGIBILITY FOR COMPETITION

Status: Legislative Council Initial Consideration

Intent: In baseball, to specify that no more than two student managers may be involved in on-field activities (e.g., catching in the bullpen, pitching batting practice, hitting fungoes, shagging balls) without counting in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such a student manager participates in the activities within five years of his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment and does not provide instruction to student-athletes or engage in other coaching activities; further, to specify that such a student manager shall be permanently ineligible for intercollegiate competition.

Bylaws: Amend 11.7.1.1.1, as follows:

11.7.1.1.1 Countable Coach. An athletics department staff member must count against coaching limits as soon as the individual participates (in any manner) in the coaching of the intercollegiate team in practice, games or organized activities directly related to that sport, including any organized staff activity directly related to the sport.

11.7.1.1.1.1 Noncoaching Activities. Institutional staff members involved in noncoaching activities (e.g., administrative assistants, recruiting coordinators in sports other than football, academic counselors) do not count in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such individuals are not identified as coaches, do not engage in any on- or off-field coaching activities (e.g., attending meetings involving coaching activities, analyzing videotape or film involving the institution's or an opponent's team), and are not involved in any off-campus recruitment of prospects or scouting of opponents. A noncoaching staff member with sport-specific responsibilities may not participate with or observe student-athletes in the staff member's sport who are engaged in nonorganized voluntary athletically related activities (e.g., pick-up games).

11.7.1.1.1.1.1 Exception -- Student-Managers -- Baseball. In baseball, no more than two student-managers may be involved in on-field activities (e.g., catching in the bullpen, pitching batting practice, hitting fungoes, shagging balls) without counting in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such a student manager participates in the activities within five years of his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment and does not provide instruction to student-athletes or engage in other coaching activities. An individual who serves as a student-manager shall be permanently ineligible for intercollegiate competition in baseball.

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Proposal Category: Amendment

Topical Area: Personnel

Rationale: This alternative proposal is intended to establish safeguards to minimize the use of the student-manager position for potential tryouts, which could also lead to runoff situations. These safeguards are consistent with the intent of the recent baseball reform package, which addressed the high rate of attrition in the sport by establishing a minimum equivalency value and a maximum squad-size limitation.

Estimated Budget Impact: None.

Impact on Student-Athlete's Time: None.

History
Oct 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal No. 2008-11-A.

2008-11-C PERSONNEL -- LIMITATIONS ON THE DUTIES OF COACHES -- NONCOACHING ACTIVITIES -- EXCEPTION -- STUDENT MANAGER -- BASEBALL -- NO MORE THAN TWO -- NO ELIGIBILITY FOR TWO YEARS

Status: Legislative Council Initial Consideration

Intent: In baseball, to specify that no more than two student managers may be involved in on-field activities (e.g., catching in the bullpen, pitching batting practice, hitting fungoes, shagging balls) without counting in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such a student manager participates in the activities within five years of his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment and does not provide instruction to student-athletes or engage in other coaching activities; further, to specify that individual who serves as a student-manager shall be ineligible for

intercollegiate competition in baseball for a two-year period after ceasing service as a student-manager.

Bylaws: Amend 11.7.1.1.1, as follows:

11.7.1.1.1 Countable Coach. An athletics department staff member must count against coaching limits as soon as the individual participates (in any manner) in the coaching of the intercollegiate team in practice, games or organized activities directly related to that sport, including any organized staff activity directly related to the sport.

11.7.1.1.1.1 Noncoaching Activities. Institutional staff members involved in noncoaching activities (e.g., administrative assistants, academic counselors) do not count in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such individuals are not identified as coaches, do not engage in any on- or off-field coaching activities (e.g., attending meetings involving coaching activities, analyzing videotape or film involving the institution's or an opponent's team), and are not involved in any off-campus recruitment of prospective student-athletes or scouting of opponents. A noncoaching staff member with sport-specific responsibilities may not participate with or observe student-athletes in the staff member's sport who are engaged in nonorganized voluntary athletically related activities (e.g., pick-up games).

11.7.1.1.1.1.1 Exception -- Student-Managers -- Baseball. In baseball, no more than two student-managers may be involved in on-field activities (e.g., catching in the bullpen, pitching batting practice, hitting fungoes, shagging balls) without counting in the institution's coaching limitations, provided such a student manager participates in the activities within five years of his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment and does not provide instruction to student-athletes or engage in other coaching activities. An individual who serves as a student-manager shall be ineligible for intercollegiate competition in baseball for a two-year period after ceasing service as a student-manager.

Source: Big Ten Conference.

Effective Date: Immediate

Proposal Category: Amendment

Topical Area: Personnel

Rationale: This alternative proposal is intended to establish safeguards to minimize the use of the student-manager position for potential tryouts, which could also lead to runoff situations. These safeguards are consistent with the intent of the recent baseball reform package, which addressed the high rate of attrition in the sport by establishing a minimum equivalency value and a maximum squad-size limitation.

Estimated Budget Impact: None.

Impact on Student-Athlete's Time: None.

History

Oct 26, 2008: Submit; Submitted for consideration as an alternative to Proposal Nos. 2008-11-A and 2008-B.

Current practices and realities.

1. Many noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities use their employment as a foundation for a future coaching career. These positions can be a way to break into the coaching industry.

2. There is a lack of uniformity in the duties performed by noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities across the membership.

3. There is a proliferation of noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities, especially at high resource institutions. For example, many Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) football programs have six to 10 noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities (e.g., director of operations, director of player development, director of student-athlete development, director of high school relations, special assistant to head coach, quality control coordinator) in addition to the 10 permissible countable coaches and two graduate assistants. In contrast, other football programs have less than the maximum number of countable coaches and few, if any, noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities. For example, some football programs have no more than a total of eight staff members, including countable coaches, graduate assistants and administrative assistants on their staff.

4. It is difficult for institutions to monitor whether noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities engage in impermissible coaching activities because compliance personnel are usually not in attendance during coaches meetings or practice nor on the sidelines or bench during games.

5. There appears to be a lack of enforcement regarding impermissible actions by noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities, due in large part to the difficulty in monitoring and lack of a definitive list of duties. It is possible this lack of enforcement has lead to unwillingness by institutions to monitor this area. If institutions are not being penalized, then institutions are potentially directing their time and resources to other areas.

Points to consider.

1. Under current legislation, managers are considered noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities, but consideration should be given to whether separate legislation should apply.

2. While the December 4, 2006 educational column and some interpretations provide guidance, there is not a definitive list of permissible and nonpermissible activities for noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities, including managers. While the membership has called for a specific list to be issued in the past, it is likely not possible to create an exhaustive list. The absence of a clearly defined list has, in part, contributed to the inconsistent application of the legislation across the membership.

3. The NCAA's legal authority to limit the number of coaches employed by an institution in a particular sport was broadly upheld in *Hennessey v. NCAA*. However, any limits related to employment must be carefully scrutinized for potential legal implications. Any legislation to limit employment should be based on solid principles, such as preserving competitive equity and the collegiate model of athletics, and should be fully vetted to determine if it is the least restrictive measure to accomplish the desired outcome.

Potential concepts for future legislation.

1. Further restrict the duties of noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities by prohibiting their participation in practice and game activities. (e.g., could not attend practice, sit on bench during games).

2. Restrict the number of permissible noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities and expand their responsibilities to include watching film and participation in coaches meetings. However, it would remain impermissible for these individuals to be identified as coaches; therefore, they could not provide instruction to student-athletes or participate in off-campus recruiting activities.

3. Create a separate definition of a manager to distinguish them from other noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities.

4. Restrict managers to individuals that are full-time students and expand their responsibilities.

5. Provide all sports with the opportunity to use graduate assistant coaches that are permitted to participate in coaching activities thereby establishing a method for professional development of new coaches through positions that are tied to continued education, consistent with other parts of academia.

6. Increase the number of volunteer coaches.

7. Permit the sports of basketball and football to have volunteer coaches.

8. Increase the number of countable coaches with restricted responsibilities in each sport.

Other potential next steps.

The cabinet may wish to collect data on the numbers and duties of coaches, noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities, volunteer coaches, graduate assistants and managers to inform their examination of this area. Accordingly, the cabinet may elect to survey various coaches associations, the Collegiate Commissioners Association Compliance Administrators (CCACA) and the National Association of Athletics Compliance (NAAC) to gather this information from the perspective of coaches and administrators charged with applying and monitoring this legislation. Such a survey may ask:

- The number of noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities and managers currently used by institution, by sport (and subdivision).

- The duties and responsibilities commonly assigned to noncoaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities and managers by institution and by sport (and subdivision).

- What type of model would be appropriate to effectively address this area?

Staff recommendation.

The staff believes the cabinet should engage in an initial discussion in February to further explore its concerns with the issues raised in this document. A substantive discussion may help identify a future strategy and priorities in which to address these issues. Following this discussion, a focused survey of various constituencies would also be helpful in determining what, if any, legislative changes are needed. A survey could be created and distributed with results and feedback for the cabinet's June 2009 meeting. The cabinet could make initial legislative recommendations at that time for consideration in the 2009-10 legislative cycle and could concurrently continue its examination throughout the 2009-10 academic year with other potential legislation for the 2010-11 legislative cycle.

History of Recruiting Materials Legislation

Listed below are some key proposals and interpretations outlining the history of legislation related to recruiting materials. This is an area that has been subject to several legislative changes over the years and continues to attract attention with the advances in technology.

- 1978-79 NCAA Manual. Case No. 164 asks whether it is permissible for an institution to provide certain printed recruiting aids (i.e., press guides, recruiting brochures, game programs and athletic department calendars) to a prospective student-athlete or to a high school or junior college coach. The answer provided states that it is permissible, with the understanding that each of these items are regularly published by the institution for distribution to the media or to individuals or business organization supporting the athletics program. Any other tangible recruiting aid would not be permissible. This case remains (although later listed as Case No. 184) in the manual until legislation is amended at the 1986 NCAA Convention.

- 1986 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 48. This proposal sought to legislate the materials in the existing Case No. 184 along with the addition of official academic, admissions and student services publications published by the institution and available to all students, an annual schedule poster per sport and materials produced for and distributed solely to student-athletes (e.g., student-athlete policy manuals, team rules). This proposal was adopted.

- 1987 NCAA Convention, Proposal Nos. 88 and 88-1. Proposal No. 88 intended to limit the size and use of color in press guides and recruiting brochures. The amendment, Proposal No. 88-1, intended to limit only the use of color in these publications. The rationale for this proposal, as noted in the motion on the floor, was to cut printing costs. The legislation was adopted as amended.

- 1988 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 118. This proposal sought to add specific printed items to the permissible list, most of which were already made permissible through existing interpretations. These additional items included: drug-testing information; summer-camp brochures; greeting cards; general correspondence, including cards and letters; newspaper clippings and weight-lifting program information to prospective student-athletes who had signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI). This proposal was adopted.

- 1989 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 99. This proposal limited institutions in providing either a press guide or a recruiting brochure to prospective student-athletes. It also eliminated game programs as a permissible item and permitted institutions to provide a student-athlete handbook (with only one color of printing throughout) to prospective student-athletes. This proposal was adopted. The rationale cited during the motion on the floor stated the duplication of efforts and costs in producing and sending both a media guide and recruiting brochure. This proposal was adopted

- 1990 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 112. This proposal permitted institutions to provide pre-enrollment information regarding orientation, conditioning, academics and practice activities to prospective student-athletes who had signed an NLI or been accepted by an institution that did not subscribe to the NLI. Previously, only weightlifting information was permitted under the existing legislation. This proposal was adopted. This proposal is the initial expansion of materials considered to be pre-enrollment information.

- 1991 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 23. This proposal included many items including:

  - Established a date (i.e., September 1 beginning of the prospective student-athlete's junior year of high school) before which it was not permissible to provide printed recruiting materials;
  - Restricted institutions to producing either a media guide or recruiting brochure;
  - Prohibited greeting cards, special postcards or highlight films from being sent to a prospective student-athlete;
  - Restricted printing on institutional stationery and press releases to one color of printing;
  - Prohibited the use of photos of enrolled student-athletes, institutional staff or other promotional items on institutional stationery;
  - Prohibited personalized recruiting videotapes or audiotapes; and
  - Limited institutions to producing one generic all-sports recruiting videotape per year, with a maximum of three minutes per sport.

  This proposal was developed by the NCAA Council's Special Committee on Cost Reduction. The rationale for this proposal cited a reduction in both printing and mailing costs, noting the cost savings would be substantial for some institutions. Additionally, the rationale noted the excess provision of materials, use of colors in photographs and text and proliferation of single-sport recruiting videotapes. In summary, the sponsor noted this proposal would bring common sense to this area, resulting in cost savings and reduced pressure on institutions to keep pace with the activities of others. This proposal was adopted. This is the first appearance of legislation related to highlight films and recruiting videotapes.

- 1992 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. I-19. This interpretation for incorporation was expansive, including several interpretations along with a reorganization of Bylaw 13.4.1. Many of the interpretations cited were issued following the adoption of 1991 Proposal No. 23. This interpretation included specifics on institutional stationery (e.g., color of printing, embossed stationary, foil printing, graphics, use of logo).

- 1992 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 139. This proposal permitted institutions to use two colors (as opposed to one) of printing on institutional stationery. The rationale noted many institutions have two official colors and this expansion would not be contrary to the original legislation's intent of cost savings. This proposal was adopted.

- 1993 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 123. This proposal sought to eliminate the limitations on institutional stationery that were added under 1991 Proposal No. 23 and the 1992 Proposal No. I-19. The rationale and discussion on the floor noted that while the restrictions in the original legislation were intended to contain and reduce costs, it had not done so and had also resulted in interpretive minutiae. Further, this proposal was designed to be a first step towards deregulation of the recruiting materials legislation. This proposal was adopted.

- 1994 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 40. This proposal was part of a recruiting deregulation package sponsored by the NCAA Council. This proposal was sponsored to address the significant number of regulations in Bylaw 13 which was the cause and result of several interpretations. The rationale noted the original intent of regulation to reduce costs had not been achieved. The nonpermissible list of materials was eliminated such that only those items in the permissible list could be provided. Further, the list of permissible items was reduced as certain items were eliminated (e.g., newspaper clippings, promotional handbills, schedule cards, student-athlete handbook). This proposal was adopted as amended by Proposal No. 40-1 (retained game programs and athletics publications).

- 1995 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 125 and 126. Proposal No. 125 reinstated the student-athlete handbook as a permissible printed recruiting item during official or unofficial visits while Proposal No. 126 introduced attachments to general correspondence. The rationale for attachments printed on white paper with black ink was to provide newspaper articles and other existing information to prospective student-athletes via photocopy at low cost and without having to recreate them just so they could be provided to PSAs. These proposals were adopted.

- 1996 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 105. This proposal introduced the use of electronic mail and facsimiles to the legislation, indicating these types of communication should be considered general correspondence rather than telephone calls. The rationale cited the advancements in technology as a cost-effective method when compared to sending information via mail or courier along with the difference in intrusion of electronic mail compared to a telephone call. This proposal was adopted.

- 1997 NCAA Convention, Proposal No. 107. This proposal permitted institutions to send a student-athlete handbook to a prospective student-athlete who has signed a NLI or been accepted for enrollment. Previously, the provision of this item was only permissible during official or unofficial visits.

- Proposal No. 1999-101. This proposal specified that prearranged electronically transmitted correspondence (e.g., chat rooms) and any electronic correspondence sent by “instant messenger” shall be considered a telephone call as opposed to an electronic transmission under Bylaw 13.4.1. The rationale cited the interactive nature of these communication

methods were more intrusive, therefore, should be restricted along with telephone calls to reduce the pressure on prospective student-athletes to participate on a regular basis. This proposal was sponsored by the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet Subcommittee on Recruiting (hereafter referred to as the cabinet) and was adopted.

- Incorporation of a September 6, 2000 official interpretation. This interpretation indicated that color attachments may be included with electronic correspondence.

- Proposal No. 2001-76 (as amended by Proposal No. 76-1). These proposals eliminated restrictions on the content and design of camp brochures and included only a restriction on size (17" x 22" when opened in full). This proposal was adopted as amended.

- Proposal No. 2003-32. This proposal reorganized parts of Bylaw 13.4. It was referred back to the cabinet after the 2004-05 legislative cycle. As a result, the inclusion of athletics publications was added back to the list of permissible items. Further, this proposal separated electronic transmissions into its own subset of Bylaw 13.4 (Bylaw 13.4.1.2) rather than being included with printed materials (Bylaw 13.4.1.1). It also permitted institutions to post other recruiting materials to its Web site, provided they were not given to prospective student-athletes. This proposal was adopted.

- Proposal No. 2003-34. This proposal sought to clarify how technological advances related to communication should be treated such that methods involving direct human interaction voice exchange should be considered telephone calls while all other forms of electronically transmitted correspondence (e.g., electronic mail, text messaging, instant messaging) should be considered general correspondence. This proposal was sponsored by the cabinet and was adopted.

- Incorporation of a December 13, 2005 official interpretation. This interpretation specified that attachments to general correspondence could not be created for a recruiting purpose. This interpretation was later incorporated.

- Proposal No. 2006-39. This proposal sought to create a consistent standard for institutional note cards as they had become larger and more elaborate over the years. The consistent standard minimizes costs in printing and mailing and limits advantages gained by institutions with resources to create unregulated note cards. This proposal was sponsored by the cabinet and was adopted.

- Proposal No. 2006-40. This proposal restricted the forms of electronically transmitted correspondence to electronic mail and facsimiles. For example, it eliminated the use of text messaging and instant messaging when communicating with prospective student-athletes. This proposal was adopted and a vote to override the legislation failed.
- Proposal No. 2006-43. This proposal permitted institutions to create computer recruiting presentations to show to prospective student-athletes during home visits and during official and unofficial visits. The rationale noted the advancements in technology and availability of

this presentation software had minimized any advantages that existed when this technology was initially introduced. Restrictions on the use of audio and video continue to apply. This proposal was adopted. This legislation was amended one year later with Proposal No. 2007-48 which permitted institutions to show these presentations at the site of any contact and post them on the institution's Web site.

- Proposal No. 2007-47. This proposal permitted institutions to use any form of electronically transmitted correspondence when communicating with prospective student-athletes who have signed an NLI [or on the calendar after a prospective student-athlete's written offer of financial aid or admission for those institutions not using the NLI or those prospective student-athletes not eligible (e.g., four-year transfer)].

- Proposal No. 2008-22. This proposal intended to place size and content restrictions on institutional postcards similar to those on institutional note cards. The rationale noted the confusion that exists in distinguishing between an institutional note card and an institutional postcard along with the lower costs in sending postcards. This proposal was adopted.

- Proposal No. 2008-23. This proposal permitted institutions to use any form of electronically transmitted correspondence when communicating with prospective student-athletes on or after May 1 of their senior year, provided the institution has received a room or tuition deposit in response to an offer of admissions. This proposal was adopted.

- Proposal No. 2008-24. This proposal permitted institutions to provide general information (e.g., not created for a recruiting purpose) on an institution's Web site to a prospective student-athlete via regular mail as an attachment to general correspondence, via electronic mail as an attachment or hyperlink or during any on- or off-campus contact. This proposal was adopted.

SUPPLEMENT NO. 9-b

Examination of Recruiting Legislation and Impact of Technology

Background

NCAA Division I Bylaw 13.4 governs recruiting materials, including printed recruiting materials (Bylaw 13.4.1.1), electronic transmissions (Bylaw 13.4.1.2) and video/audio materials (Bylaw 13.4.2). The nature of the recruiting environment is such that coaches and institutions continually search for any advantage that might be gained, including in the area of recruiting materials. The general intent of the recruiting materials legislation was and, continues to be, to minimize the recruiting advantages gained and the "keeping up with the Joneses" approach to items such as media guides, postcards, note cards, etc. by placing restrictions on items to help ensure consistency. Equally as important is the fact that this legislation is designed to minimize the intrusion to prospective student-athletes. Despite the intent, the current recruiting culture has resulted in an environment in which compliance administrators are constantly seeking interpretive guidance as it relates to these items, often dealing with minutia such as:

- Whether an institutional note card may be in the shape of a football;
- Whether a coach may use his or her own printer to print a picture of a soccer ball on a postcard; and
- Whether a video tour of the new softball locker room is a recruiting video.

With the advances in technology, including the evolution of the Internet and online video, many of the original concerns that led to the restrictions in this area have been significantly minimized or eliminated. For instance, an institution's Web site and athletics department Web site can now house an unlimited amount of information and can be immediately updated. Further, the type of information (e.g., text, audio, video) included on Web sites can now be created, uploaded and accessed with little regard to cost. The advent of video-share Web sites (e.g., YouTube, Veoh) and many niche Web sites such as those dedicated to specific sports or athletics in general, have created other avenues of content delivery to the general public.

Despite the frequent changes in legislation in this area, it has become clear that the changes in technology outpace the changes in legislation which often makes new legislation outdated or unable to address technological advances. Because technology often increases effectiveness, reduces cost and is becoming increasingly user-generated, it may be appropriate for the membership to consider amending the legislation in this area to be less specific and more flexible to the dynamic technological environment while still adhering to the Association's principles of recruiting.

Areas to Examine	
Printed materials.	Types of materials.
	Distribution of materials.
Videos.	Types of videos (e.g., general informational, recruiting).
	Types of videos (e.g., general
	Location of videos
	Distribution of videos.
	Prospective student-athlete videos (e.g., recruiting service, sports-based social networking Web sites).
Recipients.	Prospective student-athletes.
	Parents and/or legal guardians.
	Individuals associated with a prospective student-athlete, but not a parent or legal guardian and not a coach of the prospective student-athlete.
	Individuals responsible for teaching or directing a prospective student-athlete's activities (e.g., high school coach, club team coach).
Web site content.	Institutional.
	Noninstitutional.
Communication methods.	Telephone calls.
	New technology (e.g., electronic mail, video chat, instant messaging, text, social networking Web sites, recruiting Web sites).
	Contacts.
	Materials (sent via regular mail, electronic mail).
Communication frequency and timelines.	New technology.
	Telephone calls.
	Distribution of materials (sent via regular mail, electronic mail).

Suggested Stages of Examination		
Stage I	Stage II	Stage III
Printed materials	Recruiting services.	Communication methods.
Web content.	Sports-based social networking Web sites	Communication frequency and timelines.
Videos.		
Recipients.		

Possible next steps

- Establish priorities for recruiting materials and communication to guide examination.
- Gather information from internal and external constituencies including, but not limited to other governance (e.g., Student-Athlete Advisory Committee) and sport committees; coaches associations; Collegiate Commissioners Association Compliance Administrators; National Association Athletics Compliance and the prospective student-athlete community.
- Study new technology as it develops including operations, cost and availability.
- Identify areas for further study or research.

Review of Recreational Activities Legislation
Discussion Document

Background.

During its October 2008 meeting, the NCAA Division I Legislative Council requested the NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet examine the history of NCAA Division I Bylaw 13.11.2.2 (recreational activities) compared with the current practice of recreational activities during official visits. The council expressed concern that today's activities have expanded beyond the original intent of the legislation.

Legislative History.

1994 NCAA Convention Proposal No. 167 was adopted in Division I during the 1994 Convention to permit a prospective student-athlete (PSA) visiting a Division I institution to participate in physical workouts or recreational activities during a visit even if the activities involve a sport for which the PSA is being recruited. The proposal carried an immediate effective date and maintained previous restrictions regarding the activities not being organized or observed by coaches and not designed to test the athletics ability of the PSA. Previously, Division I PSAs were prohibited from engaging in physical workouts or recreational activities that involved any sport for which they were being recruited. The rationale for the proposal indicated that PSAs often need and want to continue their regular physical workouts or recreational activities during a visit to campus and should be allowed to do so, even in the sport for which they are being recruited, as long as coaching staff members do not organize or observe the activities.

Soon after this change in the legislation, the staff confirmed in an October 5, 1994, interpretation that a PSA may arrange and engage in a "pick-up" game with the institution's current and former student-athletes provided the following conditions are met:

1. All arrangements for the game are initiated by the PSA;

2. If the institution's facilities are being used, the facilities must be open to the public; and

3. No recruitment activities occur.

Further, an August 25, 1994, official interpretation also notes that an institution may not provide workout apparel to a PSA who participates in recreational activities during a visit to the institution's campus.

No additional interpretations in this area specific to recreational activities (as opposed to weightlifting and conditioning activities in the presence of an institution's strength and conditioning coach) were formally issued until a September 4, 2008, staff interpretation

determined that a PSA may participate in recreational activities during an official or unofficial visit in a facility not open to the general public provided they are not organized or observed by athletics department coaching staff, including strength and conditioning coaches, and are not designed to test the athletics abilities of the PSA.

Current Application and Issues.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the "pick-up" games referenced above are being organized and conducted in a manner where they are being observed by large public crowds, especially in the sport of basketball. While it is clear that coaching staff members cannot be involved in the organization of any recreational activities per Bylaw 13.11.2.2, how these games are arranged and how spectators become aware of the activities is unclear. One option is that the PSA is initiating the "pick-up" game directly with current student-athletes and they are finding an open time to get on a court in the campus recreational center or team practice facility. Another option is that the PSA is requesting the arrangement of a pick-up game with current student-athletes and a noncoaching athletic staff member with sport-specific responsibilities (e.g., director of basketball operations) organizes and schedules the activity.

As noted above, some of these activities are occurring in the presence of spectators from the general public. While Bylaw 13.10.5 prohibits institutions from publicizing, or arranging for the publicity of, a PSA's visit to campus, increased media attention and involvement of recruiting and scouting services often provide notification of a PSA's visit to campus. Subsequently, it is not uncommon for members of the general student body or general public to organize these activities on behalf of the PSA. Therefore, the gathering of spectators may occur without the involvement of institutional staff. Depending on the size of the crowd and facility being used, the safety of the PSA and participating student-athletes is sometimes in jeopardy, which is a rationale for the September 4, 2008, staff interpretation. Furthermore, the presence of a crowd creates a celebrity atmosphere around the PSA's visit that is contrary to the efforts and standards set forth by the former NCAA Division I Recruiting Task Force, which sought, in part, to minimize this celebrity effect.

Questions to Consider.

1. Did the original legislation intend for these recreational activities to occur only with currently enrolled student-athletes?

2. Are there concerns that non coaching staff members with sport specific responsibilities (e.g., director of basketball operations) may organize these activities once the request has been initiated by the PSA?

3. Are there concerns with the general public attending these recreational activities without violating the publicity legislation in Bylaw 13.10 that prohibits a member institution from publicizing a PSA's visit to the institution's campus?

4. Does it matter how the general public becomes aware of the activity (e.g., whether any institutional staff member is involved in alerting the public to the "pick-up" game or whether observance of the game in progress creates word of mouth alerts and a spontaneously growing crowd)?

Potential Solutions to Consider.

1. Propose legislation to preclude noncoaching staff members with sport-specific responsibilities from being involved with recreational activities, including the organization and observation of the activities, regardless of location.

2. Propose legislation to permit recreational activities to occur only in a facility not open to the general public, provided there is no involvement by coaches or noncoaching staff members with sport-specific responsibilities, including the organization and observation of the activities.

3. Maintain status quo. Current legislation and interpretations satisfactorily address the issue.

Referenced Bylaws, Interpretations and Proposals.

Bylaw 13.10.5 Prospective Student-Athlete's Visit.

A member institution shall not publicize (or arrange for publicity of) a prospective student-athlete's visit to the institution's campus. Further, a prospective student-athlete may not participate in team activities that would make the public or media aware of the prospective student-athlete's visit to the institution (e.g., running out of the tunnel with team, celebratory walks to or around the stadium/arena, on-field pregame celebrations). Violations of this bylaw do not affect a prospective student-athlete's eligibility and are considered institutional violations per Constitution 2.8.1. *(Revised: 1/14/97, 9/12/03)*

Bylaw 13.11.2.2 Recreational Activities**.**

A prospective student-athlete visiting a member institution may participate in physical workouts or other recreational activities during a visit to an institution's campus, provided such activities: (a) Are not organized or observed by members of the athletics department coaching staff; and (b) Are not designed to test the athletics abilities of the prospective student-athlete. *(Revised: 1/11/94)*

Recreational Activities During an Official or Unofficial Visit (I).

Date Issued: September 4, 2008
Date Published: September 4, 2008
Item Ref: a

The membership services staff determined that during an official or unofficial visit a prospective student-athlete may participate in recreational activities in a facility that is not open to the general public (e.g., facility reserved for student-athletes to participate in voluntary activities), provided such activities are not organized or observed by members of the athletics department coaching staff (including strength and conditioning coaches) and are not designed to test the athletics abilities of the prospective student-athlete.

[Reference: NCAA Division I Bylaw 13.11.2.2 (recreational activities)]

See Also
Issued by Staff 8/13/08
Approved by LRIC 8/27/08

Prospective Student-Athlete Arranging 'Pick-Up' Game with Enrolled or Former Student-Athlete.

Date Issued: October 5, 1994
Date Published: October 5, 1994
Item Ref: c

c. Prospective Student-Athlete Arranging 'Pick-Up' Game with Enrolled or Former Student-Athlete: The legislative services staff confirmed that it is permissible for a prospective student-athlete to arrange a 'pick-up' game with an enrolled student-athlete or a former student-athlete, provided all the arrangements are initiated by the prospect, the facilities are open to the general public if the institution's facilities are used and no recruitment activities occur. [References: 13.12.1 (tryouts -- prohibited activities); 13.12.2.3 (recreational activities), and 1994 Official Notice, Proposal No. 167]

See Also
1994 Convention Proposal No. 167

Providing Workout Apparel to a Prospect During Campus Visits.

Date Issued: August 25, 1994
Date Published: August 25, 1994
Item Ref: 2

2. Providing workout apparel to a prospect during campus visits: An institution may not provide workout apparel to a prospect who wishes to participate in recreational activities during a visit to an institution's campus. [References: NCAA Bylaws 13.12.2.3 (recreational activities) and 13.2.1 (offers and inducements -- general regulations)]

See Also
1994 Convention Proposal No. 167

VISITS – PARTICIPATION BY PROSPECT IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Intent: To permit a prospect visiting a Division I institution to participate in physical workouts or recreational activities during a visit even if the activities involve a sport for which the prospect is being recruited.

Bylaws: Amend 13.12.2.3, page 102, as follows:
[Division I only]

> "13.12.2.3 Recreational Activities. A prospect visiting a Division I or Division III institution may participate in physical workouts or other recreational activities during a visit to an institution's campus, provided such activities:
>
> *"(a)* *In Division I only, do not involve any sport for which the prospect is being recruited regardless of whether the institution's facilities are open at the time for use by the student body or general public;*
>
> *"(b)* **(a)** Are not organized or observed by members of the athletic department coaching staff; and
>
> *"(c)* **(b)** Are not designed to test the athletics abilities of the prospect *for recruiting purposes*."

Source: NCAA Council (Legislative Review Committee).

Effective Date: Immediately.

Rationale: Prospects often need and want to continue their regular physical workouts or recreational activities during a visit to campus and should be allowed to do so, even in the sport for which they are being recruited, provided coaching staff members do not organize or observe the activities.

Sponsor: Ivy League

Title: Exception to National Letter of Intent Signing Date Dead Period – Fencing

Intent: To provide an exception to the National Letter of Intent Signing Date dead period in fencing when the dead period occurs during the North American Cup Fencing Championship.

Text: 30.10.10.1 National Letter of Intent Signing Date. Monday through Thursday of the week that includes the fall or spring signing of the National Letter of Intent in the applicable sport.

> 30.11.10.1.1 Exception – U.S. Diving National Championship. When the dead period for recruiting occurs during the U.S. Diving National Championships, it shall be permissible to observe prospective student-athletes participating in that event.
>
> **<u>Add New 30.11.10.1.2:</u>**
>
> **30.11.10.1.2 Exception – U.S. Fencing North American Cup Tournament. When the dead period for recruiting occurs during the U.S. Fencing North American Cup Tournament, it shall be permissible to observe prospective student-athletes participating in that event.**

Rationale: As provided in bylaw 30.10.10.1.1 for the sport of diving, the fencing community seeks an exception to provide the opportunity for coaches to attend an elite tournament sponsored by the sport's National Governing Body and unrelated to recruiting, regardless of whether or not it overlaps with an NCAA dead period.

The North American Cup is an elite fencing tournament for Junior (under 20), Cadet (under 17) and Youth-14 age group conducted by the United States Fencing Association. As one of a limited number of Cup events in fencing, this tournament draws over 2000 athletes from all over North America to compete and earn cup-points. These points are what determine athletes' eligibility for national teams that represent the US in World Cup competition. The tournament is scheduled over the three day Veteran's day weekend so that students will be able to attend without missing school. In some years, including the last two years, this event has coincided with the start of the National Letter of Intent dead period, meaning it was impermissible for coaches to attend on Monday, the final day of the event.

In addition to the college coaches losing a cost effective evaluation opportunity (most coaches travel there and attend for the permissible time period), this is also problematic for the operation of the event. Unlike in other sports, the elite coaches and officials in fencing are very often one and the same. College coaches are an essential group of

volunteer talent within USFA and typically make up a significant portion of the referee cadre for every event the USFA holds. If college coaches are not available to officiate at an event it leaves very few qualified officials to officiate, particularly at an elite level tournament such as this.

In 2007, on behalf of all NCAA fencing coaches, the Ivy League requested and was granted a waiver to permit NCAA coaches who were officiating at the North American Cup during the final date, which also fell during the NLOI dead period, to be able to honor their officiating commitments, which were made prior to the publication of the NLOI signing date and dead period. In 2008, on behalf of all NCAA fencing coaches, the Ivy League again sought relief of Bylaw 30.10.10.1 to allow all NCAA coaches to attend the final day of competition of the NAC on Monday, November 10, 2008. This time the waiver permitted all coaches to evaluate at the event in order to negate any perceived recruiting advantage a coach might have by being in attendance at the event that day.

We now understand that this conflict will exist only when Veteran's Day weekend falls on the weekend prior to the 2nd Thursday in November (the traditional NLOI signing date). To the best of our knowledge, the conflict will exist in 2009 and 2010, not in 2011 and 2012, and will exist again in 2013.

North American Cup Tournament Dates	NLOI Signing Date	Dead period begins
November 6-**9**, 2009 (Fri-Mon)	11/12/09	**11/9/09**
November 5-**8**, 2010 (Fri-Mon)	11/11/10	**11/8/10**
November 11-14, 2011 (Fri-Mon) 11/10	*11/10/11*	*11/7/11*
November 9-12, 2012 (Fri-Mon) 11/8	*11/8/12*	*11/5/12*
November 8-**11**, 2013 (Fri-Mon) 11/14	11/14/13	**11/11/13**

In order to avoid the need for future waiver requests, we are seeking to change the legislation to provide for a permanent exception.

The Ivy League submits that this proposed change in the legislation meets the standard as both emergency and non-controversial. It is our understanding that the NCAA fencing coaches are unanimous in their desire to have all coaches attend the North American Cup tournament final date of competition every year. This will accommodate coaches' evaluation opportunities, but more importantly will enable the top officials to work at the event. It is necessary for this to be adopted now rather than in the normal legislative cycle because the conflict exists in November 2009 and the normal course of legislation would not permit adoption until January 2010 at the earliest.

December 10, 2008

Dear NCAA Recruiting Cabinet:

As President of the American Women's Hockey Coaches Association, I am writing to you asking for your support in sponsoring emergency legislation for the sport of women's ice hockey.

Proposal: The sport of women's ice hockey is proposing that off-campus recruiting and telephone contacts shall not be made with a prospective student-athlete or the prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardian before July 7 following the prospective student-athlete's completion of the junior year in high school. Furthermore, in the month of July, the one permissible telephone contact to international prospective student-athletes after their sophomore year, shall not be permissible until July 7.

Current Rule: NCAA 13.1.1.1 Off-campus recruiting contacts shall not be made with a prospective student-athlete or the prospective student-athlete's relatives or legal guardian(s) before July 1 following the prospective student-athlete's completion of the junior year in high school.

Vote: motion proposed at the 2008 American Women's Hockey Coaches Association Convention by St. Cloud University Head Coach, Jeff Giesen. The motion was seconded by Providence College Head Coach, Bob Deraney. The women's ice hockey coaching body voted: 34 possible votes - 29 voted in favor, 3 abstained, 0 against, 2 not present.

Rationale: The implementation of this legislation would allow prospective student-athletes and college coaches to enjoy holidays (Canada Day, 4th of July) with family and friends, not having to worry about receiving/making phone calls or home visits. This would also help promote some family time for prospective student-athletes, college coaches, and their families, before the major recruiting season starts.

Thank you for your consideration,

Katie King
President
American Women's Hockey Coaches Association
Head Coach - Boston College

CC:
Carolyn Campbell-McGovern-Ivy Group
Gene DeFilippo-Boston College Director of Athletics
Jerome Rodgers-Boston College Associate AD/Compliance
Bob Taggart-Boston College-Academic Liaison
Jody Mooradian-Boston College Senior Associate AD/SW Admin
Thomas Peters-Boston College Associate AD
Shane Lyons, ACC Assistant Commissioner for Compliance and Governance
Joseph Bertagna, Executive Director AHCA, Commissioner of HE Conference

AMERICAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY COACHES ASSOCIATION

December 10, 2008

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Recruiting and Video Services

Background

NCAA Division I Bylaws 13.14.3.1 and 13.4.3.2 govern the use of recruiting and video services by member institutions.

Since this legislation was originally adopted, the landscape of recruiting and video services has evolved. There has been a proliferation in the number of entities offering these services as the interest by prospective student-athletes (and their parents/legal guardians) in using these services has grown along with the increased interest in recruiting activities generally by the public and media. Further, the advances in technology have significantly altered how recruiting and video services operate, including how content is received, accessed and delivered. For instance, the use of online services permit prospective student-athlete to submit biographical information and video at any time and in unlimited quantities. Accordingly, coaches have access to this information immediately. In addition, there is a growing number of social networking Web sites dedicated to high school sports and prospective student-athletes in order to create a community where individuals may communicate, socialize, share experiences and learn from their peers. While some of these Web sites may not intend to be recruiting or video services, some of the features or services provided function like a traditional recruiting or video service. For example, a prospective student-athlete could create a profile and upload photos, videos and statistical information to share with others who are members of the social networking Web site.

The general intent of the original legislation was to minimize the recruiting advantage gained by those institutions that use these services by ensuring the same information is available to all institutions and that all institutions pay the same rate. This precludes institutions from developing an exclusive relationship with an outside entity to obtain information that is not otherwise available to all institutions. Further, this legislation was adopted when virtually all recruiting and video services charged for their services. With the variety of delivery methods and relatively low cost associated with using online methods, the same information for which coaches used to pay, is now available at no charge through some mechanisms not intended to be identified as a recruiting service (e.g., social networking Web site).

Accordingly, consideration should be given as to whether current legislation and interpretations adequately address the technology in this area. Further, consideration should be given to whether or not an examination of the current landscape requires a reprioritization of principles in this area.

Coaches' Clinics and Speaking Engagements

Background

Institutional coaches' clinics are clinics that have typically been designed to educate and teach coaches of youth, high-school, two-year college or nonscholastic teams strategies related to a sport. These clinics have been conducted for several years as a way to help each sport's coaching community grow and develop professionally. Historically, these coaches' clinics have been hosted in the community, state or region of the institution. Coaches' clinics are hosted or sponsored by several entities including the institution, a high-school association or other external groups.

A critical element in the recruiting environment is for institutional coaches to develop relationships with coaches of teams that include prospective student-athletes (e.g., high school, nonscholastic, two-year college). NCAA coaches believe these relationships are important because they can learn information about prospective student-athletes from their high-school coach, for example, that they may not otherwise receive. These coaches' clinics provide an opportunity for NCAA coaches to interact and develop relationships with these coaches. Current legislation does not limit the location or frequency of coaches' clinics, but there is some concern that these clinics are shifting focus to be more recruiting opportunities than professional development opportunities. For example, NCAA coaches may speak at coaches' clinics held at high schools. While no recruiting activities can occur during these speaking engagements, the presence of coaches at high schools is often viewed as a recruiting advantage.

Another issue involves institutional coaches speaking at high-school fundraisers. NCAA legislation in Bylaw 13.15 prohibits institutional staff members from directly or indirectly providing funds to benefit prospective student-athletes. A January 25, 1991 staff interpretation provides some guidance and flexibility for coaches to attend and/or speak at high school functions. However, concern has been expressed that it is still difficult to monitor and assess whether coaches' participation in these activities is permissible.

Accordingly, consideration should be given as to whether current legislation and interpretations adequately address coaches' participation in coaches' clinics and speaking engagements in light of the current recruiting environment.

Coach speaking at a banquet for prospective student-athletes in which fundraising activities occur.

Date Issued: Jan 25, 1991
Date Published: Jan 25, 1991
Type: Staff Interpretation
Item Ref: a
Reviewed NCAA Bylaws 13.1.3.7 (banquets and meetings) and 13.16 (precollege expenses) and

88/11/01 NCAA Interpretations Committee minutes, Item No. 6 and 88/06/17 staff minutes, Item No. 1-(c), and confirmed that a coach may speak at a banquet for prospective student-athletes in which fund-raising activities also occur only if fund-raising activities are not the primary purpose for conducting the banquet or meeting; confirmed that if the fund-raising activities are the primary purpose of the banquet or meeting, institutional staff members may attend the fundraiser subject to the following conditions:

1. The staff members could play no active role in fund-raising activities;

2. The attendance of the staff members at the event could not be publicized in advance;

3. No contact with prospective student-athletes or parents of prospective student-athletes would be permitted outside the permissible contact period, and

4. Conversations between staff members and the high-school's coaching staff members, parents, prospective student-athletes and other individuals could not include recruiting information or contain a recruiting presentation. [Note: This staff minute replaces Item No. 1-(c) of the June 17, 1988, staff minutes, which now has been archived in the NCAA legislative services data base.]

Scouting of Opponents – Film Exchange

Background

NCAA Division I Bylaw 11.6 specifies limitations on the scouting of opponents. The general intent behind this bylaw is to ensure competitive equity by prohibiting in-person scouting opportunities in many instances. Bylaw 11.6.4 governs the cost of exchanging video by permitting institutions to pay the costs of exchanging video for scouting purposes, including the expenses associated with an individual traveling to pick up the video. Further, Bylaw 11.6.4.1 permits institutions to obtain such video from a commercial entity that provides recording/dubbing services, provided the institution requesting the video does not pay any fees or expenses other than providing a blank videotape or DVD (or other medium) and paying postage costs. Since institutions who request the video cannot pay any cost (other than as noted), these commercial entities typically charge a fee to the institution whose contest is being recorded. Essentially, institutions pay these entities to perform the work of recording their own contests rather than absorbing the responsibility themselves.

With the advances in technology, concern has been expressed that this legislation may be dated. Specifically, many of the commercial entities who provide these services use the internet which permits online video "exchange" where there is no cost associated with a blank videotape or DVD or postage costs. Therefore, these entities have shifted the cost associated to use their services to both the institutions whose contests are being recorded and those institutions who are requesting the video. Since the legislation only permits the institution to provide a blank video and postage, it is difficult to ascertain how it applies to these types of online services since there is more than a blank videotape and postage involved in the cost.

Accordingly, consideration should be given to whether the legislation needs to be updated to contemplate the use of technology in the area of film exchange to more accurately regulate this area.

Legislative Review

Background

Due to the constantly evolving recruiting culture coupled with advancements in technology and increased public scrutiny, it has become apparent that certain parts of NCAA Division I Bylaw 13 are dated. This presents challenges to the membership in applying the legislation and to the national office staff in interpreting the legislation. For example, the legislation adopted in the mid-1990's regarding restrictions on audio/video materials was adopted at a time when the cost associated with producing videos was so great that it provided a distinct advantage to those institutions who could afford the necessary equipment. However, in today's culture in which video is placed online with a click of a button, recording equipment is part of mobile phones and digital cameras, and people watch the news, sporting events and movies online, it is clear our current legislation does not address the current reality of technology.

In some cases, the membership has amended legislation in attempts to keep up with technology. For instance, we have now legislation that address electronic communication and includes references to text messaging, instant messaging and videoconferences. However, it creates a regulatory culture in which legislation is constantly changing because technology continually evolves. Therefore, consideration should be given to whether this reactionary approach is the most appropriate way to address the changes in technology. The NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet may wish to consider reviewing Bylaw 13 for these types of examples and discuss options that could result in legislation that is more dynamic and tied to principles rather than specifics. While this may be a difficult exercise considering the intense competitiveness of the recruiting environment, the current regulatory state associated with the recruiting legislation presents application, interpretive and monitoring challenges that often times result in greater focus and resources used to track details (e.g., number of pages in a media guide, narrative language in a video) than to ensure the spirit and intent is preserved.

Current NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet
Key Issues

Below is a list of some key issues related to recruiting and athletics personnel issues, the staff has identified for possible review by the NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet in future meetings. These are only some of the issues and challenges facing the membership in these two areas as there are certainly more that may warrant review and discussion by the cabinet. The growing trend to expand the number of staff members (e.g., director of operations, administrative assistants, volunteer coaches) associated with sport programs, the interest in expanding the duties and benefits provided to these staff members, the intense pressure on coaches to recruit the top prospective student-athletes and the increased public scrutiny on recruiting activities generally presents the membership significant and complex challenges to ensure a level playing field and protect the well-being of prospective student-athletes while still allowing coaches sufficient time and resources to identify, evaluate and connect with prospective student-athletes who can be successful at their institutions.

[Additional background information on each item is included in its corresponding attachment.]

<u>Current cabinet agenda items</u>

1. Early recruitment and early offers of aid.

2. Recruiting materials and communication.

<u>Other future potential agenda items</u>

1. Recruiting and video services. [Attachment A]

2. Coaching clinics and speaking engagements (e.g., banquets, meetings). [Attachment B]

3. Scouting of opponents – film exchange. [Attachment C]

4. Legislative review of "dated" legislation. [Attachment D]

5. Camps and clinics.

Hits & Headaches: While Recruiting Websites Are Popular With Fans, Players And Parents, Some Coaches See Problems

Desmond Conner
The Hartford Courant

Aug 31, 2008

Aug. 31--The athletes love them. They want to see where they stack up, who's saying what about them. The parents do, too. It's their kid being evaluated and with the economy being what it is, a scholarship offer sure would lighten the load.
The coaches, well, they just have to live with them.

Internet recruiting sites continue to get bigger and bigger -- and rate kids younger and younger.

There is a huge market, so big that media kingpins have snatched up these sites.
Yahoo bought Rivals.com in June 2007 for $100 million and says it received 75 million views on national football signing day in February. Fox bought Scout.com in 2005 for a reported $60 million. CBS owns MaxPreps.com, having bought it in March 2007 for an undisclosed amount.

Tom Luginbill, the former Georgia Tech and Eastern Kentucky quarterback, heads recruiting efforts for ESPN's Scouts Inc. in football; longtime analyst Bob Gibbons does the same for college basketball.

Football players are being ranked before they have played their first high school game. The top 100 freshman in the country are listed on MaxPreps.com. They are so far away from physical and mental maturity that no one can tell how good they might become, but fans love this stuff.

So in the mad rush, football freshmen and sophomores are being promised scholarship offers, even though a letter-of-intent can't be signed until the player is a senior. In basketball, the same thing, even earlier sometimes.

In an unprecedented move at UConn, Jamal Coombs-McDaniel and Alex Oriakhi committed to the UConn men's basketball program in 2006 after their freshman year, but won't be eligible to play in Storrs until 2009.

"Boy, I do feel sorry for the coaches now," said longtime football analyst Tom Lemming, who is CBS Sports' college recruiting expert.

Projecting Success

Football is much more difficult to project than basketball.

"I didn't even play freshman football in high school and if I did, I know I wouldn't have made anybody's list," said Pittsburgh coach Dave Wannstedt, who played offensive tackle for the Panthers and captained their 1973 Fiesta Bowl team. He was a graduate assistant for the school's 1976 national championship team.
In basketball it's a little easier to project if someone will be able to compete, so kids for a while have been rated younger and younger. If a kid is tall and has decent skills as a freshman, you may have something to work with, but it's too early to tell if a 14- or 15-year-old football player is going to develop into a scholarship athlete physically.

"In three years, I'll bet you 75 of the 100 names you saw on that list won't even be there," said Lemming, believed to be the first to start the evaluation on the football side and began writing about it 31 years ago.

Lemming, who primarily evaluates juniors and seniors, also does work for CSTV.

"Fans like to see stuff like that, but you have to read it with a grain of salt," Lemming said. "Kids don't get into the growth spurt until maybe their junior and senior years in high school up to and through their freshman year in college.
Bottom line, the evaluation of these guys at this age is a natural progression, and I'm willing to bet that by the year 2010, scholarship offers are going to b made based on genetics. You may laugh at that, but I'm serious."

UConn football coach Randy Edsall, a member of the American Football Coaches' Board of Directors, would like to see the NCAA pass legislation that would prevent an offer until the prospect's junior year.

"I just think one of the problems you have in all of this is what happens when a young kid in high school gets burned out, loses the passion and love for the game? You don't see some of the problems," Edsall said. "How many three-sport athletes do you see anymore? Hardly any. It used to be that kids cross-trained, playing different sports throughout the year; now you're seeing kids with more injuries. They want to be ranked and noticed and put their focus on that. Well, if you're good, coaches are going to find you. There's just so much undo pressure on these kids. I went to camps when I was young, and it wasn't all the pressure it is now. You went to camp to have fun and learn."

But Edsall has to play the game the way it is now structured. Edsall, like his coaching brethren, can ill afford to miss a name on the rise.

"Randy would often say, 'Make sure you ask about the sophomores [when talking to high school coaches],'" said Columbia coach Norries Wilson, a former Edsall assistant. "And he is correct."

Coach Pete Carroll and Southern Cal got their running back of the future in Dillon Baxter of San Diego, who told the Trojans he was coming when he was a sophomore.

Baxter is the second-best running back in the entire junior class. In fact, USC offered scholarships to most of the top-10 players in Baxter's class from California. Washington offered a scholarship to wide receiver Kasen Williams. He is a sophomore.

Ratings and rankings for 14- and 15-year olds is hardly new in basketball. Clark Francis of Hoop Scoop has been ranking seventh graders for years, but college coaches are up in arms after Billy Gillispie, just completing his first season at Kentucky, offered a scholarship to eighth grader Michael Avery, then turned around and offered one to a ninth grader.

Almost immediately the National Association of Basketball Coaches board of directors released a recommendation asking all coaches to hold off on offering scholarships or accepting commitments from prospects until mid-June of their sophomore year because they "have not yet displayed sufficient academic credentials or, in the vast majority of cases, basketball maturity to accurately project them as admissible students to the institution or impact players on the basketball team."

'It's All Subjective'

The services and their analysts criticize each other, all in the name of competition.

The truth is they all have tremendous audiences. We live in a society infatuated with lists and rankings. And when you're in the business of evaluating, the discussions can be hot like fire.

"It's all subjective and opinion," said Mike Farrell of Rivals.com. "But I think there's confusion sometimes on what's reality and what isn't when it comes to the recruiting services. Our audience is the fan, the die-hard fan, those are our subscribers. They pay the bills. We don't claim to be a resource for the coaches, although we know that they check out our service, or their assistants, to see names. I don't think they pay that much attention to the evaluations. That's what they have staffs for. But what we do, rankings, stars, what schools a kid is considering, we are catering to the fans because that is our market."

And it's big business.

"There's a place for it, we all understand that," Boise State basketball coach Greg Graham said. "It gets fans talking, it's interactive, there's video of the kids up there now. There is a place for it. No coach should use it as the basis for the recruiting but in this part of the country, people may not know us like they may know a school like Connecticut. Our recruiting area is pretty much out here but you might find a couple of names you may have missed. It's just a name. You have to go out and do the work yourself."

And what about the work the recruiting analysts are doing?

The coaches don't give them a whole lot of respect when it comes to evaluations because they wonder how these services can evaluate so many players.

"I can be at basketball tournament, like Nike or Reebok or something like that with my staff, and have trouble evaluating five guys, much less 50 or 100," Kansas State coach Frank Martin said.

Edsall also looks at the services with a wary eye.

"If these guys were so good they'd be player personnel people in the NFL or GMs," he said.

Gibbons is so big that he holds camps, attracting the top players in the country. Some see that as a conflict of interest. Gibbons calls it hogwash. He said no matter what he does, it will be better than how his former employer handled things.

"I worked for Rivals and I was embarrassed by the way they did their player rankings," Gibbons said. "I gave that up. I gave that up because I was like, 'Where are they getting this?' No, my reputation meant more to me than bringing in any additional income."

"That's all right," Farrell said. "People always rag on us. I think other football sites know how big Rivals is. Period. They can argue it, but that's the truth. I was doing this for ESPN before Luginbill even appeared. I don't think ESPN even realized how lucrative a business this is. Now they do and everybody is pretty much happy, I think."

Well, not everybody.

Gary Charles, the coach of the New York Panthers AAU basketball team -- formerly the renowned Long Island Panthers -- said a couple of years ago he constantly told one of his players to stop looking at the sites.

"He was always following his ranking, wanted to know what his ranking was," Charles said. "And he was one of my best players. He was getting a Division I scholarship regardless. But the kids eat that stuff up and it's not good for them."

And then, of course, there are the parents.

"I was running a basketball camp with my son [Danny] recently and we were told very happily by a parent there that their child, in grammar school, OK, had a ranking already," said Bob Hurley, the legendary St. Anthony's [Jersey City, N.J.] high school basketball coach. "I just did a double take. I understand people want to read this stuff, but I think you have to take into consideration the effect something like this is going to have on a kid, his family. Is he going to be able to handle it? And parents can be a bit overbearing sometimes."

So what happens if a kid is considered a four- or five-star athlete but doesn't maintain a solid work ethic once he receives a non-binding scholarship offer?
And what happens when a parent is unhappy with a kid's rating.

"Parents can be tough," Luginbill said. "And a kid could fall off, but that's not our issue. Those are issues of the parents and the student-athlete. Unlike some of the sites that give out stars and things like that, we are evaluating the player and his ability to perform at the next level but that's it. I mean whoever you chose to believe or go with, no site or the ranking on that site guarantees a scholarship. You have to work."

One would think UConn coach Jim Calhoun's feathers might have been ruffled when Edsall came out with his suggestion about not offering scholarships and commitments, but the Hall of Famer said he didn't have a problem.

"I agree that we shouldn't be doing that, either, because I think kids need more time, but what happens if a kid knows he wants to go to that particular school and that's it?" Calhoun said.

Coombs and Oriakhi, the two who committed to Calhoun when they were freshmen, seemingly know that. It's hard to figure out where all of these rankings and ratings started, but Bob Knight certainly got basketball coaches looking at kids earlier and earlier in 1986 when Indiana schoolboy Damon Bailey was the object of the coach's affection as an eighth grader.

In football, 1993 is considered a breakout year for early recruiting. Penn State missed out on the top 10 recruits in Pennsylvania, including the nation's No.1 recruit, quarterback Ron Pawlus, who went to Notre Dame.

Ironically, the inexact science shows that Bailey and Pawlus didn't live up to the billing.

But that has not stopped the rating game from continuing.

"High school football is kind of like the final frontier," Lemming said. "And part of the frontier is going to involve ranking them all the way down to probably the top 100 preschool kids, forget the top 100 freshmen. Fans can't get enough of this stuff, I'm telling you. It's a business."

Fans' Recruiting Pitches Are Catching On

Steve Yanda
Washington Post
October 16, 2008

Scott Meyer doesn't consider himself a complicated person. He grew up following University of Maryland football because of its proximity. He attended Good Counsel because of its reputation for providing a quality education. The criteria he used to select his college also were straightforward: It had to be a big school, and had to have a good football program.

Meyer visited Penn State and quickly became enamored with its football coach, Joe Paterno, and Beaver Stadium, where more than 107,000 white-clad fans cheer madly for the Nittany Lions. "It's so easy to fall into all of it," said Meyer, now a senior political science major. "It's everything I could want."

And when it comes to football recruiting, Meyer believes Penn State is everything any top high school prospect could want, too. That's why Meyer reaches out to some of those recruits via online social networks such as Facebook and MySpace. Maybe, he reasons, if a recruit sees that students from a certain school who aren't associated with the athletic department take the time to initiate a relationship, it might influence that recruit's decision on where to attend.

"When you follow recruiting, you wish you were the coaches going into the houses and telling kids about the tradition," Meyer said. If coaches can't recruit through social networks, he added, "students can do it."

Innocent as Meyer's intentions may be, his actions constitute an NCAA recruiting violation, one schools cannot protect against and one the NCAA cannot closely monitor. Meyer is not the lone culprit by any means. Many top football recruits in the class of 2009 contacted for this story said their Facebook or MySpace accounts have been bombarded in the past year by friend requests and messages from fans across the country. Numerous top men's basketball recruits in the class of 2009 have a following on social networks, as well.

Current students cannot serve as representatives of their schools' athletic interests and thus are not allowed to contact recruits, according to Stacey Osburn, the NCAA's associate director of public and media relations. In fact, NCAA rules state that any individual who is known or should have been known by a member of a school's athletic administration to be "assisting in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes" qualifies as a representative of that institution's athletic interests. Therefore, any fan with a social networking account could possibly cause a violation, not merely those currently enrolled at a school.

"If a school found out this was going on, it would have to self-report it," Osburn said. "The NCAA then would look at the situation within reason." She added that reports of major violations concerning this subject have yet to surface.

According to NCAA rules, electronically transmitted correspondence with recruits or their legal guardians is permissible only in the form of an e-mail or a fax; "all other forms of electronically transmitted correspondence (e.g., Instant Messenger, text messaging) are prohibited." Contact via social networks is "the middle ground of sorts between e-mails and instant messages," said Tim Parker, the senior assistant director of athletics for compliance at Virginia Tech. "It would be impossible to be proactive in a meaningful way on this. All you can do is educate fans on what is and is not permissible."

Some sought-after high school football players called recruiting via social networks unfair; others said they were flattered by the attention. Either way, the trend poses a potentially serious problem for university compliance officers charged with keeping their respective team's contact with recruits above board.

"It makes it exceedingly difficult, no doubt, with the proliferation of what goes on with the Internet," said Mike Karwoski, Notre Dame's associate athletic director for compliance. "If anybody in the country says they know everything that's going on with those sites, they're not telling the truth. They can't. It's impossible."

When it comes to monitoring students' and other fans' contact with recruits through social networking sites, the issue is threefold. Most university compliance departments are small in staff size. Many Division I schools have tens of thousands of students and an exponentially larger base of fans.

So even if compliance officers could gain access to the social networking accounts of each of their school's fans (privacy restrictions prohibit such access), they would not have the time or manpower to ensure no contact was being made with potential recruits.

"Is there a chance that we're going to miss something? Absolutely. I'll be the first one to admit that," said Karwoski, whose compliance staff usually consists of four full-time employees, himself included, and a part-time assistant. "You just hope these people are doing the right thing. I hate to put it in the context of crossing your fingers, but that's what you have to do."

Several compliance officers contacted for this story said attempting to educate their school's coaches -- and their school's fans -- is vital. Most do so through staff meetings for coaches and newsletters for fans.

Meyer said he has not been contacted by Penn State regarding his unofficial recruiting efforts and that he does not see any harm in contacting recruits through social networks so long as it is done "in a sensitive way."

Let's Be Friends

Ohio State fans created a Facebook group for Jaamal Berry, rated by Rivals.com as the No. 7 running back and No. 47 player overall in the class of 2009, after the senior from Miami Palmetto Senior High School visited Ohio State's spring game.
The group had 65 members as of last night, and on June 14, one of those members, Travis Taylor, made a post on the group's wall stating his reasons why Ohio State was the best place for Berry to play football.

Taylor, who grew up in Dublin, Ohio, does not attend Ohio State. Rather, he is a sophomore at the University of Arizona. Despite the distance separating him from the team he loves, Taylor said he stays abreast of Buckeyes recruiting by following various message boards and listening to a weekly hour-long radio podcast. That's where he heard about Berry.

"It just shows the kind of fan base [Berry] will have if he goes to Ohio State," Taylor said in a July phone interview. "No other school has a group for him. Our fan base is better than anywhere else."

On July 8, Taylor made another post on the group's wall, this time criticizing Florida and Michigan, two schools also vying for Berry's services.

The group's wall contains 24 total posts, each imploring Berry to come to Ohio State. On Aug. 31, Berry orally committed to the Buckeyes.

Some fans reach out to recruits in a more personal manner. Nine months ago, Xavier Nixon logged on to his MySpace account and saw he had a friend request from a student at West Virginia. Nixon, a senior offensive lineman at Jack Britt High School in Fayetteville, N.C., and the No. 39 overall recruit in the class of 2009, according to Rivals.com, accepted the request.

Nixon said he has received a message from the West Virginia student almost daily since then. He said it is among the three or four MySpace messages he gets per day from fans of different schools. A few simply let Nixon know their school is recruiting him heavily. Others tell Nixon their school offers the best opportunity for him to succeed. Some criticize coaches from rival universities.

"It kind of caught me off-guard," said Nixon, who remains undecided on which of his 40 scholarship offers he will accept. "It just shows the dedication they have for their school. It's amazing to see people all over the country, people from California who are North Carolina fans, and it's just crazy that they would contact me to try to get me to go to their school."

Some recruits don't appreciate the extra attention. Morgan Moses, a senior offensive lineman at Meadowbrook High School in Richmond and the No. 12 overall recruit in the class of 2009, said he has received about 50 friend requests and 40 messages from fans on his Facebook account since December 2007.

"It's surprising, but it also gets kind of aggravating a little bit," Moses said. "You go [online] and see a lot of fans saying go here or go there, and a lot of people expect you to go here or go there, but I'm trying to make this decision on my own."

Monitoring Is in Place

Osburn said that if a school were to report a violation regarding fan usage of social networks to contact recruits, the NCAA would try to answer two questions: Did the university in question have a system in place to monitor this type of activity, and was the university responsible in any way for encouraging the students to contact recruits?

Because there have been no reported instances of major NCAA violations regarding social network recruiting, Osburn said the NCAA has established no penalty guidelines for such cases. She said it was likely that secondary violations have occurred but she did not have access to such information.

In April 2007, Penn State administrators instructed two students to shut down a Facebook group the pair had created in an attempt to influence the college decision of high school quarterback Terrelle Pryor. At the time, the group consisted of nearly 1,000 members, and only about one-third of them left the group upon request. In this case, the school made a concerted effort to halt the recruiting violation, and therefore the NCAA did not further investigate the matter.

"We're not different from any other place," Penn State compliance coordinator John Bove said. "We like to believe we are, but unfortunately we have fans that sometimes want to walk the line where if they step to the left, they're in a violation area."

Since the incident with the Pryor Facebook group, Bove said he was not aware of any cases in which Penn State students were using social networking sites to reach out to recruits on such a grand scale.

"In today's age, I wouldn't be surprised if kids at Penn State go home and if they have a great player in their area, tell that player to come to Penn State," Bove said. "On a smaller scale, yeah, that might be going on, but the NCAA understands how difficult this can be, and everyone's pretty reasonable when these things arise."

For schools, the possible consequences of their fans' actions are problematic, but for the fans, the only potential drawback to reaching out to recruits is disappointment if their attempts fail. Meyer considers his contact to be nothing more than a friend telling a friend about a college.

"If he goes to a Penn State rival, that would be unfortunate," Meyer said. "I'll not have to like him as much."

How Young is Too Young?

Ryan Wood
Active.com
October 24, 2008

In May of 2008, University of Kentucky basketball coach Billy Gillispie offered a scholarship to a promising 6-foot-4 guard out of California named Michael Avery. It was the first offer Avery received, and he quickly accepted it to end his recruitment.

The catch? Avery was in eighth grade when he made the commitment.

Incredibly, Avery is not the only example of an athlete picking a college while still in junior high. Far from it. A year earlier, Ryan Boatright committed to play basketball at the University of Southern California when he was 14. Soon after, he picked a high school.

Later in 2008, 14-year old ice hockey player Jordan Schmaltz ended a recruiting process that had barely begun when he chose the University of Wisconsin.

Examples continue to pop up, mainly because college coaches continue to offer scholarships to middle school students. Heck, Arizona coach Lute Olson reportedly offered Matt Carlino when the point guard was in seventh grade. Carlino waited--until after ninth grade--before committing to Indiana.

Predictably, the idea of junior high students choosing colleges has been met with criticism by experts. That includes Michael Husted, who played college football at Virginia and now runs Active Recruiting.

"Allowing 14-year olds to make a college commitment is very premature," Husted said. "Many things can and will happen over the next few years to that athlete (that could change his mind)."

Tanesha Boatright, the mother of USC-bound Ryan, looks at it differently. In an interview with ESPN.com, she pointed out the benefits of her son committing to receive a free college education.

"Whether they offered him something at 14, 16, 18, what is wrong with it?" Boatright said. "What if it was a scholarship for good grades? Wouldn't that be exciting? My son makes good grades and he is good at sports. Hey, he's a good kid. He's been trained to work hard and study hard."

Boatright was first, but Avery's pledge a year later put the issue of young commitments at center stage, perhaps because of the prestige of Kentucky. After the Avery news broke, the National Association of Basketball Coaches released a statement asking coaches to "refrain from offering or encouraging these young people to make such commitments."

"The academic and athletic profiles of these younger students are still very much works in progress," then-NABC president and University of Minnesota coach Tubby Smith said.

The NABC suggested that offers should only be extended after a player's sophomore year of high school, when NCAA rules allow coaches to start initiating contact with recruits.

In the case of Avery, he received an offer over the phone because his father contacted Gillispie after hearing rumblings of the coach's interest, which is within the rules. Boatright received his USC offer during a face-to-face meeting with coach Tim Floyd at a USC elite camp--also within the rules since the meeting was on campus.

The NABC's statement expects to fall on mostly deaf ears. Recruiting can be so competitive that coaches are forced to walk the thin line between right and wrong, if only because every other coach does.

A similar issue occurred regarding the brief hysteria of text messaging recruits. Though officials spoke out against texting high school students during the school day, coaches didn't stop until the NCAA finally banned the form of communication altogether in 2007.

It's been proven: many coaches will follow hard rules and little else.

Which makes the young-commitment issue even harder to handle. Technically, oral commitments like the ones Avery and Boatright gave are non-binding, and worth only the word each teenager stands behind. Both recruits are free to listen to other colleges or even commit to play basketball elsewhere if they choose to. They will sign a binding letter of intent in the fall of their senior year.

The issue, then, may shift--from the college coaches pressured to win to the young recruits with plenty of time to make their choice.

"Both the parents and athlete should be patient," Husted said. "If he or she is getting an offer that early, chances are there will be many more to come. He may go from wanting to be an astronaut to wanting to be a doctor in those two or three years and thus feel another school may best suit him academically."

Lady Terps Are An Internet Presence

By Camille Powell
Washington Post
Tuesday, October 28, 2008; E04

Brenda Frese is always looking for new ways to promote her nationally ranked Maryland women's basketball program. Her players will meet with local reporters this afternoon as part of the team's annual media day, much like every other team in the country has done. But while that is happening, the players will also be introducing themselves to a much wider audience as part of a new Web site that the team is officially launching today.

The site, MarylandWomens Basketball.com, is a multimedia mix designed to define the image of the program in the minds of potential recruits and die-hard fans, as well as casual visitors.

"I think whenever you get on any college athletic Web site, you're just blurred by busyness and ads and sponsorships and pop-ups," Frese said. "You can't get to the meat of what you really want to read. That was the thing: We wanted something that would give us really sharp focus and was a really good blend between something that obviously would help us from a recruiting end, but that was also fan friendly."

Frese, who is beginning her seventh season at Maryland, has used different methods to present her program. For the past four seasons, the team has had its own reality television show called "Under the Shell," which has documented everything from the Terrapins' run to the 2006 national title to the birth of Frese's twin sons.

The new Web site incorporates many of those videos, using them as a way to illustrate different aspects of the program. The section on academics, for instance, has a video of sophomore forward Drey Mingo, who would like to become a pediatric cardiologist, talking about how she went to one of Frese's sonogram appointments.

There are also videos that were created specifically for the Web site, such as two tours of Comcast Center -- one from a player's perspective (sophomore guard Marah Strickland is the guide) and the other from a longtime fan's.

"We've always wanted to be ahead of the curve," Frese said. "Look at the typical college-age student: They're on the Internet; they're on YouTube. It's all about the videos. How can they be wowed, how can they be entertained?"

The player profile section uses cover-flow navigation similar to what's used on the latest iPods and iTunes. Each profile includes basic biographical information and photos, as well as recorded audio messages from Frese and the player herself.

So instead of just reading about Yemi Oyefuwa, a freshman center from London, fans can listen to an audio message from Oyefuwa, in which she explains how to pronounce her last name, describes herself as "a bit of a computer geek," and reveals that her favorite food is chicken -- all in her lilting accent and backed by a music track.

"We had a lot of fun with that," Strickland said of the player profiles. "If you just see a picture and read a bio, it's not as exciting as hearing someone's voice and hearing the passion she has. It's nice to put a special touch on it, to put our own little flavor on it, to show our personalities."

That was one of the goals of Michelle Miller, a former Maryland walk-on who is spearheading the project. Frese approached Miller earlier this year after reading an article about Miller, who at the time was commuting between Denver (where she was an executive with an Internet domain company) and Arlington (where she was coaching the Washington-Lee girls basketball team). In August, Miller replaced Billy Fennelly as Maryland's administrative assistant to the recruiting coordinator, and focused on creating the Web site.

"There was this kind of mutual respect that [Frese and I] instantly had, despite coming from completely different worlds," said Miller, who graduated from Maryland in 2000 with degrees in finance and marketing. "The common denominator for the two of us was we both agreed that this program could benefit from having something really empowering and unique. [Frese] loves to make a statement, and to put herself out there."

Miller worked with Frese to develop a overall theme -- "More Than Just Basketball" -- for the project. Miller came up with the concept, the brand and the overall design, and put the site together with Bethesda-based BrowserMedia. All told, it took roughly three months -- a grueling schedule that Miller said she was willing to do because she believes so strongly in Frese's vision.

"As a women's program, we have to work harder to get even half the exposure of the men," Miller said. "We really believe that this Web site is a catalyst to turn some heads. . . . That's our number one goal: to say hey, we are more than just basketball, our Web site even shows that itself. It captures things in a way that no one else has done."

NCAA talking about rules to protect 7th-graders in basketball recruiting

Steve Wieberg
USA TODAY
October 31, 2008

It has come to this in college basketball: The NCAA is weighing whether to officially designate seventh- and eighth-graders as "prospective student-athletes."

The move, backed by the new Championships/Sports Management Cabinet, is intended to help insulate youngsters from recruiters by limiting the contacts by coaches at some camps and clinics. It's also intended to limit contact by e-mail, letters and phone calls, according to Joan Cronan, women's athletic director at Tennessee and a member of the management cabinet.

"The whole idea was to eliminate unappropriate recruiting," said Cronan, also president of the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. "Some of the real early commitments made people stop and think how early should we be recruiting. … It's more to protect (young athletes)."

Coaches, always with an eye on recruiting, now are prohibited from working outside camps that are open to ninth-grade and older players.

But "you can do just about anything you want until they reach ninth grade," says San Diego State athletics director Jeff Schemmel, who heads the NCAA cabinet. "Now, the craziness of getting someone to give a verbal commitment in the eighth grade is upon us. And that's really uncomfortable."

Players younger than high school age making early commitments has become an issue in the last year as basketball coaches such as Kentucky's Billy Gillispie and Southern California's Tim Floyd received public commitments from eighth-graders.

"It sure doesn't feel very good, does it, that we have to reach that far back," said Schemmel of the seventh-grade designation. "The ninth-grade rule has been the rule for so long. But I think we all worry about people who stretch (the boundaries). 'Well, geez, if I can't have contact with them until the ninth grade, let's do the things we would have done with them in the ninth grade in the eighth grade or seventh grade.' "

The proposal to declare seventh- and eighth-graders "prospect aged" and thus off limits was tabled last week by the NCAA's Legislative Council, which will reconsider the issue in January. Cronan says the basketball issues committee also will take a look at it and gives the proposal a "50-50" chance to pass.

The Next Big Thing

TOMMY CRAGGS.
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The New York Times
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The lightning arrives in great, thwapping bursts, and the night sky over New York City is a series of bright fissures. The world outside Renardo Sidney's hotel looks gorgeously broken. Inside, Sidney is sitting in a gloomy nook, tapping distractedly on his Sidekick. He is one of the best young basketball players in the land, an 18-year-old with a molten game whose career, though he is not yet out of high school, has already become a morality play about the state of contemporary basketball. He is 6-foot-10 and about 270 pounds. In two years, maybe less, he will be a well-paid professional basketball player, and perhaps at that time, too, he will shrug his massive shoulders when he is asked why he still sucks his thumb.

"I've been sucking my thumb since I was a kid," he says. "Sometimes, I do it just to do it. Like, when I'm mad." He also travels with a lucky blanket. His father -- Renardo the elder -- is seated across the table. He chuckles. "It's a sheet," he clarifies.

Renardo Jr. is large in ways you don't often see in people his age, less like a heavyset teenager rounding slowly into shape than a longtime athlete who has spent his off-season at the buffet. He has always been big, though, starting at birth. As his father recalls, even the doctor said damn. By middle school, he stood 6 feet 5 inches tall, but he had yet to outgrow his old compulsions. One of his coaches, Trent Hysten, used to kid him: "You look just like a big baby. Get your thumb outta your mouth."

Sidney is frequently called a man-child, but maybe the most precocious thing about him is the already long arc of his career. Next spring, he will finish his senior year having attended three high schools in two states and having played for three summer travel teams since 2005. A nationally known quantity since before his eighth-grade year in Jackson, Miss., where his middle school charged $3 admission to his games, Sidney was considered the best player in America in his class by the time he reached high school. Some had penciled him in as the top pick in the 2010 N.B.A. draft. "They were talking about him being the next Magic Johnson," says Tom Konchalski, an influential talent scout.

From the beginning, however, Sidney represented a different sort of high school star, in part because, strictly speaking, he wasn't a high-school star. He didn't even join a high-school team until his sophomore year, and caused a minor stir when he told The Washington Post that high-school ball is "not that important." Of course, for Sidney, it wasn't, but that's not something a young player is supposed to say out loud.

Instead, to the dismay of many scowling traditionalists, Sidney was almost wholly a product of the summer. He made his name in the demimonde of summer basketball: what the sneakers companies call grass-roots basketball and what most everyone else calls, in slightly misleading shorthand, A.A.U. basketball. (Many, but not all, of the events fall under the purview of the Amateur Athletic Union, a nonprofit that promotes and oversees amateur sports.) What they're talking about is the ecosystem of shoe-company-sponsored summer traveling teams, shoe-company-sponsored summer tournaments and shoe-company-sponsored summer camps.

It is a vast, roiling Dodge City of the hoops landscape, lying as it does outside the reach of high-school coaches and the regulatory arm of the N.C.A.A. -- an unsavory world, in the popular imagination, of street agents and shoe boxes full of cash and chest-thumping 16-year-olds with Adidas stripes branded like bar codes on their foreheads. And largely for that reason, summer ball has become a catch-all symbol of basketball indulgence, blamed for everything from the death of the bounce pass to the corruption of America's youth to the occasional failures of the grown men who represent USA Basketball on the international stage. It is something like basketball's bad conscience.

And it was in this system that Sidney thrived. "He blew up in A.A.U. basketball," says Renardo Sr., who, until his contract expired recently, earned about $20,000 a year as a Reebok "consultant," a job that mostly entailed shepherding his son to Reebok-sponsored events. In 2007, Renardo Sr. started his own grass-roots outfit, the L.A. Dream Team, sponsored by Reebok and coached by Renardo Sr. himself. (He also mentors kids and works as a sort of personal trainer for other aspiring basketball players.)

By August, however, the start of Sidney's senior year, things had gone awry. Having relocated to Los Angeles in 2006, he was now attracting interest from a variety of college teams -- among them Memphis, U.C.L.A., Texas and Arizona State, according to recruiting scuttlebutt -- and perhaps even entertaining the notion, as some loose gossip had it, of playing in Europe next year. But he had put on weight. He talked wistfully about going fishing and "getting away from basketball," which made him sound more like a 38-year-old power forward on a second tour with the Clippers. Sidney fell in everyone's esteem. Rivals.com, a prominent recruiting site that offers a national ranking of prospects, nearly bounced him out of its top 10. A handful of scouts even figured him for a bust.

He is a "prima donna and has one of the worst attitudes that we've ever seen," wrote Clark Francis, the editor of Hoop Scoop Online and a bigfoot on the recruiting scene, in a scathing evaluation of Sidney. By Francis's lights, the kid with the thumb in his mouth had become the bogeyman of modern basketball. "As a matter of fact," he wrote, "Sidney could be the poster boy for many of [the] things that are wrong with grass-roots basketball and is the perfect example of just how bad the sense of entitlement among many of the top players has become."

He seemed to be saying, remarkably, that an 18-year-old's basketball career had gone irretrievably to pot.

Some time ago, a series appeared in a newsletter under the title "Is Basket-Ball a Danger?" In it, several correspondents wrung their hands over the game's miasmic influence on children, the unruly behavior it seemed to inspire. This is no doubt a familiar litany, especially to those who remember the moral panic that ensued in 2004 after Ron Artest and the Indiana Pacers decided to punch their way out of the Palace of Auburn Hills. The only surprise is the year the series ran: 1894.

It has been Renardo Sidney's misfortune, more than a century later, to find himself cast as the villain in the oldest story in basketball.

The Sidneys are in New York City on this June weekend for a Nike-sponsored tournament called the Rumble in the Bronx, and the day has gone miserably for the L.A. Dream Team. The equipment manager apparently left the uniforms in Los Angeles, forcing the players to borrow jerseys from their New York rivals, the Juice All-Stars. Then the team van got lost, and the Dream Team arrived late to its second game of the day, against the New York Panthers. Renardo Sr. was further horrified to learn the game was being held in what he would later call "the dungeon," a humid, windowless gym that effectively simulates what basketball might feel like if it were played in a blast shelter.

The Rumble in the Bronx is a relatively minor event in the summer hoops multiverse. There are a handful of college coaches milling about, mostly local. Where other summer events have the air of an industry convention, with backslapping reunions and furtive side-room deal-making, this one, at least off the court, feels meandering and almost casual; it is early June, the preamble to A.A.U. ball's long summer.

The N.C.A.A. has worked assiduously to curb the influence of these tournaments. For years, this meant primarily a flurry of rules and recommendations, many designed to limit contact between college and summer coaches and to return the locus of the recruitment process to the high schools, where establishment coaches with better credentials could act as the key brokers between college and player. This spring, however, the N.C.A.A. and the N.B.A., with token participation from the A.A.U. and the shoe companies, upped the ante, announcing a five-year, $50 million effort to reform what the N.C.A.A.'s president, Myles Brand, called the "dysfunctional" world of youth basketball.

Fundamentally, the idea is to seize control of the mechanism by which players like Renardo Sidney launch their careers. What reform actually entails is unclear, but the deal calls for the N.B.A. and the N.C.A.A. to each chip in $15 million, with another $20 million coming through joint-marketing ventures. The contributions will fund an as-yet-unnamed program that will offer an alternative structure for youth basketball. The N.C.A.A. News wrote, "The new structure is designed to negate the effects of third-party

influences currently working the youth basketball environment," by which it meant "people who may not have the player's best interests at heart."

That this comes from the same groups that in 2005 cheered the adoption of the N.B.A.'s minimum-age rule, effectively forcing high-school stars to spend one year playing college basketball pro bono rather than leap directly to the N.B.A., is more than a little rich. The partnership was announced at the Final Four this year, and it was noted in passing that both Brand and the N.B.A.'s commissioner, David Stern, would prefer that the age rule be raised from 19 to 20, meaning most players would have to remain in college for two years. Colleges benefit tremendously from keeping the best players in apprenticeship for two years; the N.B.A., in turn, gets marketable commodities who've spent more time in the college star-making machinery, as well as proven players who aren't being drafted purely on their potential.

The traditional justification is that colleges produce better, more well-rounded citizens, though in fact one study has suggested that the opposite may be true. In 2005, Michael McCann, then an assistant professor at Mississippi College School of Law, looked at 84 recent N.B.A. player arrests. He found that 57 percent of the players arrested spent four years in college; only 4.8 percent had never gone to college, significantly less than the league-wide share of prep-to-pro players (8.3 percent). In fact, one might infer from the study that the less time a player spent in college, the less likely he was to get arrested.

"The N.B.A. and the N.C.A.A. are entertainment vehicles. One pays you, one doesn't," says John (Sonny) Vaccaro, the 69-year-old godfather of summer basketball and the man who, in the employ of first Nike, then Adidas, then Reebok, rained shoe money on the basketball world and in so doing acquired so much clout that he is set to be portrayed by James Gandolfini -- the guy who played Tony Soprano -- in an HBO movie. Vaccaro walked away from Reebok in 2007 with two years left on his contract and now wanders the country as basketball's angry prophet, barnstorming noisily against the N.C.A.A.'s tax-exempt status and the N.B.A.'s age rule. "One thing is constant," he says. "One thing. The performers. The players. Without the players, neither of these entities can be multibillion-dollar businesses."

Greg Shaheen, the N.C.A.A. senior vice president who oversees Division I basketball, says that "95 percent of our revenue stream goes to educating young people. I'd be curious to know if those criticizing us put 95 percent of their money toward the education of young people."

The attacks on summer basketball typically also come wrapped in a lot of moralizing about the style of play. In particular, the reformers have made a fetish of "the fundamentals" -- the stuff that, to hear them talk, apparently went out of fashion around the time Whitey Skoog left the N.B.A. and that now lies dead by the hand of Sonny Vaccaro and the summer game. It's for lack of fundamentals that the Americans can barely keep up with those "team-first, back-to-basics foreigners," as USA Today put it, and after the 2004 Olympics, the critics hung Team USA's bronze medal around the summer game's neck like a millstone. This is a preposterous argument to make now,

during the ascendancy of LeBron James and the coronation of Kevin Garnett, both of whom cut their teeth in summer basketball and bypassed college ball entirely and both of whom are as fundamentally sound as anyone who passed through John Wooden's bounce-pass academy at U.C.L.A.

Nevertheless, this is maybe the most persistent charge lodged against grass-roots ball, and because the summer game is mostly coached by blacks and played almost entirely by black kids in a black idiom, it comes freighted with all sorts of odious insinuations. In 2006, George Raveling, the former coach at the University of Southern California, fired an oblique shot at summer basketball when he told USA Today, "N.B.A. teams are realizing it's less risky to draft internationals because they're more coachable, more socialized, have no posses and have not been Americanized." The racial tinge of his comment was staggering, made all the more remarkable by the fact that Raveling was not only Nike's grass-roots director but a black man, to whom Martin Luther King gave his original typewritten notes for his "I Have a Dream" speech.

I ask Vaccaro about the attacks on the style of summer play. "Are you crazy?" Vaccaro says. "The style of play? What was the style of play in U.S.A.-Spain [the 2008 Olympic gold-medal game]? Tell me, where was the defense in United States-Spain?

"I'm tired of that. I'm tired of the vilification of these kids," he goes on. "It's sinful. It's ethnic cleansing. Street basketball to them has a connotation -- they think street basketball is black. Well, they better hope it's black, because the majority of players playing the game has been black since they allowed blacks to play."

Brian McCormick, a coach and trainer who self-published a book on youth-player development, suggests the real problem with summer ball is that it "creates a system of overtraining," with players bouncing from the high-school season to the summer season and back again with little break. Sidney estimates he plays close to 100 games a year. "Players are going, going, going," McCormick says.

In many ways, Renardo Sidney's game was built for grass-roots ball, which, because of its fast tempo and showcase nature, tends to reward versatility. Last year, The New York Times called him "the epitome of camp evolution." But Sidney does not suffer from a lack of fundamentals. He has a clean flick-knife of a jumper, smooth from anywhere on the court. He has the ballhandling ability of someone a foot shorter and five years older, and there are a lot of tiny felicities to his play: touch passes and no-looks and footwork out of an Arthur Murray studio. His is a veteran's game. In fact, it's possible he appears too fundamentally sound, that he relies too much on the sort of deftness that won't sustain him in college and the pros. At his size, at this level, elegance can look more like nonchalance.

At the New York tournament, Sidney is arguably the best prospect in the gym, and there are plenty of glimpses of the player he has been celebrated for being, not to mention the player he might become. But he also has a maddening tendency to drift, and in a game against the Panthers, he hardly leaves a mark. Triple-teamed on offense and mostly

inert and grabby on defense, he manages only a handful of points before fouling out with several minutes remaining. The rest of the team looks equally skittish and tentative, and L.A. loses by a dozen, dropping the squad to the Rumble's second-tier silver bracket. Renardo Sr. leaves the court hurling insults over his shoulders at a ref: "You can't foul out the No. 1 player in the country with 10 minutes left!"

By the time I see the Sidneys back at their hotel later that evening, neither is in much of a mood to chat. Renardo Jr. rubs his knee warily and hovers over his phone, barely lifting his head to answer questions. Renardo Sr. is hoarse, still exercised over the tournament, the conditions, the cost. And then, of course, there are the refs. "You can't just get these guys off the street or at a liquor store," he says.

Renardo Sr. is in his pajamas, and his eyes look a little rheumy. He is not a big man, or at least he doesn't look it, sitting here next to his son, but he certainly has an outsize presence. He favors shades indoors and enormous, billowing T-shirts that have tigers on the front and hang down to his knees, making him look short-armed and skinny-legged; on each hand he wears a fat, gleaming bowling ball of a ring, spoils of a 2007 California Division III state championship won by Renardo and Renardo's older brother Tacus while at Artesia High School in Los Angeles.

In talking about his younger son's career, Renardo Sr. occasionally slips into the first-person plural, in the way that agents often do. For instance, when talking about whether the family's history with Reebok -- the deal expired this summer -- will influence his son's shoe preference in the pros, he says: "We're gonna be with anybody that got the most money. So if you see us with Ponys on" -- Pony being a minor player in the shoe game -- "you know Pony came over." Later, when he mentions Renardo Jr.'s nickname, the Difference -- a nickname no one else seems to use, by the way -- you can almost see the shoe commercial dancing in his eyes.

There are, by my count, 182 Reebok logos inside the gym on the small campus of Philadelphia University, the site of July's Reebok All-American Camp, where Sidney makes an appearance. They are everywhere: on backboards, scorer's tables, doors, wall pads, folding chairs. They're affixed to the railing on the track high above the floor, nearly 100 of them encircling the gym. I don't even bother counting the Reebok shoes and the Reebok uniforms and the Reebok pencils and the Reebok lanyards and the Reebok signs that some poor soul had to hang on lampposts all around campus. Reebok-Reebok-Reebok-Reebok-Reebok. With every repetition, the word seems stranger to the eye, and it occurs to me later that I have no idea what it means. As it happens, "reebok" is the Afrikaans rendering of "rhebok," an antelope that reminded European settlers of a type of deer called the roebuck, a word that many years later could be found adjoined to the word "Sears." These are heady connotations: imperialism and commerce. One hell of a give-and-go.

I mention the logos to Christopher Rivers, Vaccaro's successor as Reebok's director of basketball. He seems flattered. "I'm gonna have someone else count 'em," he says,

adding that the placement is anything but haphazard. "Everything is done strategically," he says. "There isn't a place you can shoot a picture without getting a logo."

The origins of the camp go back to 1984, when, under Vaccaro's midwifery, the ABCD Camp was born. It stood for Academic Betterment and Career Development, though no one ever used the full name, and depending on its creator's allegiance, ABCD has been a Nike camp, a Converse camp, an Adidas camp and a Reebok camp, though it was always, above all, a Sonny Vaccaro camp. It was Vaccaro, a promoter of high-school all-star games, who first paid college coaches to outfit their teams in Nikes, Vaccaro who signed Michael Jordan to his first shoe deal, Vaccaro who hugged Kobe Bryant just moments after he was drafted. And as he moved from company to company, taking his camp with him, a new event would sprout up in ABCD's place, the various camps and tournaments running concurrently. The basic aim never changed, however: to give scores of the nation's best high-school players exposure in front of the finest college coaches in the country (and vice versa), and to bury those kids in a hail of shoe logos.

"There's never been anything in the history of amateur basketball as successful as the ABCD Camp," Vaccaro says of his creation. "And for this [the players] are vilified. Summer basketball and summer camps, starting with the Nike camp, the ABCD Camp, have been the epitome of what basketball is."

Vaccaro is the first person to cop to the venality of the summer circuit. "It's a cesspool, and we start the process," he told the authors of "Raw Recruits," a 1991 expose of college-hoops recruiting. A few years later, he told The New York Times's Robert Lipsyte that "what I'm doing is morally wrong. But it's not in my power to stop it." In the bizarre moral universe of basketball, summer basketball has the virtue of being honest, at least on occasion, about its wickedness. When I asked one A.A.U. coach, Damian Johnson, how one best goes about building a program, he talked nakedly of putting together "the best team money can buy." (At the high end, a team, often set up as a charity, might get $100,000 from a sneaker company, tax-deductible, in addition to donations from a variety of benefactors who may or may not include college boosters and agents. That covers the costs of shipping a team around the country, as well as remuneration for the coach.)

Every sport exploits its prodigies, but none seems to cause the vast and unceasing tut-tutting that summer basketball does. Two years ago, O. J. Mayo, the nation's most coveted high-school player and maybe the purest product of the summer system to date, picked up the phone and called U.S.C.'s head coach, Tim Floyd, to whom he had never spoken and who thought so little of his chances to sign the superstar recruit that he hadn't even sent Mayo a brochure. "Coach," he said, according to one account, "this is O. J. Mayo. I'd like to come to your school." When Floyd asked for Mayo's phone number, he answered, "No. I'll call you." As Rodney Guillory, an associate of Mayo's, had explained to Floyd, Mayo wanted to market himself for a year before the draft and decided Los Angeles was the best place to launch his brand. Mayo, in effect, was recruiting Floyd. When an ESPN investigation later alleged that Mayo had received cash and gifts from a "runner" for an N.B.A. agent, his saga became a handy symbol of

the ultimate corruption of basketball. But what, in the end, was harmed besides some outdated notion of amateurism? Certainly not Mayo. He played a single season at U.S.C. and then, in June, was taken third in the N.B.A. draft.

This summer, Vaccaro was instrumental in the decision by the prized point-guard recruit Brandon Jennings to spurn Arizona -- he had not yet qualified academically -- and instead play professionally overseas, sidestepping the N.B.A. entirely and making Jennings a wealthy man. (He was reportedly inspired after he and his mother heard Vaccaro on the radio discussing Europe as a viable option for newly minted high-school grads.) Playing in Italy for Lottomatica Virtus Roma, Jennings will earn $1.2 million this season in salary and endorsements. If all goes well, he will be a top-10 pick in next year's N.B.A. draft.

To see Mayo work the phones, or Jennings draw a paycheck in euros at an age when he'd normally be running suicides for Lute Olson, is to see the players gaining the leverage that probably should have been theirs in the first place. For Mayo and Jennings, the supposedly dysfunctional summer game was in fact perfectly functional.

The Philadelphia camp is a disorienting affair. It's not immediately clear who the intended audience is. There are only a handful of fans and a smattering of talent-scout gurus, plus of course the coaches. The coaches are there to recruit, certainly, but because of rules that bar contact with the players -- the coaches can't even use the same bathroom -- it seems more accurate to say the coaches are there to be seen recruiting. They are marketing themselves and their schools just as surely as Reebok is hawking sneakers. The players, for their part, seem to try very hard to pretend they're not being watched, though you catch them feigning a limp now and then after a blown layup. They'll also glance toward the stands from time to time, up to where Mike Krzyzewski and Rick Pitino and Billy Donovan and other Division I coaches are sitting.

On the floor, some of the players look drum-tight, as you might expect -- but not Sidney, who is the only one mugging in his camp photograph. He has a mixed week. Midway through, he submits to the indignity of a press conference devoted almost entirely to his weight. In games, he turns himself into the camp's tallest guard, firing away from the perimeter though he is easily the biggest guy in the gym. He also finds himself fencing with the refs again. In one game, he picks up three fouls in a minute, and from where Renardo Sr. is sitting, there comes a hoarse, concussive sound. "Boooo!" And then another: "Booo!"

"He's gonna be up there as one of the all-time players [who make you] just shake your head and wish he'd wake up and figure it out," Hoop Scoop's Clark Francis says later. "Four years ago he could play any position, do things on the perimeter. He wasn't heavy. And now he's basically an underachiever. It's a tragedy." (Francis, it should be noted, thinks Shaquille O'Neal is an underachiever.)

If his performance is indeed a disappointment, perhaps it's only because Sidney is being measured against the absurdly high standard he set for himself. "He's the victim

of the cancer of early success," says Tom Konchalski, the talent scout. "They may have adult ability, but they're kids. It's unrealistic to expect a maturity level you find in an adult." The Sidneys themselves are sanguine about Renardo's prospects. As of September, Francis had dropped Sidney to 39th in his rankings (he had once held the top spot) and had named him the biggest disappointment for the second summer in a row, but as both father and son are fond of saying, "the only ranking we care about is David Stern's."

During one game in Philly, I find myself sitting behind Rick Pitino. I mention the common criticism of Sidney, that he can often look like he's saving himself. Pitino snorts: "Saving himself for the Lakers."

The story goes that when his son was a seventh-grader in Jackson, Miss., Renardo Sr., then a security guard, approached a local A.A.U. coach named James Wright. "He saw me and said, 'Coach, I got a son in the seventh grade, about 6-foot-5.' Oh, really? Sure," recalls Wright, now an assistant coach at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. "He said, 'Coach, he wants to play on your team.' I said just bring him by. He brought him by; I worked him out. . . . This guy's a pro. It took me five minutes. I told his dad, 'You sure you want me to coach him?' And his dad was just shocked. He didn't think he was that good. It was ridiculous. . . . He had no clue what that kid was.

"He was so versatile," Wright continues. "A freak of nature with length, ballhandling skills, and the kid's 6-foot-5 at 12 years old? That's a pro."

Soon enough, Wright was calling Christopher Rivers at Reebok and then Vaccaro himself, suggesting they invite the boy to Reebok's Camp Next. About watching him for the first time, Vaccaro says, "A blind man could see. There was no question he was gonna be a great player. From that minute on, the family and I started a rapport." Sidney debuted at ABCD the summer before ninth grade and was named co-M.V.P. of the underclassmen's all-star game, and from there his stardom was assured.

And that's when high-school basketball got in his way. In his freshman year, Sidney hoped to play for a former University of Mississippi assistant, Wayne Brent, at the private Piney Woods School. The Mississippi High School Activities Association, however, ruled him ineligible. In Mississippi, private schools can only draw in-state students from within a 20-mile radius of the school, according to the association's executive director, Ennis Proctor; the Sidneys lived 28.6 miles from Piney Woods, according to Brent. Had Sidney attended a public school, he would have gone to Forest Hill High School, where, some local observers pointed out, Proctor had once served as principal. Sidney practiced with Piney Woods and watched from the bench during games, and that summer seemed to indicate he might skip high-school basketball entirely, which raised eyebrows among the message-board set.

"My thing is, what makes high-school basketball the alpha and omega?" says Reebok's Christopher Rivers, who is black. "White people, traditionally. Indiana. Playing for your

school's great, but he's not playing as a hobby, so he can go out on a Friday night, score 17 points and go to the pizza parlor. He's playing because it's his career."

So the Sidneys, including Renardo Jr.'s mother, Patricia, and two of his three siblings (Tacus and a sister, Tiarra), decamped for California. "To be honest," Renardo Sr. says, "L.A. was the last resort. It was between Atlanta, Texas and L.A., and it took us a little bit of time to make that decision. We went to L.A. a couple times. We're good friends with Master P," the rapper, who also runs an A.A.U. team out of L.A. "You have to do what's best for your family."

It was a good fit. Sidney's new school, Artesia High, ran a highlight video at the team banquet at the end of the season, with a U.C.L.A. assistant coach in attendance. "I was watching his mouth drop," says Loren Grover, Artesia's then head coach. That year, there were plenty of highlights to choose from. "There was one fast break in a playoff game against Simi Valley. The point guard, Lorenzo McCloud, just threw it to the rim. It was, like, 'What are you doing?' And Renardo comes out of nowhere, catches it in midair, throws it down right behind him and dunked it. He never even saw the rim. Just . . . wow."
Is basketball a danger? Is Renardo Sidney a danger?

We're sitting in a Thai restaurant in Los Angeles, not far from Fairfax High School, where Sidney has just started his senior year and where his team will likely once again contend for the city and maybe the state title. This morning he was run ragged in the school's gym, under the whistle of John Williams, a freelance trainer and former N.B.A. big man whom everyone called "Hot Plate" to distinguish him from the lankier John (Hot Rod) Williams, the springy former N.B.A big man.

Sidney transferred to Fairfax for his junior year, just months after winning a state championship at Artesia. There were a number of factors, according to his father, including Patricia's new job in the Hollywood area. And though he doesn't mention it, the fact that Coach Grover had left Artesia for Pomona's Diamond Ranch High School -- for reasons Grover won't discuss, other than to say he had been placed in "a difficult situation" -- no doubt figured in the decision as well.

At the moment, however, Sidney and I are chewing over the matter of the mohawk, a hair style that Sidney wore, briefly and regrettably, earlier this year. He thinks it had a good deal to do with his problems at a tournament in Arizona in May, when he recalls earning at least one technical foul every game and getting tossed twice. "The mohawk made me kinda crazy," Sidney is saying.

Basketball makes its own monsters. They are the outward manifestations of the game's bipolarity -- its abiding pathology, the one true fundamental, going all the way back to James Naismith and his famously unruly Y.M.C.A. charges. Naismith saw the game as a pedagogical pursuit, something to occupy the men during the cold winters in Springfield, Mass., and not incidentally to spread the robust gospel of muscular Christianity. But at the same time, he designed the game expressly in the hope that the

masses could learn it on their own, no coach necessary, taking the sermon out of the preacher's hands.

"Is Basket-Ball a Danger?," the Y.M.C.A. newsletter asked in 1894. "The gymnasium is not a playhouse," a director for the organization wrote, sounding many of the same notes the N.B.A. would hit a century later in demonizing its own employees as overpaid greedheads during labor strife, "and when a man gets to be a basketball fiend it is very hard to do anything with him."
And here is Renardo Sidney, the sum of basketball's newest fears.

"Renardo Sidney," Reebok's Christopher Rivers says. "Fantastic basketball player. Good kid, never been arrested, not on drugs, never kicked out of school, not failing classes. He's a normal kid. Probably comes home late and spends too much time on his computer. But because he's 6-foot-10 and he's special and has the ability to make a lot of money if he continues his craft, and he's treated like there's something wrong with him? What's wrong with him?"

Sidney claims that he doesn't read his notices, and that he only hears what people are saying about him through his parents. "Ain't nothing on the Internet but negative stuff," he says. Still, he seems fully apprised of the charges leveled against him and his father. "That he can't control me," he says. "That they see where I get my attitude from. I don't like that." He is keenly aware that people now call him fat. "It's true," he says. "I was fat. I put that in my brain when I get on the floor. All I can think of, he's fat, he's slow, he's lazy. So I just work harder, you know?"

He's at 270 pounds now, down from nearly 300 and still dropping, the fruits of a steady month of workouts, sometimes two a day. He starts plyometrics training in a few days, and his father hopes to hire a personal chef soon, someone who will keep the fridge stocked with three healthy precooked meals a day. "More have been slain by supper than the sword," as the talent scout Tom Konchalski notes. Sidney is one of the best youth athletes in the land, and now this is what basketball has become: an 18-year-old responding to fat jokes.

Which is why, when the waiter materializes, there is a particularly fraught moment as Sidney deliberates over the menu. "Do you all have that brown rice?" Sidney asks. (He eats here frequently.)

The waiter nods.

"Does it taste just like the fried rice I've been eating?"

The waiter seems doubtful. "If you use brown rice, it'll be soggy."

"But I'm saying, will it taste like what we've been eating?"

Sidney turns to ask his dad something, then whips back around and starts tapping his menu on the table thoughtfully.

The waiter's pen is poised.

"Just give me the brown rice, like how you make the other rice. It has that little sweet taste to it?"

"Everything's the same," the waiter says. "It's just the texture."

"It's fine, it's fine," Sidney says at last. A pause. "But no vegetables."

The waiter scurries off, and Sidney alights once again on the subject of his mohawk. It was nothing dramatic, nothing like you might have found on Mr. T. Still, in Arizona, he found himself mouthing off constantly, especially to the refs. What would he say? "You suck," he says. "But it'd be, like, with cuss words." He'd cuss at his dad, he says. "I'd cuss out anybody. It [the mohawk] just made me go crazy." People noticed, too. The University of Arizona student paper described him as "not the character Arizona wants." So Sidney shaved the thing off and swore never to have one again. "And when I cut the mohawk off," he says, "I was just a normal person."

High school football combines are raising profits and eyebrows

Firms offer events to kids as young as middle-school age who eye scholarships

Ryan Basen
News &Observer
Wednesday, Nov. 05, 2008

Kyle McKeown, Price Litton and Christian Lowder hope to play college football.
So in May, the Weddington High students went to Columbia to participate in a combine. They showed recruiters how fast they can run 40 yards, how high and far they can jump, and how agile they are. Organizers also measured their height, weight and wingspan.

The trio, who as freshmen played on the Weddington junior varsity last fall, were among 55 freshmen at the combine, one of 44 that New Jersey-based Schuman Sports ran for eighth- through 10th-graders nationally this year.

And with North Carolina's high school football season ending Friday for a lot of players, many with an eye on being recruited will go to combines during the upcoming off-season. Such events used to be reserved for seniors, then juniors, too. But as college recruiters have started to target younger athletes, combines are now available for kids as young as middle-schoolers.

That's one factor driving rapid growth in the high school football combine business. An industry of dozens of companies see themselves as avenues for teenage athletes to exhibit their skills to recruiters. They bring in revenue by charging those athletes and contracting with sponsors who want to tap into the teen market.

One organizer estimated it's a nine-figure industry nationally, saying it grew by 20 percent annually from 2003 to 2006 and 40 percent each of the last two years.

That includes VTO Sports, a new Charlotte company that runs an annual combine and camps to prepare athletes for combines.

Many speak highly of the industry, saying it helps kids land college scholarships and gives them a new outlet for competition.

But some coaches, parents and organizers urge caution. They say some companies are exploitative, raising unrealistic hopes for eager kids dreaming of scholarships. And they question why sponsors are involved.

College coaches consider many factors when recruiting players, including their combine data.

Most combines are modeled after the NFL Scouting Combine held in Indianapolis every February, when college players strut their stuff for pro scouts. Players' speed, agility, strength and other attributes are evaluated. Most are scheduled in the spring. Organizers promise to post results on their Web sites and share them with recruiters.

There are at least 600 national, regional and local circuits, up from 120-140 five years ago, says Andy Bark, who organized combines for two decades. They have spread to amateur lacrosse, baseball and softball; still, football is king.

Demand is fueled by athletes' desires for scholarships, competition and respect.
It's also a product of the increasing media coverage and attention paid to high school sports.

The first high school combines were 20 years ago in California. The point then was to help kids get noticed by recruiters, Bark says.

The point now is often to do that while making money for organizers and sponsors. Some combines rely on participation fees and sponsors for revenue, others only on sponsors.

Organizers and sponsors rarely profit from combines directly, they say (none agreed to disclose profits). They consider them complementary ventures.
Take Rivals.com. The 10-year-old company, purchased by Yahoo! last year, specializes in covering recruiting. It co-sponsors combines.

“Access to those camps is an important facet of our coverage,” says Rivals CEO Bobby Burton. “You get to evaluate players, you get photos of them, you get video, you can interview them.”

Rivals co-sponsors some events with Nike, one of several large companies to get into the combine market recently. Consider these other developments:

ESPN this year bought StudentSports Inc., which organized combines. ESPN wants new TV and online content. Nike will sponsor the old StudentSports combines, now free events directed by an ESPN division.

Nike bought SPARQ, a Portland, Ore., company. SPARQ tests are offered at many combines and are touted as accurate measurements of a player's athleticism.

Under Armour, a sports apparel and footwear company, co-sponsored combines with recruiting news service Scout.com several weekends last spring. Litton and Weddington teammate Anthony Boone, for example, got T-shirts, shorts, skull caps and socks at Under Armour's Charlotte combine.

As recently as a few years ago, Charlotte didn't host any major combines. This year, Schuman, Scout.com and Rivals.com circuits stopped here. VTO Sports also ran an event.

Such developments have stimulated the industry's growth. Participation in Schuman Sports combines increased threefold each year since the first batch in 2005, founder David Schuman says.

Velocity Sports Performance, a training center in south Charlotte, hosted two free combines on a Saturday afternoon in March. Nike sponsored them.

Here's what they looked like: A few dozen teens in sweat-soaked compression T-shirts, shorts and cross-trainers rotated between a small football field and track.
On the field, trainers in Nike T-shirts led them through drills such as sideways sprints between cones.

Some athletes were there to prepare for future combines. “It's just like doing schoolwork,” said Antwan Campbell, then a junior safety at West Forsyth High.
“You've got to know what you've got to get better at.”

Others hoped to post good numbers and earn attention from recruiters.

Anthony Hooks Jr. of Steele Creek, now a senior defensive back at Olympic High, planned to attend a combine in April as well. “We want to get him exposed as much as we can,” said his father, Anthony Sr.

In the competitive chase for a college football scholarship, combines have become a necessity in the minds of many players and parents. They can help, but that thinking can make them vulnerable because the industry is not closely monitored. Sources said many combine results never get to recruiters, for example, because organizers don't send them.

“There's people who are out there to help the kids and ones that are out there just trying to make money,” says Jed Hartigan, a Velocity trainer. “I've had kids (he trained) fly out to California and post great numbers and never hear anything …There are people out there who are trying to (con) these kids.”

Other kids are manipulated to come, says Billy Napier, Clemson's recruiting coordinator. “They want to play in All-Star games, and people who dictate the rosters are at the combines,” he says. “Recruiting services use it as leverage to get kids to come to combines.”

Some questioned why sponsors are involved. The National Athletic Testing System, an American Football Coaches Association initiative, conducts athleticism evaluations in private and sends results to recruiters.

“No TV crews, no sponsors, no audience,” says director of development Marty Rauch. “When you have a sponsor, you're beholden to the sponsor. We're not promoting a product or service. We're just trying to provide accurate data.”

The NCAA has enacted bylaws in three straight years to address combines. The most recent rule, adopted in March, banned Division I football coaches from attending and D-I schools from hosting them.

The new NCAA rule initially hurt the combine business. VTO, for example, canceled one in June because it was unwise to expose players to just Division II and III coaches, said co-founder Terence Lawshe. But business has bounced back.

The Internet provides easy mass promotion, Napier says. In addition, college coaches read the recruiting sites, and the combines give them more accurate data on potential recruits.

Finally, there's the competition factor.

“You're only going to play 10, 12 games of high school football a year on average and stay mostly in Charlotte,” says Burton, the Rivals CEO. “By going to camps, you're going to see kids from S.C., kids from southern Virginia…

“Ultimately, athletics is about competition and kids today, they want to be the best. So they get out and compete.”

For young stars, early is name of the game

High school athletes picking colleges sooner

By Julian Benbow
Boston Globe
November 9, 2008

No matter how many people were in the gym, Courtney Finn could always tell when someone was there to see her.

One night last winter, her Winthrop High girls' basketball team was playing a road game in Danvers. Finn scored 24 points that night, a couple dozen of the 1,000 she's collected in just three seasons in a Vikings jersey.

After the game, a woman in a Boston University jacket walked across the court and approached Winthrop coach Peter Grimes. "A scout," he'd say later. Unable to speak to Finn because of rules governing contact with a potential recruit, the scout chatted with Grimes.

But, in all likelihood, Finn already knew she was there.

College programs began showing interest in the 5-foot-8-inch guard the summer before her junior season, when she was playing AAU ball. In that short period, she attracted attention from BU, as well as the University of Maine, Providence, Stonehill, Assumption and a list of others. They kept track of her during the high school season.

"It's exciting," she said, "but it was nerve-racking at the same time. I was really nervous when it came to game time, knowing there was a coach in the stands watching me play."

Last March, Finn visited Bentley University and the following day, she made a verbal commitment to the Division 2 program. This week, she will formally sign papers.

Wednesday marks the start of the NCAA's early signing period, the seven-day window for nonfootball recruits to sign letters of intent in the fall. After Nov. 19, the recruiting will continue, but student-athletes can only make a verbal commitment until April.

Finn has had her mind set on Bentley for months, but the relief of making the decision official and getting it out of the way early allows her to enjoy her senior season without the pressure of playing every game as if her college education is on the line.

"It was like a load off my shoulder," she said. "All I have to do is fill out one application to a school I already knew I was going to. All my friends are stressing out filling out applications to 10 schools. It probably would get real crazy if I was unsure where I was

going. I don't know if I could deal with that. I see a lot of people going through that. It would be tough for me."

According to the NCAA, more than half of the nearly 20,000 signees from the 2007-2008 academic year signed during the early period. Those 9,805 student-athletes marked an 8 percent increase in early signees from the year before.

The benefits are simple. For the student-athlete, there's an advantage having college plans set while still in your senior year. For the program, they have a more concrete agreement from their recruit than a verbal commitment.

But debates about the early signing period often arise in the context of major-conference college basketball or football, where, as Rivals.com national recruiting analyst Mike Farrell put it, "Recruiting is now a sport, 365 days a year."

His counterpart at Scout.com, Dave Telep, said, "There was no single event to me more than LeBron James, no bigger recruit to me that changed high school coverage. We were doing it on the Internet beforehand, but he made everyone pay attention to it."

The byproduct is a landscape where the recruiting process speeds up. Schools begin to look at students earlier, expecting commitments earlier.

After recently speaking to a group in Pennsylvania, Boston University basketball coach Kelly Greenberg said, "I'm not a big fan of how speedy [recruiting] is getting, to be honest with you. You do hear of programs getting commitments from [current sophomores] who are graduating from high school in 2011, and you're thinking, 'How in the world can they know, at that age, where they want or what they want?' I don't want to speed up this process any more than it has been."

She uses University of Connecticut recruit Elena DelleDonne as a cautionary tale. As a 6-foot-5-inch Naismith high school national player of the year, DelleDonne attracted interest from schools as a seventh grader. She signed with UConn early last year, but never made it to fall semester. She went to summer school for three days and decided she couldn't do it. She transferred to Delaware, where she's now playing volleyball on a nonscholarship basis.

"The process is almost too ahead of itself right now," Greenberg said. "It used to be if they could visit your school the summer going into their senior year, then that was a head start. Now it's too late because so many girls make verbal commitments to schools in the spring of their junior year so they go into the summer basketball circuit already committed."

She does encourage athletes and their families to begin considering their college options as early as possible, in order to find the best fit. All but one player on Greenberg's roster signed during the early period, and she expects five more to sign

early next week. Caroline Stewart, a 1,000-point scorer at Masconomet before graduating in June, was one of Greenberg's early signees last year.

She said she didn't rush the process.

Before giving BU a verbal commitment, Stewart made four official visits. The NCAA allows five. She traveled to Holy Cross, Loyola in Maryland, St. Joseph's in Philadelphia, and American University in Washington, D.C. She was still able to make up her mind in time to sign in November.

Stewart said she didn't feel like she had to speed up her college process, but it did force her to deal with college plans earlier.

"Your junior year is more your senior year with the stress of getting everything in and taking tests and doing well in basketball," she said. "Once you sign early all that stress is relieved and you just get to enjoy playing basketball and your senior year with your friends."

Cousins may waver without UAB waiver

Jim Halley
USA TODAY
November 13, 2008 Thursday

LeFlore (Mobile, Ala.) big man DeMarcus Cousins, the No.3 recruit in the country, may wait before signing with Alabama at Birmingham because he wants a guarantee. If UAB coach Mike Davis should leave, Cousins wants an escape clause from his scholarship.

"That's exactly it," Cousins said Wednesday night. "It (an agreement) would be between me and Coach Davis."

Cousins said his family andLeFlore coach Otis Hughley and AAU coach Danny Pritchett are helping him through the recruitment process. If UAB doesn't come up with the agreement, he says he has other options.

"I'm just waiting, and I'm going to see how the season goes for them (UAB) and other schools," he said. "I hope I can still sign in the early signing period, but it's looking more like that may not happen."

Alabama at Birmingham spokesman Norm Reilly said the school could not comment because Cousins is still a prospect and hasn't yet signed.

Cousins wouldn't be the first to ask for a way out in case the coach leaves or the school is put on NCAA probation. But if he receives an escape clause, the agreement would not be written into the national letter of intent, which incoming athletes sign when they accept a scholarship.

"The national letter of intent cannot be altered or modified in any way," NCAA spokesman Chuck Wynne said.

Wynne said the LOI is an "agreement between the institution and the student-athlete, not the coach and the student-athlete." But, he added, that doesn't mean a school can't make an agreement to allow an athlete out of his or her scholarship.

For example, when Greg Oden and Mike Conley were going to sign with Ohio State, which was in the midst of an **NCAA investigation,** The Indianapolis Star reported that coach Thad Matta wrote them a letter that guaranteed they would be released from their scholarship if the **sanctions** had kept the team out of the 2007 **NCAA** tournament.

At Indiana last season, athletics director Rick Greenspan told the Star that two unnamed players had escape clauses that allowed them out of their scholarships.

Wynne says as far as the NCAA knows, players asking for release guarantees when they sign is "not a growing trend and not an overwhelming number."

Jim Haney, executive director of the National Association of Basketball Coaches, said he is "not aware of any sort of side deals. ... The bottom line is the letter of intent is the letter of intent. Historically, when there have been coaching changes, the prospects have asked for a waiver that would allow them to not be penalized. Some of them have been granted. Not all of those have been granted."

Another option for high school players who might be concerned the coach would leave, Haney says, "is to not sign until the spring, and then you know."

National sign of the times: He who hesitates is boss

Gary Parrish
CBS Sports
November 12, 2008

Ever heard of a national signing period where nobody signed?

If not, get ready, because it's here, folks.

And it's wild.

Or tame.

Or just plain weird.

"It's not normal, especially compared to last year when there seemed to be a bunch of guys flying off the board on signing day," said Scout.com recruiting analyst Evan Daniels. "There will still be a few guys pop, but it appears the top dogs will wait it out."

This is the second Wednesday in November. So the weeklong national signing period is officially under way, which used to mean something. All the best prospects would hold news conferences or whatever, sign a letter of intent and we'd spend the afternoon debating whether Duke or North Carolina or Syracuse had the best recruiting class. It was fun and exhilarating and a time for fans in search of hope to rejoice about the possibilities of a 17-year-old point guard.

Fast forward to today and ... yuck.

Four of the top five products from the Class of 2009 -- namely Derrick Favors, John Wall, Xavier Henry and Renardo Sidney -- seem set to let the period pass without a development, because after pondering their possible college decisions for at least two years they clearly need just a little more time. No sense in rushing things, not in this era. And though I can't honestly say I blame any of them, I do find it all to be a little ridiculous given how pretty much every major decision made in a normal human's life -- which job to take, what person to marry, whether to go with DirecTV or Dish Network, etc. -- is made in less time and with less back-and-forth.

Take Xavier Henry, for example.

The Oklahoma City product has been a high-profile recruit for as long as I can remember, been recruited heavily by everybody for as long as I can remember and been down to choosing between Kansas and Memphis for many, many months. He has been to both campuses multiple times. He knows both coaching staffs and every player on both teams, and yet Henry *still* isn't ready to make a decision despite the fact that he nearly made a decision in July.

No kidding.

I spoke to Henry at the LeBron James Skills Academy more than four months ago, at which time he acknowledged he had planned to announce his college decision from the Ohio event. Between you and me, it was going to be Memphis. But then Henry had second thoughts, decided to re-evaluate the situation, and the word from that day forward has been that Memphis is still the leader but that the longer Henry remained uncommitted the better it would be for Kansas.

Worth noting, Henry remains uncommitted.

So it appears Kansas is in position to come from behind and beat the Tigers for the second time in eight months, and it really has been a tough year for the city of Memphis, hasn't it? First, Mario Chalmers hit a shot that cost it a national title. Then Isaac Hayes died. Then TOM II (the Tiger mascot) died. And now Kansas is in position to keep Henry in Big 12 country, which might send the city over the edge.

"There's just a lot of uncertainty," Daniels said. "There is so much going on behind the scenes, and with recruiting anything can happen."

Or *not* happen.

So if you were hoping to learn over the next week where Favors, Wall, Henry, Sidney -- or even fellow top 10 national prospect Lance Stephenson -- plan to enroll, I'm afraid you might be disappointed. Sure, like Daniels said, there could be some surprises, and there usually are. But it appears the elite of the elite are determined to be the last of the last, which will make for a ho-hum national signing period, just another boring week in November.

On the other hand, the late signing period in the spring should really be something.

Can't wait for that.

Gillispie making some noise

Barnhart Q AND A ON YEAR ONE:Coach is right to use rules to find an edge

Mark Story
Lexington Herald-Leader
November 16, 2008

The knock on Kentucky men's basketball in the latter years of the Tubby Smith era was that UK lacked the necessary aggression in the recruiting wars.

In an age of shoe company and AAU coach influence, it was said that Smith and his staff were either unable or unwilling to manipulate the new realities of recruiting to Kentucky's advantage.

The Cats hadn't lost an opener since 2001.

On the weekend when the second year of the Billy Gillispie coaching regime officially began, no one is saying that about UK now.

Already in his brief Kentucky tenure, Gillispie has accepted a verbal commitment from an eighth-grader. He's hired family members of a prized UK recruit to work his summer camps. He used a loophole in the rules to hold Kentucky's Big Blue Madness a week early.

The question being asked in basketball circles now is whether the UK coach is a little too comfortable working in the gray areas.

On Monday, Kentucky Athletics Director Mitch Barnhart, the man who hired Gillispie, discussed that and other current issues with Kentucky basketball going into year two of the Billy G. era.

Question: What's your current report card for Billy Gillispie?

Barnhart: "I think Billy has given our program incredible energy on the road recruiting. He's given us great energy and passion for the game of college basketball. That's exactly what we expected from him.

"Our (20-man) roster is a big one (laughs). That allows us to compete in practice. And gives us flexibility which we haven't had in the last couple of years.

"Recruiting continues to go extremely well for us. Billy has been able to identify people who fit into his style of program and, more importantly, people he thinks can get us back to where we want to go. Which is back to the Final Four and competing for the championship."

Q: When you look at recruiting eighth-graders, finding a way to have Big Blue Madness a week early and some other things Gillispie has done, people are now asking if Kentucky isn't a little too comfortable working in the gray areas of the rules.

Barnhart: "I look at the football side of it. I remember when they had the Nike camps, the big show camps (for high school prospects). There was the big controversy, are they on campus, who is actually running them. So there was legislation about that.

"All the great football programs were out there saying, 'OK, we're going to do this until you tell us we can't.'

"Other schools have done things in recruiting that run right up to the speed limit. At Kentucky, we weren't doing that. Well, if the NCAA doesn't want something to occur, write a rule and stop it.

"That's not gray. It's black or it's white. Billy has gotten interpretations of the rules and he's used those to his advantage. Last time I checked, that's what we've hired him to do. If you don't like it, change the rule."

Q: But given the past history of scandal with Kentucky basketball ...

Barnhart: "But again, is what he's done within the rule? And it is. So then don't complain."

Q: Have you had discussions with Gillispie about the whole gray-area issue and any perception issues that might be arising?

Barnhart: "Oh yeah. He came to me every time. We had Sandy (Bell, the UK rules compliance chief) work with the NCAA and the SEC and we said, 'Are we within the rules, can we do it?' They said yes. So we said pursue it. And we'll be legit about that.

"Billy has been wonderful to work with in that respect."

Q. What is the status of Gillispie's still unsigned contract?

Barnhart: "He's working his way through it. He's got it and his folks are looking at it. We're fine. We're just working along."

Q. When I interviewed you, (UK President) Lee Todd and Billy G. after last season, all three of you indicated that the contract would likely be signed this past summer. What happened?

Barnhart: "It seems like, I won't say it's not a point of emphasis, it is. But we've got the one document (a memorandum of understanding signed shortly after Gillispie accepted the UK job) and we're working our way through that just fine.

"Would I like to get something finished up and done? Well, yeah. But every time we turn around there's always something else going on.

"Maybe we should make it more of a point of emphasis to get it done. It hasn't precluded anybody from working hard and doing the job they need to do. And it hasn't precluded us from paying anybody their money."

Q. Everyone says Billy G. appears far more comfortable in the role of Kentucky coach now as opposed to last year at this time?

Barnhart: "I totally agree with that. He's relaxed — well, as relaxed as he gets. I see him much more relaxed and understanding what it means.

"If you are in a new job, especially one of this magnitude — I don't care whether you are the athletic director, the football coach or the basketball coach — year one is always hard.

"Year two, I won't say it gets easier, but you know what it looks like. There is no mystery. Less mystery. You have an opportunity to grow into it and feel more comfortable.

"(Kentucky basketball) is something you can't explain until you've gone through it. Once you've gone through it, OK, now you understand how to grow and work your way through the highs and lows, the peaks and valleys and find the rhythm you want to find.

"I truly believe there is a rhythm and routine to every job. It takes you awhile to get there.

"This one is no exception. And probably more difficult, probably one of the more difficult jobs in all of college or pro sports because of the nature of its prominence.

"There are no professional franchises in our state. We become very much the focus of the entire state. It's different."

Q. So, you've gotten from Gillispie so far what you anticipated when he was hired?

Barnhart: "Oh, very much so. Very much so. He pours his heart and soul into this program. And that's what I want.

"I want people who are going to go out and recruit hard. Bring great passion to the program. And then, eventually, deliver a product in the competitive arena that gives us a chance to compete for a championship.

"I've got coaches doing that. Billy is one of them. We're getting there. He's worked really hard to elevate us in a lot of different areas. And I appreciate that."

For Recruits, High Schools Give It the Old College Try

Josh Barr
Washington Post
Friday, December 12, 2008

As he sat with the phone pressed to his ear, Bill McGregor could only shake his head. One of the Washington area's most respected high school football coaches, McGregor has guided DeMatha to 17 league titles and seven No. 1 finishes in The Washington Post's rankings during his 26 years at the school and annually sends a dozen or so players to college with athletic scholarships.

McGregor has witnessed football evolve from a seasonal sport into a year-round activity, with the spotlight shining brighter than ever on top prospects.

But on this day last spring, McGregor was incredulous as an eighth-grader -- mimicking the ever-popular declarations by high school athletes making their college selections -- announced that he was "committing" to play football for McGregor's school.

"What are you committing to?" McGregor replied, retelling the story and chuckling at the thought that a middle schooler considered his future plans so noteworthy.

Such proclamations once were laughable, but recruiting by high school coaches more and more resembles what college coaches do in their quest to find and attract top players. High school coaches scout youth league games, establish relationships with coaches of younger teams and try to persuade prospective players to visit their schools.

And just like with college coaches, the recruiting stakes for high school coaches are heightening, as many private schools pump more money into their athletic programs and create full-time non-teaching positions for some coaches. While private high schools add athletic emphasis to attract students, their coaches are putting more time into recruiting younger players.

"Absolutely, it's getting much more competitive, there's a lot of good programs in this area," said Montrose Christian boys' basketball coach Stu Vetter, who annually fields one of the region's elite teams. "I'm not sure if it's a good thing or a bad thing, but definitely there is more of an emphasis at the high school level.
You'll see a lot of high schools being very similar to college programs with the recruiting and everything that goes into a college program. It's happening."

* * *

Public school athletic coaches have simple rules to follow in recruiting potential players: Nearly all state high school athletic associations ban such conduct.
Private school coaches, however, have few limits. Locally, the Interstate Athletic Conference requires that potential players initiate contact with a high school coach, not

vice versa, before any dialogue can begin. The Washington Catholic Athletic Conference prohibits coaches from visiting prospective players' houses or from providing any gifts or gear to recruits, though McGregor scoffed at that rule, noting that a middle school athlete recently came to a DeMatha game decked out in a sweatshirt, hat and other apparel from a rival WCAC school.

Most private school leagues also stipulate that their members cannot provide athletic scholarships and that all financial aid must be need-based. This, too, is a point of contention for many coaches, nearly all of whom say privately that their school follows this rule but others do not.

And private schools that do not belong to a league generally operate without restrictions.

"A tremendous amount of time is spent on [recruiting], in so many different ways," O'Connell boys' basketball coach Joe Wootten said, noting a youth league game last fall at which he was joined in the stands by fellow WCAC coaches Mike Jones (DeMatha), Steve Turner (Gonzaga) and Marty Keithline (Bishop McNamara). "Obviously, identifying the young man is number one, and number two is building a relationship with him and his parents, whether it's a phone call or a note or getting them in for a visit."

Jones said he and his staff generally avoid talking to a parent while his son is playing.

"I try to be [situated] somewhere where I know the person I'm there to see will see me, whether it be a player or a parent," Jones said.

"If other coaches are there, I would definitely sit and talk with them. It's very cordial, and when the game is over, we respect each other's space. For a family, it can be rough sometimes: There might be six schools there to see your son and each of them wants their face time with you."

Wootten's father, Morgan, the Hall of Fame former coach at DeMatha, largely is given credit for the practice of recruiting players, turning the all-boys Hyattsville Catholic school into a national basketball power. After that, many coaches said, it was a matter of trying to keep pace. It only makes sense that coaches recruit in other sports, too.

"More often than not, it's a matter of trying to keep up with the Joneses," St. Albans football coach Gary Schnell said.

In basketball, there are numerous travel team tournaments that offer scouting opportunities. In football, unlimited-weight teams -- made up of players who exceed a size requirement for their age group -- are a good source for coaches to find players. Summer camps and coach-run clinics offer other means to find and evaluate talent.

Once a link is established, the coaches try to get players to visit their schools, often for a "shadow visit" where the players attend school for a day. There are invitations to attend practice or stand on the team's sideline during a game.

"You're sitting there as an eighth-grader and you see a high school coach come to your games, it's like getting recruited by a college or the NFL right now," said DeMatha senior quarterback Tom Chroniger, who attended Grace Christian School in Bowie as an eighth-grader and sifted through pitches from Good Counsel, Gonzaga, Bishop McNamara and Curley in Baltimore before choosing his school. "You definitely notice. They come down in their high school outfits or warmups. That's the world. It's like going to college. You're going to the high school that wants you to play."

That said, many of the coaches who emphasize recruiting would prefer to be doing something else. WCAC Commissioner Jim Leary felt that way when he was an assistant boys' basketball coach at Gonzaga in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

"I told [former Gonzaga coach Dick Myers], 'I love working with you, but I'm not going to go watch any seventh- or eighth-graders play,' " said Leary, who is in his second year overseeing the area's most prominent private school league.

"There is something kind of odd trying to convince a 12- or 13-year-old to come to your school. Heck, you have no idea, did the young man or woman mature too early? It's hard to look at somebody that young and think that by the time they're a junior or senior they're All-Met."

From a parent's perspective, the process can offer affirmation and promise for the future.

"I think most parents, saliva would be coming from their mouth for [coaches] to be looking for their child," said Keith Ross, whose son, Isaiah, was recruited to play football out of middle school by DeMatha and Riverdale Baptist before enrolling in a public school, Eleanor Roosevelt. "If [high school coaches] see something, that your kid could possibly play in college, you're excited. If someone is saying they're not, I want to see them."

Isaiah Ross, a standout defensive end-linebacker who has accepted a scholarship to play for Maryland, said the attention he received in middle school seemed unusual.

"It was odd seeing the DeMatha coach at my football games," he said. "It was something different. I wasn't expecting it."

* * *

Determining who is and who isn't a top prospect can be challenging. Some coaches check physical measurements such as height and weight, vertical jump and reach. Maybe the player has a tall sibling or a parent who was a standout athlete. As more

than one coach noted, running the 40-yard dash faster than 4.5 seconds is excellent for a high schooler, but there is no scale for determining what would be a good time for a preteen.

"It's so hard," McGregor said. "You're looking at eighth-graders, so it's all potential. You're looking at how big he is, how big can he get? How fast is he, how fast can he get? Sometimes with the skill [position] kids it's a lot easier. You can see the skill kids run and things like that. The hardest part is linemen; you don't really have a real good feel for them at all."

And as coaches increasingly scout games, more parents are sending highlight videos of their children's athletic feats to high school coaches, hoping to stir interest. McGregor said that after doing a clinic in Philadelphia last summer, he received two DVDs from seventh-graders who were interested in coming to DeMatha.

"Some kids jump off the screen; you know they're good," Good Counsel football coach Bob Milloy said. "But to be honest with you, there are so many teams and so many leagues that some of them are playing terrible competition and they're running all over the place and it's very difficult [to judge]. A lot of them are taken from ground level, which is difficult to evaluate. We're looking for big kids with good grades. Even if they're not very good, we figure that four years from now with coaching and the weight room, we can make them into players. You've got to take a chance on some of them."

Recruiting In The Shadows

JOEY JOHNSTON, IRA KAUFMAN and NICK WILLIAMS
The Tampa Tribune
December 14, 2008

The right player in men's college basketball can be the difference between a national contender and a team that struggles to compete. Winning teams fill arenas and unnversity coffers. Losing teams can get coaches fired.

With stakes that high, the NCAA, which governs college sports, is increasingly wary of what colleges sometimes do to get those difference-making athletes. Getting the star might mean first taking care of his friend, family members, or those in the inner circle who simply have their hands out.

Today, for instance, 6-foot-10 center Gus Gilchrist will make his debut for the University of South Florida. He is a potential franchise player for the Bulls, who have mostly been overmatched in basketball since joining the Big East Conference. Shortly after Gilchrist entered USF's program last summer, the Bulls created a job as a video and conditioning assistant for one of his closest friends.

Terrelle Woody was the player's personal trainer, adviser and spokesman as Gilchrist hopped from two high schools and two other universities before landing at USF. Hiring him broke no NCAA rules and the practice is widespread enough that many coaches know the drill.

"I had an opening on my staff last year and three different guys called me about it," said Phil Martelli, coach of Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. "They all said the same thing: 'If you hire me, I can deliver this guy (high school player) to your program.'

"Frankly, it made my skin crawl. Not to make an analogy that's a huge over-exaggeration, but hasn't slavery ended?"

The prospect of these shadowy deal-makers having such a large impact on one of the NCAA's marquee sports makes a lot of people nervous. Even if arrangements such as Woody's at USF don't violate the rules, many say the system has too many loopholes and is open to high-level abuse.

"Follow the money, follow the money," former University of Pennsylvania and Boston College coach Chuck Daly said, evoking images of Hal Holbrook's stern advice to Robert Redford in "All the President's Men."

In an unprecedented move, enforcement officials were deployed to Las Vegas, Orlando and other summer-basketball sites to infiltrate what NCAA President Myles Brand describes as a "dysfunctional" system of recruiting. On a staff of 20 investigators, the NCAA has now designated three solely for men's basketball.

"There has been growing concern at some of the things developing in men's basketball," NCAA spokeswoman Stacey Osburn said. "We want to get deeper into that environment and culture."

Front and center: The connections between Amateur Athletic Union coaches, sometimes affiliated with agents, and high-profile players.

"Recruiting is extremely difficult right now," said Virginia Tech coach Seth Greenberg, formerly of USF. "The player is the center of the universe. You've got to draw a circle around that player and then touch everyone in that circle. If you don't touch the right person, you're going to be eliminated."

'Return On Investment'

An ESPN investigation last spring revealed University of Southern California player O.J. Mayo, now in the NBA, had received money and gifts from agents, some as early as seventh grade.

Those gifts are meant to ensure loyalty when a talent such as Mayo goes on to play professional basketball. He was a first-round selection last summer in the National Basketball Association draft.

Sonny Vaccaro, who once advised Nike to design an athletic footwear line for a young player named Michael Jordan, calls it "capitalism ... return on investment" and says these arrangements "should be saluted."

Even some elite players, though, say they wanted to choose a school based on academics and basketball - not what their family or friends could get.

Kenny Boynton, a senior at American Heritage School in Plantation, is the No. 8-ranked player in the country and has committed to the University of Florida. He also plays in AAU tournaments for the elite Team Breakdown.

His father, Kenny Boynton Sr., said he rebuffed all calls from recruiters and "street agents" offering to broker deals.

"A lot of people put into these kids' minds the thought of 'What can they get?'" he said. "Those guys work the moms. They promise to take them to California for AAU and stuff.

"A lot of kids may get pressure from their parents if they're in a bad situation. Every situation is different. Those behind-the-scenes guys, they never come to the gym. As long as I've been with Team Breakdown, I've never seen it happen. I try to keep him around good people. The street agent knows who is vulnerable."

Last season, a last-second shot by Kansas guard Mario Chalmers sent the national championship game into overtime. The Jayhawks went on to beat Memphis. On the

bench was Chalmers' father, Ronnie, the program's director of basketball operations.

Chalmers is now in the NBA. His father has resigned. Mission accomplished.

Also on the bench that night was assistant coach Danny Manning, the former Jayhawks' All-American who led Kansas to the national title in 1988. His arrival at Kansas was clinched by the hiring of his father, Ed, onto coach Larry Brown's staff.

"The bottom line is people don't care how these kids get on the court," Vaccaro said. "They're only interested in the wins and losses."

Last summer, Baylor University hired Dwon Clifton, coach of the AAU team that includes the nation's top point guard prospect, John Wall from Raleigh, N.C. Wall hasn't signed a scholarship, but Baylor is on his short list.

It's 'About Relationships'

Lamont Peterson is administrative assistant to Memphis coach John Calipari. Peterson also is the personal strength and conditioning coach for freshman guard Tyreke Evans, who was the nation's fourth-rated prep player last season.

"Recruiting is about relationships," Calipari said. "Sometimes, it's with AAU coaches when you have one of their kids and you do well by them, then they help you get another kid. I have a lot of relationships and don't apologize for them."

Larry Orton, the father of Daniel Orton, a top-10 high school player, was paid $4,800 for speaking engagements at University of Kentucky camps, according to the Louisville Courier-Journal. The player's stepbrother was paid $1,950 for more talks to campers. Daniel Orton attended those camps. It was all legal under NCAA rules.

Daniel Orton has committed to Kentucky.

Kansas State's Michael Beasley, last season's national college Player of the Year, once made an oral commitment to the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. But the assistant coach who recruited him, Beasley's former AAU mentor, Dalonte Hill, moved to Kansas State and received a $400,000 salary.

Beasley signed with Kansas State.

"I think the whole thing needs fixing," said Orlando Christian Prep coach Reggie Kohn, a former USF point guard. "There are too many people pulling at these kids. As a high school coach, you'd want it recruiting to be under your control, along with the parents, but that's not how things work these days."

The NCAA's Involvement

Five months ago, John Henson of Sickles High School, a 6-foot-10 forward who has signed with top-ranked University of North Carolina, was surrounded by big-time coaches as he performed during an AAU national tournament in Las Vegas.

Also in the crowd: NCAA investigators.

The organization was stung by the revelations on Mayo and other high-profile players. The combination of money, pressure and opportunity for abuse raised numerous red flags, especially because the NCAA has little ability to control what goes on in AAU.

"The summer coach has in far more cases than not taken the place of the high school coach in terms of where the kid is going to go to school," said Bobby Knight, who won three national championships at Indiana and leads all Division I coaches with 902 career wins. "He goes to play for some guy that really has no ability to teach."

Vaccaro shrugs off the concerns.

"This is simply doing business. Nothing more," he said. University of Florida coach Billy Donovan said adults have failed the kids, pointing to an NBA rule that prohibits drafting players until they have turned 19. In effect, elite players are just passing through college and everybody knows it.

"O.J. Mayo is basically a good kid who works hard and means well, but he never should have been in college," Donovan said. "When these guys agents come around, how are you going to monitor a kid in the ninth grade?

"It's not the kid's responsibility to know all the NCAA rules and in the end, the kid is made out to be a bad guy. With the way things are set up now, of course these kids are going to have temptations."

So will coaches. Donovan has always known that. When his program captured its second consecutive national championship in 2007, he deflected the praise.

"We could've told you about strategy, about what our coaches did on the X's and O's," Donovan said. "But in the final analysis, that's not what gets you to the top. You build a program by recruiting the right kind of players. They're the driving force."

For College Athletes, Recruiting Is a Fair (but Flawed) Game

LIBBY SANDER
The Chronicle of Higher Education
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Despite all the alarm that recruiting in college sports has spun out of control, for many athletes the process was neither as intrusive, nor as lavish, as its critics have warned, according to a *Chronicle* survey of hundreds of current Division I athletes.

But the accelerated pace of recruiting, and the demands it placed on athletes during their sophomore and junior years of high school, left many of them feeling overwhelmed.

Some said they were uncomfortable with having to make hasty decisions during their senior year, sometimes in a matter of days, about whether to accept scholarships. And the majority of athletes said they had little exposure to the academic side of campus life, such as meeting with professors or sitting in on classes, during their campus visits.

Most of the nearly 300 athletes who responded to the survey, representing 17 men's and women's teams (but not football) at seven universities in the Mid-American Conference, said the institutions they now attend were fairly portrayed to them during the recruiting process. But a few had harsh words for the coaches who recruited them.

"Coaches can tell you whatever they want, pretty much what you want to hear," one athlete wrote in response to the online survey, which was conducted in October and November. "But once you sign your name on the dotted line, they can do whatever they want, and you're stuck there."

Although a few athletes had no qualms about the process, many found the experience unsettling.

"It was very overwhelming and stressful at times," one athlete wrote. "It was a big decision, and not always having a clear idea of what I wanted made it more difficult, especially when I had to tell coaches 'No.'"

NCAA rules governing athletics recruiting have grown ever more intricate, restricting how and when coaches may communicate with prospective athletes.
The rules are intended to protect recruits from overeager coaches who might otherwise push the limits with intrusive telephone calls and visits. Coaches and athletes have found the rules to be helpful and maddening to equal degrees, and the survey results reflected the paradox: For every complaint of having received too many phone calls or too many e-mail messages, there was a wish for more unfettered communication with coaches.

The survey also showed that as recruiting spreads to ever-younger athletes, the recruits are making greater numbers of unofficial visits to campuses before their senior year, trips that the students or their families must pay for. More than four-fifths of the surveyed athletes made at least one such visit, and nearly one in five players went on five or more unofficial recruiting trips.

The frequent visits also affect current athletes. Coaches call on them to entertain prospective athletes, show them around the campus, and escort them to team gatherings. More than half of the athletes surveyed, in fact, said that on their own official recruiting trips (those the colleges paid for), they had spent 12 or more hours with prospective teammates, attending games or going out for meals. After the visits, 62 percent of the respondents said they had stayed in touch with members of the team they met on their official visits.

The athletes urged coaches to offer recruits a practical view of their program both during campus visits and at other times, instead of an unrealistically polished version just for the sake of making a good impression.

"It's not terrible to show flaws," one athlete wrote. A program doesn't have to be "perfect" — it just has to be "the right fit."

In a trend that is trickling down from the high-profile sports of football and men's and women's basketball to almost all other sports at the Division I level, a third of the athletes surveyed said they had committed verbally to their college teams during their junior year of high school. Except for just 2 percent who committed during their sophomore year, the rest of the athletes who committed early did so during their senior year but before the sports' official signing dates.

While some athletes said committing early gave them a sense of relief and allowed them to put the recruiting process largely behind them, others said it placed them in the difficult position of having to make significant decisions far earlier than they would have liked, and often with little time to think the terms over.

"It's hard to know what you're going to want in a school and make such a huge life choice when you're 16," said one athlete.

Data: http://chronicle.com/weekly/v55/i17/17a00101.htm

Recruits getting younger and younger

Basketball coaches now offering scholarships to athletes in ninth and 10th grade

Ken Tysiac
Raleigh News & Observer
December 14, 2008

At 15, Tyler Lewis is used to being the youngest and smallest player on the court.

He's already in his third season starting for a high school varsity basketball team even though he's just a ninth grader and 5 feet 10, 145 pounds.

But he has exceptional passing ability and a dead-on jump shot from 22 feet at Forsyth Country Day. And he already has coaches with the Charlotte 49ers, Auburn and Virginia Tech telling him they will pay his tuition, room and board if he will play basketball for them.

"At first I thought it was a joke," Tyler said of his first offer, from Virginia Tech, which came last summer.

It's no joke. College coaches looking for a competitive edge are in some cases recruiting and accepting commitments from players earlier than ever.

Earlier this year, a player committed to Kentucky before picking a high school.

Recruiting analysts say about 10 current sophomores and a couple freshmen have committed to schools for basketball. Some coaches and administrators say it's not wise to put the pressure of choosing a college on teenagers who aren't mature enough to make such a decision.

"Kids aren't rational, autonomous decision makers," said William Morgan, a sports ethics expert at the University of Southern California. "... They seldom think about the long-term consequences of their actions."

The NCAA, the governing body of college sports, doesn't have a rule preventing coaches from offering and securing non-binding verbal agreements from players of any age. But the National Association of Basketball Coaches' board of directors in June asked coaches not to offer scholarships or accept commitments from players before June 15 following their sophomore year of high school.

Before then, some coaches say, it's difficult to predict a player's athletic and academic potential. The NABC doesn't have power to enforce its principles beyond perhaps withholding Final Four tickets from coaches who don't follow them.

But the NABC is working with conference officials to push forward legislation to curb early recruiting. One current NCAA proposal aims to stop coaches from working at camps (except at their own school) where seventh- and eighth-graders are receiving instruction.

Some coaches, particularly those at schools that aren't traditional powers, say that identifying prospects early and developing longstanding relationships helps them compete for talent against high-profile programs such as Duke and North Carolina.

NCAA rules limit their contact with players in the middle school and early high school years, but coaches develop relationships through players' high school and club team coaches.

NABC executive director Jim Haney, though, said players who make early commitments are done a disservice because schools are gambling on how they will develop athletically and academically.

"We care about these kids," Haney said, "and we want to get them in the right setting."

Diaper dandy

"Change your diaper," a rough crowd taunted Tyler two years ago when he started as a seventh-grader on Statesville Christian's varsity against Camden (S.C.) Military Academy.

Only 13 years old, Tyler scored 27 points that night.

He began getting serious attention from recruiters last season as an eighth-grader at Forsyth Country Day. Coaches who would come to scout Ravenscroft High standout Ryan Kelly, who recently committed to Duke, saw Lewis score 13 points in a triple-overtime loss.

"(He) looks like he shouldn't be on the court with the kids he's on the court with," said Rusty LaRue, the former Wake Forest three-sport standout who coaches Tyler at Forsyth Country Day, located about 12 miles west of Winston-Salem.

Some of the plays Tyler makes are dazzling. At the Prep Challenge at Charlotte last summer, he chased down a loose ball near midcourt. With his back to the basket, he made a perfect, no-look pass over his head to a teammate for a dunk.
In the semifinals of a team tournament at UNC-Greensboro during the summer, Tyler tipped the ball over an opponent's head as they chased a rebound, then caught up to the ball just in time to put it behind his back to avoid another opponent. Then he faked a left-handed, behind-the-back pass to freeze a defender before finishing a layup with his left hand.

"Everybody huddles around him and says, 'Did he just do that?' Because he's just such a small kid," LaRue said.

Through 11 games this season, Tyler averaged 13.5 points, 4.3 assists and 2.1 steals steals as Forsyth Country Day was 9-2. He is an odd combination of naive and sophisticated.

Rick Lewis, his father, coaches the Carolina Flight club team that has taken him and Tyler to Orlando, St. Louis, Las Vegas, New York, Cincinnati and San Diego in search of top competition. He established the club in 2002 in part because he wanted to coach Tyler.

On most weekends from September through March, Lewis runs a drills and skills camp at North Mecklenburg High.

Tyler, who loves to watch "Spongebob Squarepants" and prefers chicken fingers when ordering at restaurants, has taken unofficial visits to seven schools, including Charlotte, N.C. State, South Carolina and Wake Forest. He said he isn't in a hurry to choose.

He has no idea what he might want to study in college. He likes math, but remember, he's just in ninth grade and started Algebra II this fall.

"I'm going to wait a little bit longer (to commit) so I'll have a better look at the academics and stuff like that," he said.

Youth movement

Players can't sign binding scholarship agreements until November of their senior year, but that hasn't stopped schools and young athletes from making non-binding verbal agreements.

In May, eighth-grader Michael Avery of Encino, Calif., gave a non-binding commitment to Kentucky.

Closer to home, N.C. State took a commitment from Raleigh Word of God's C.J. Leslie in 2007 at the end of his freshman year. North Carolina received commitments from Kendall Marshall of Arlington, Va., in September of 2007 and Reggie Bullock of Kinston in January of 2008 when they were sophomores.

All those commitments came before the NABC established its policy.

Because they're not binding for either party, commitments don't always last.

Taylor King of Huntington Beach, Calif., committed to UCLA in 2003, shortly before entering ninth grade. King changed his mind, played as a freshman a Duke last season and then transferred to Villanova.

King is one of many players who have had a change of heart, "decommitted," and choose other schools instead.

"To me, that's a problem," said Virginia Tech coach Seth Greenberg, who is disappointed when players go back on their word.

(None of the coaches recruiting Tyler will comment on him specifically. NCAA rules prohibit coaches from talking about recruits until they sign with the school.)
If committed players mature and develop as expected, coaches urge them to keep their word. But if a player unexpectedly fails to grow or improve, coaches sometimes find ways to get out of their end of the commitment.

In those cases, Greenberg and Auburn coach Jeff Lebo said, a coach might explain to the player that he won't get much playing time. If the player still wants to come, Greenberg and Lebo said, the coach is obligated to honor that commitment.

"You've got to be honest with kids," Greenberg said. "I think that's the only way you can be. Because you certainly don't want someone coming in under false pretenses."

To avoid coming to a school where they wouldn't play, coaches say, players usually agree to find a new school. Charlotte 49ers coach Bobby Lutz said he has never withdrawn a scholarship offer, but other coaches do.

"I'm aware of many offers that have been rescinded, whether officially or unofficially, through the years," Lutz said. "It's happened for years. It may be more pronounced now, but it's not just a recent phenomenon."

'Abdication of ethics'

Haney, the NABC executive director, said it's difficult to predict if a junior high player will make enough progress on the court and in the classroom to live up to a commitment.

"Kids committing in the eighth or ninth grade, in some cases they haven't even taken a core course toward initial eligibility," Haney said.

Davidson coach Bob McKillop said college presidents and deans of admissions need to stop coaches from offering seats at their universities to players with no high school academic credentials.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski worries about high school students getting preoccupied with college instead of focusing on high school academics and experiences like the prom.

"They're going to get screwed up a little bit," Krzyzewski said. "You've got to stay in the moment. As a parent, I think you would be concerned."

Morgan, the sports ethics expert, said coaches under intense pressure to win sometimes do things they otherwise wouldn't. He said it's up to the schools to stop them.

"Institutions can't get off the hook here," Morgan said. "Simply leaving these kind of decisions up to the coaches is an abdication of an ethical role of these institutions."

Morgan, author of "Ethics in Sport," "Why Sports Morally Matter" and other books about sports ethics, said it's up to parents and high school coaches to protect them from college coaches who might not have their best interests at heart.

Morgan said parents sometimes get starstruck by the attention and don't act in paternalistic ways, either.

"Obviously the younger they go, the more problematic it becomes," he said.

Will he grow?

Because of his extensive background as a club team coach, Rick Lewis isn't as awestruck as some parents when he meets famous coaches or players.

He said Tyler has been around so much big-time basketball that he isn't easily impressed, either. During the summer, he played in the backcourt alongside New Orleans Hornets All-Star Chris Paul at a Pro-Am event at Forsyth Country Day.

Tyler enjoyed it but wasn't used to playing with another point guard who commanded the ball.

"It's pretty cool playing with him," Tyler said. "He's a good leader. He tells you what you need to do on the court and what man to pick up and everything."

What's Tyler's basketball future? During a break at his annual Tournament of Champions club basketball event in Chapel Hill last summer, All-Star Sports recruiting analyst Bob Gibbons spoke glowingly of Tyler, who twice has attended Gibbons' evaluation clinics for younger players.

Gibbons calls him an outstanding passer and playmaker and says his point guard skill level is advanced far beyond his years. He says Tyler is a precise shooter if there isn't a taller player guarding him. Gibbons believes he has "tremendous upside" if he continues to grow.

If not, Gibbons said, it's difficult to project him as a prospect for a major college program.

"That's the unknown factor," Gibbons said, "and the risk coaches take in offering players this young and immature."

Most high school freshmen do grow, and Tyler said coaches like seeing him shine now against bigger, older players. He surmises that coaches expect him to get quicker and stronger. In the past year, he has grown two to three inches, and his brother Colby is 6-2 as a high school senior.

Tyler grew up a North Carolina fan and said he probably would go there if given a chance but is in no hurry to decide on a school.

"As I get along in high school, I can go visit some more colleges, see how I like them, meet the coaching staffs," he said.

His father is proud and excited about his son's prospects, but also is more pragmatic. Rick Lewis wants to make sure Tyler won't sit the bench wherever he goes.

He acknowledges that the schools that offered scholarships early made an impression on the family with their early interest. That's the edge some coaches are seeking, despite the NABC's objections.

"Whoever shows you the most love early," Rick Lewis said, "you have to show them some respect."

Social-networking sites full of risks and benefits for student-athletes

David Borges
New Haven Register (Connecticut)
December 14, 2008

Dec. 14--Patrick Sellers, the assistant coach for the UConn men's basketball team, looks around at all the communication devices owned by the players and can only shake his head in amazement.

"I tell them all the time, and they laugh at me, 'When I was in college, all I had was this square, black beeper,'" said Sellers, who graduated from Central Connecticut State in 1991. "That's it."

It's a very different world these days. Facebook and MySpace, Blackberries and iPhones, text messages, emails and camera phones keep kids in almost constant communication with their friends, families or whomever. Sellers' black beeper, like the phone booth, is little more than a relic of the past.

"It's incredible how kids can interact on Facebook or MySpace and also be text-messaging and e-mailing, while carrying on a regular conversation, listening to an iPod or watching TV," Quinnipiac men's basketball coach Tom Moore said. "It's just sort of an expected part of the college generation today. It's certainly a far cry from my generation or my parents' generation."

It's the social-networking sites -- MySpace and, particularly, Facebook -- that are the most popular among student-athletes. They're also the most risky.

Post a photo of yourself on your own or someone else's Facebook page holding a beer at a party or engaging in some other objectionable behavior and you could find yourself a star on badjocks.com -- not to mention suspended or kicked off your team, even expelled from school. Post a racist or profane message that embarrasses yourself, your team and your university, and you could face similar punishment.

"We tell kids," UConn compliance director Alicia Alford Queally said, "if they wouldn't want their mother or grandmother to look at it and be disappointed, don't post it."

And yet it happens all the time. Look no further than Quinnipiac, where a freshman basketball player, who had previously been the target of racially harassing phone calls, was recently expelled for posting racist threats on a fellow African-American student's Facebook page. In the past year, in fact, four area colleges -- Quinnipiac, Southern Connecticut State, Yale and the University of New Haven -- have each had student-athletes find their way onto badjocks.com, for varying reasons.

And there's the added threat of a friend, or even a total stranger, posting an objectionable message on your site, or an unflattering photo of you on their own page.

"It's like getting a tattoo," Moore said. "When you put it on, it's permanent. I know there are some things where you can put a picture on and take it off, but it seems once it's put up there, it's up there, and it's a part of you that's up there. That can be dangerous."

A NEW PHENOMENON

Perhaps the most alarming thing about Facebook is how quickly it has become such a fabric of college students' lives. When Ed Peters, a senior offensive lineman on the Southern Connecticut State football team, arrived on campus four years ago, Facebook wasn't even available at the school.

Today?

"I'd say everybody on our football team has Facebook," Peters said.

Indeed, facebook has recently surpassed MySpace in terms of monthly unique visitors, largely because of its popularity on college campuses. Founded in 2004 by students at Harvard, Facebook membership was originally limited solely to Harvard students, then to any Ivy League student, and eventually to any college student with a legitimate university e-mail address.

Ultimately, it was expanded to high school students, then to anyone aged 13 and over. Facebook now has more than 120 million users worldwide, according to its own Web site.

In a nutshell, here's how it works: membership is free, so long as you provide a valid email address. Once you're signed up, you can design your page any way you'd like -- with photos, video downloads, quotes, and "status updates" that tell people what's on your mind at the time, among other features.

Profiles are usually hidden from the general public and can only be accessed by "friends." To become a friend of a fellow Facebook user, you must send a friend request and be confirmed, or confirm a request from someone else. Hence, the verb "friendrequest" has been introduced to the modern-day vernacular.

That's where things can start to get tricky for the student-athlete. Members of the UConn men's basketball team, for instance, are high-profile personalities in this state. They can get hundreds of friend-requests per week, making it difficult to decipher who they want to accept and who are strangers who may only want to delve as much as they can into the players' personal lives, or post messages on the "wall-towall" feature each page offers.

Seniors Jeff Adrien and Craig Austrie each have more than 4,500 friends.

"If I don't know you, I won't accept you," said junior center Hasheem Thabeet, who called himself "so swaggerlicious" on a recent Facebook status update. "A lot of people from different places will "friend" you. When you lose or do something bad, some other fans will write something on your profile."

Kemba Walker, a freshman, takes an opposite tack.

"I accept all UConn people," Walker said. "Some people who friend-request me on Facebook and MySpace, I see at the games. Some of them actually live in my dorm, so I get a chance to meet them. It gives me a chance to meet other people, not just my teammates."

Senior A.J. Price, however, isn't a fan of the social-networking sites.

"Personally, I don't have either Facebook or MySpace," Price said. "There's too much access, and it becomes too hectic. So many people hit you on a regular basis that you basically start accepting everybody, and anybody becomes your buddy.

"I don't think it's smart for any athlete, at any level, to have those types of pages."
Of course, it's not just members of the highest-profile team in Connecticut that get friendrequests from total strangers. As a member of the SCSU field hockey team, Cheshire native Grace Martha is hardly a household name. But she has accepted a few friend-requests from people she hardly knew: a pair of men who used to work in the SCSU equipment room and still follow all SCSU sports, as well as a female alumnus who has donated a substantial amount of money to the school's athletic foundation.

Peters said he and other teammates have received requests from SCSU football fans, but he usually only accepts them from people he knows or fellow Southern students.

Peters also recalls former SCSU quarterback Steve Armstrong getting a friend-request from a rival defensive end shortly before a game a few years ago. He assumes the end wanted to trash-talk, but Armstrong didn't take the bait.

"I think it's a great, helpful tool," Peters said of Facebook. "You've just got to be careful."

FINDING TROUBLE

Last April, shortly after the Huskies were unceremoniously ousted from the NCAA tournament, UConn guard Craig Austrie posted the following Facebook status update: "Craig Austrie is in need of 2,000 dollars right now if u are a true UConn basketball fan and you're (sic) rich and can spare 2,000 dollars ... e-mail me ... Thanks."

"It was a joke," said Austrie, now a senior. "(Compliance) made me take it down. It was obviously a joke, it wasn't a big deal."

Queally said she had no recollection of the matter.

Fortunately for Austrie and the Huskies, nothing became of the ill-advised post. Other studentathletes haven't been so lucky.

In a similar situation to Austrie's, University of Buffalo top scorer Andy Robinson posted this (unedited) message on his Facebook page last April: "I am paying anybody who have read the book "there are no children here' by Alex Kotlowitz $30-40 which in some classes you have to read at UB (even more money if you have to read the book a little more!!) to write a 3-4 page paper, on a couple questions which was assigned."

Robinson was suspended from offseason workouts and from the Bulls' first three games this season. Ironically, he and Austrie met on the court a little over a week ago in Buffalo.

There have been more serious transgressions. Shortly after Barack Obama was elected president of the United States, University of Texas lineman Buck Burnette posted on his Facebook page: "all the hunters gather up, we have a #$%&er in the whitehouse (sic)." Burnette quickly offered an apology, saying on his page: "Clearly I have made a mistake and apologized for it and will pay for it. I received it as a text message from an acquaintance and immaturely put it up on Facebook in the light of the election. I'm (sic) not racist and apologize for offending you. I grew up on a ranch in a small town where that was a real thing and I need to grow up."

Burnette certainly did pay for it -- he was kicked off the Longhorn team.
Then there's the bizarre, curious case of Quinnipiac.

Back in November, Harold Washington, 18, a freshman on the men's basketball team, went to police along with two fellow African-American teammates after receiving threatening and racially motivated phone calls. Soon, Charles Merritt, Washington's white roommate, was arrested for making the calls and later expelled from school.

A few weeks later, however, Washington was arrested for allegedly using Facebook as a tool to anonymously post racist messages on one of his fellow victims' home pages.

The entire situation shook the university, and particularly the basketball team. It also opened the eyes of Moore, the Bobcats' second-year coach, to the potential hazards of social-networking sites.

"Dealing with the players through the whole ordeal, it sort of enlightened my coaching staff and me to how computer-savvy kids are these days," Moore said. "Through technology, they can carry on so many different conversations with different people, all at the same time."

Moore took note of it while spending time in the players' dorms during the situation.

"It's a little intimidating to think how open their lives are," Moore said. "Once they start a Facebook page or a MySpace page and invite people to come in, it's scary to think how much of their lives are out there."

But Moore said he doesn't prohibit his players from having Facebook and/or MySpace accounts.

"It's a fine line. As coaches, there are so many issues like this that come up that border on how controlling you're going to be as a coach. At what point are they beholden to you off the court because they're on scholarship? Are you going to force guys to cut their hair, wear a certain colored T-shirt under the uniform? This is another one right in that gray area. It seems to me, as an outsider, it's an important part of socializing in college at this time. It's not something I want to tell my 13 scholarship guys they can't be a part of, but maybe in workshops, etc., we can give constant reminders of the risks that come with it."

PLENTY OF POSITIVES

While there undeniably are risks for student-athletes using Facebook, there are plenty of benefits, too. As Walker stated, it's a chance for some athletes who are constantly busy with practice, games, travel and schoolwork to get to know their fellow students. As Martha mentioned, it provides a chance for student-athletes to interact with members of the neighboring community -- and with opponents, too.

Martha recently played in an all-star game in Kentucky against seniors from other schools in the conference. "When I got home, I got requests from some of them, which was really cool," Martha said. "It's fairly easy, simpler than sending an e-mail. It's easier to check updates on what's going on in their lives."

Facebook also allows team members to communicate with each other. Most college sports teams have some sort of Facebook page, on which messages can be conveyed as to when meetings are, where captain's practices will be held, or simply what a great game they played the other night.

"A lot of schools are going to Facebook for invitations, getting the word out for programs," said Amy Backus, Yale's compliance director.

It's so effective, in fact, that Yale administrators recently asked students whether e-mail was still a productive tool to get information out on campus, or if Facebook was the better way to go. (Turns out, e-mail still works just fine).

University of New Haven athletic director Debbie Chin pointed out that the NCAA actually is encouraging interaction among student-athletes through Facebook and other sites.

"It's the way of students of today, it's how they communicate with each other," Chin said. "It can be a little troublesome because they can't communicate one on one, they're so used to texting, going on MySpace, Facebook. That's how they meet people. But they're probably more savvy than us in terms of picking out the good and the bad."

Indeed, none of the area colleges ban their student-athletes from using the sites, leaving it up to them to use good judgment (and, in some cases, their coaches and/or compliance directors to keep tabs on what they're posting).

Still, other athletic departments across the country, including DePaul and Minnesota-Duluth, have taken the drastic step of banning student-athletes' use of the social-networking sites altogether. Those schools are still very much in the minority -- for now.

"People have mixed emotions about (Facebook) because it is a social-networking tool, and you do have your everyday life on this Web site," Martha said. "Being a student-athlete, you shouldn't partake in alcohol or drugs, but inevitably some do.
As a safety precaution, you should put no pictures of you participating in those activities. You have to be careful what you let people put pictures up of, and what people put on your wall."

It certainly is a very different world from the days of the square, black beeper.

CBS College Sports Network, MaxPreps and CBS Sports Team Up for Cross Platform Coverage of T-Mobile Invitational High School Basketball Tournament

MarketWatch.com
Dec. 16, 2008

NEW YORK, Dec 16, 2008 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- CBS Properties to Showcase High School Basketball Tournament Featuring Top Teams and Players

CBS College Sports Network, MaxPreps and CBS Sports are teaming up to provide comprehensive cross platform coverage of the T-Mobile Invitational high school basketball tournament, a top national event featuring highly ranked high school boys and girls teams. The T-Mobile Invitational will be played December 29-30 at Worthen Arena on the campus of Ball State University.

The T-Mobile Invitational is the only basketball tournament sponsored by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), and the field is composed only of schools from NFHS-member associations. The NFHS' 51 member associations oversee and administer athletic and fine arts activities within those states. Only high schools that are members of those state associations are allowed to compete for their respective state titles.

CBS College Sports Network will broadcast all eight games of the tournament live with play-by-play announcer Jason Knapp teaming with analyst Steve Wolf to call the boys games and analyst Tammy Blackburn to call the girls games. The network is also partnering with Comcast Cable locally in Atlanta, Indianapolis and Seattle to make select tournament games and highlights available to each market via Comcast's Video On Demand platform. Atlanta, Seattle and Indianapolis all have local high school teams participating in the event.

In addition, MaxPreps (www.maxpreps.com), the leading online high school sports network and official online partner of the T-Mobile Invitational, will offer replays of the full broadcast of all tournament games, available on-demand 48 hours after the conclusion of each contest. MaxPreps.com will also provide video features on all of the competing teams, as well as comprehensive highlight packages following each game.

Lastly, CBS Sports will cap off the tournament by airing a special one-hour "T-Mobile Invitational Showcase" on Jan. 18, 2009 (2 p.m., EST) that will give a behind-the-scenes look at the players, coaches, and fans that make this invitational high school basketball tournament the best in the country. The "T-Mobile Invitational Showcase" will focus on player profiles while highlighting the positive impact high school sports and activities have on students and their communities.

"This event is a great example of how CBS is able to utilize various properties to deliver full value to an advertiser," said Steve Herbst, Executive Vice President and General Manager of CBS College Sports Network. "Together, we are providing T-Mobile with multi-platform, in-depth coverage and a one-stop solution that reaches fans nationally across all outlets, national broadcast, cable and online."

"As a leader in the high school athletics media business, participation in this tournament is a natural fit for MaxPreps," said Andy Beal, President of MaxPreps. "Showcasing a high school tournament on MaxPreps, CBS College Sports Network and CBS Sports provides tremendous visibility for these athletes and their stories."

This year's tournament features the Duncanville (Duncanville, Texas) boys and the Washington (South Bend, Ind.) girls, each among the nation's top ranked teams. Outstanding individuals include Derrick Favors (South Atlanta HS, Atlanta), the nation's top ranked boys prep forward and Skylar Diggins (Washington HS, South Bend, Ind.) the top ranked girls point guard. For more information on the event and for the schedule of games, go to www.t-mobileinvitational.com.

Athletes promote themselves to colleges

BRIAN STENSAAS
Minneapolis Star Tribune
December 16, 2008

Thirty years ago, Warren Peiffer was recruited to play football for Iowa, although as a teenager he figured he would play basketball somewhere in college. Instead, Hawkeyes football coaches found him. Simple as that.
It's quite a difference compared to what Warren and his wife, Wendy, went through with their son, Weston, who eventually attended Western Michigan as a defensive end on a football scholarship.

The Peiffers were contacted by Midwestpreps.com, a self-described one-man "marketing service" run by Erik Lofdahl out of Green Bay, Wis. Lofdahl made his pitch to the Peiffers for the service, came for a sit-down visit to their Chaska home and, $995 later, Weston's accomplishments were on paper and Internet video was being sent to college coaches across the area.

"It's a whole different, faster process," Warren Peiffer said. "And we went with it. My theory was it's a two-way marketing street: colleges are marketing their program, you're marketing your son."

Lofdahl has run the service for three years, focusing primarily on football players. He banks on referrals and doing his own research.

The end result, he pitches, is the best playing opportunity for his clients. He generally does work for athletes who, at the very least, have a shot at a high-money scholarship with an NCAA Division II program.

"It's Marketing 101 and, if there's enough interest and opportunity, it's Finance 101 on the back end," Lofdahl said. "If you present an athlete to enough programs, ultimately you put them in a situation that suits them academically, athletically and socially."

Joel Engel, whose son Derrick is represented by Midwestpreps.com, paid for the service before Derrick ever played a varsity football game for Chaska. Instead, Derrick was invited to a combine-like camp set up through Midwestpreps.com. Derrick Engel, a wide receiver, is currently in the process of narrowing down his choices for official visits.

"That got him on the map," Joel Engel said. "A real benefit. It was a good opportunity to get some exposure for him."

Services such as Lofdahl's business are not uncommon. But not all companies approach matching athletes with colleges the same way.

Ross Greenstein, a former elite-status Blake tennis player, is president and CEO of Scholarship for Athletes based in San Diego. For $2,000 to $3,000, depending on the length of the service, the company aims to steer athletes in the right direction on their college decision. Just don't go calling it a marketing service.
"We are a consulting service," Greenstein said. "We do not market at all, no e-mail blasts to coaches or anything like that. Stuff like that doesn't work. We evaluate."

Greenstein said about 100 clients are currently using his service all across the country, including a soccer player from Mahtomedi whom he declined to identify.
Scholarship for Athletes tries to answer two main questions for athletes about playing sports in college: What are the differences between schools on and off the field of play? And where does the athlete stand with any given team?

"The market value is the hardest part; how many players at your position are they trying to bring in?" Greenstein said. "The family needs to understand they need to do their homework. Of all the kids [a school] is recruiting, are you the first kid, 10th kid, 50th kid or 100th kid?"

Barely Teenagers, Already Groomed for Stardom

THAYER EVANS and PETE THAMEL.
The New York Times
January 4, 2009 Sunday

At age 13, the 6-foot-3, 280-pound Reeve Koehler is so big that he has never been allowed to play organized football. Despite that, he already has a full scholarship offer from the University of Hawaii.

Wes Medeiros, 13, is a YouTube sensation who kicked a 45-yard field goal at the Pittsburgh Steelers' training camp. He wants to attend a high school with a turf field so he will have more consistent kicking conditions.

Chris Laviano, 14, can throw a football 50 yards. He has been compared to Peyton Manning and Troy Aikman, and has been courted by a top high school football power.

Koehler, Medeiros and Laviano are among 143 players here for Sunday's inaugural Football University Youth All-American Bowl, a series of three games at the Alamodome that will feature the nation's top seventh and eighth graders. The event will be broadcast online at footballuniversity.org.

''Imagine if you could have saw Reggie Bush when he was in eighth grade or seventh grade and see how he develops,'' said John Gallagher, the director of the Football University Youth All-American Bowl.

Organizers are billing the bowl as an event similar to the Little League World Series, but coaches and others say it opens a path toward professionalism already traveled by other sports, like basketball, golf and tennis. It is another example of America's seemingly endless search for the next great star.

''It's a slippery slope, and I'm a little bit queasy about it,'' University of Cincinnati Coach Brian Kelly said.

The Football University Youth All-American Bowl is the brainchild of SportsLink Inc., a sports-marketing company based in Wharton, N.J., that operates the U.S. Army All-American Bowl, an annual all-star game for the nation's top high school seniors.

The new event was the idea of Rich McGuinness, the president of SportsLink, who said he had grown tired of having players in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl who were physically gifted, but technique deficient. So he created Football University, invitation-only instructional football camps across the country from February to July at a cost of $40 an hour for campers.

The sons of Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis, the former N.F.L. wide receiver Ed McCaffrey and the former N.B.A. star Karl Malone are among the participants in the

Football University Youth All-American Bowl. The event is meant to showcase the nation's top seventh and eighth graders, as well as emphasize leadership, teamwork, and speed and strength, McGuinness said. Even with players paying for their travel and lodging, the event is expected to lose $30,000.

"In major sports, they start identifying their best players in seventh and eighth grade," McGuinness said. "That's what happens in the world. It never happened in football because the N.F.L. is the only player."

What worries many college coaches about all-star games proliferating to this level is that high school football coaches could become less influential in the recruiting process.

Wake Forest Coach Jim Grobe said he was concerned that sponsors of all-star games could influence players to consider universities with which they have financial arrangements.

"I think it could develop into a concern if those companies also outfit college teams and have a vested interest in them," Grobe said.

Exposing players to corporate sponsors at such a young age could invite the type of outside influences that have become so prominent in basketball that Myles Brand, the N.C.A.A. president, called them one of his organization's most difficult problems.

Kelly said: "When you have these kinds of events, you open up the door for third parties. Is the guy an A.A.U. coach? Is he a personal trainer? Is he a street agent?"

To play in the Football University Youth All-American Bowl, a nomination form and highlight tape must be submitted for a player. The event relied heavily on Football University's network of youth scouts, directors, commissioners and coaches for selections, Gallagher said.

Thousands of children were scouted and 2,000 nominations, from Hawaii to New York, were received. They were evaluated by a selection committee and Gallagher, who until June had been a Nasdaq institutional trader.

A youth football league president in New Jersey, Gallagher selected players based on performance, competition level and long-term potential. Size and speed were major factors. By seventh grade, Gallagher said, it is "mostly clear" as to which players have football talent.

"It's not an exact science," Gallagher said. "You try to do the best you can with what they present you."

Malone said he was honored that his 13-year-old son, K. J., who is 6 feet and 208 pounds, was selected for the event, but cautioned that he and the parents of other youth players must keep their children grounded.

"Let our young kids be kids," Malone said. "They're going to have plenty of time when it's serious and for real."

Lewis added: "I wouldn't say it worries me. You try to keep them as kids, let them play as kids, instead of being so serious."

Malone said that he was not sure how talented his son was as a football player, which the Football University Youth All-American Bowl spokesman Kristian Dyer clarified.

"If his name was K. J. Smith and you saw that video, you'd still walk away just as impressed," Dyer said.

Dan Gould, the director of the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports at Michigan State, said the first question he has about such events was why they were necessary. Dr. Robert Cantu, the chief of neurosurgery and director of sports medicine at Emerson Hospital in Concord, Mass., said the health risks for football at this age were "hard to come down on," but the question lingers about why these games are played.

"What we're worried about here is too much, too soon," Gould said. "My flags go up at a seventh- and eighth-grade national all-star game. What does it do for the kid? Probably not that much."

Koehler said he received his verbal scholarship offer from Hawaii this past summer while attending one of its football camps. Official written scholarship offers are prohibited by the N.C.A.A. until Sept. 1 of a player's junior year in high school.

Koehler said he expected to play on the offensive and the defensive lines once he could finally compete in high school football next fall.

"It's frustrating," Koehler said of not being allowed to play in Hawaiian youth football leagues. "I want to get out there and play on the field, but I'm just too heavy."

Medeiros is used to the spotlight because of his friendship with the Steelers' kicker, Jeff Reed. The video of Medeiros making field goals at the Steelers' training camp last year has been viewed nearly 12,000 times on YouTube.

Medeiros, who uses a two-inch block on his field-goal attempts instead of kicking off the field, is considering three private high schools in Charlotte, N.C., for ninth grade next season. His father, Paul, said his son's being able to kick for a school with a turf field would be a significant factor in his decision.

"It's just a lot more consistent kicking," Paul Medeiros said.

Four days before the festivities began for the Football University Youth All-American Bowl, Laviano arrived from Brookville, N.Y., and prepared. Laviano, a 5-11, 165-pound

eighth grader, participated in three-a-day workouts at a local university under the watch of his father, Tom.

Laviano said he had been approached about playing next season for the football power DeMatha Catholic High School in Hyattsville, Md., but his father did not want him to move in with a coach. His youth coaches have told him that he is comparable to Manning, a three-time N.F.L. most valuable player and a Super Bowl winner.

''There's a little pressure,'' Laviano said.

Gallagher mentioned Laviano in the same breath as Aikman, the former Dallas Cowboys quarterback who is a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

''He's definitely a great player,'' Gallagher said of Laviano. ''I think he can play in high-level college.''

But college is seemingly the last thing on Laviano's mind these days.

''College?'' Laviano said. ''I don't even know where I want to go to high school.''

Youth All-Star Events: A New Growth Industry

By Josh Barr
Washington Post
Friday, January 2, 2009

It is an annual tradition in the Cofield household, piling in the family's black 2001 Ford Windstar and driving from their Chantilly home to visit family in Dayton, Ohio, for the holidays. With a few stops along the way, the trip usually takes about eight hours.

This year, though, will be different.

Instead of driving nearly 500 miles, the Cofields boarded a plane Wednesday and flew halfway across the country. Jamon Cofield, 13, is one of 132 players nationwide selected to play in Sunday's Football University Youth All-American Bowl in San Antonio -- a series of three all-star games for seventh- and eighth-graders that will be held in conjunction with tomorrow's U.S. Army All-American Bowl for high school seniors.

A 5-foot-5, 127-pound fullback and linebacker, Jamon will play in the seventh-grade game. Five other local players also will play in the games, which include an eighth-grade game and an eighth-grade "unlimited weight" game.

"We felt like this is an opportunity for him and a great experience," said Jesse Cofield, Jamon's father and a former college defensive back. "We're pretty much a football family."

While the game has changed the Cofields' travel plans -- and caused them to dip into their pockets, as participants must pay their own expenses -- the event also has sparked debate about the rising profile of youth sports. The dollars being generated from sports at the pro and college level are having a trickle-down effect, creating an appetite for discovering the next big star. National exposure keeps skewing younger.

"Ninety-five percent of the reaction has been, 'What a great idea, no one has done it like this on a national scale,' " said Rich McGuinness, who founded these games as well as the All-American Bowl. "There is a small minority that say, 'Listen, is this a little too much for seventh- and eighth-graders?' My response to those people is to look at the Little League World Series, where they start a little bit younger. That's a staple."

Count Ned Sparks, executive director of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, as a member of the minority alluded to by McGuinness.

"Seventh and eighth grade? That's absurd," Sparks said. "Where does it end?"

But while state scholastic sanctioning bodies have the ability to regulate their athletes' entries in all-star games -- usually prohibiting participation until a player has completed his high school eligibility in a sport -- they generally are helpless when it comes to the

youth all-star games because the players have yet to reach high school. The MPSSAA, Virginia High School League and most other state associations govern interscholastic athletics for grades 9 through 12. The D.C. Interscholastic Athletic Association has jurisdiction over grades 4 through 12, but DCIAA athletic director Troy Mathieu said he was unaware of any league rules that would prevent a D.C. Public Schools student from participating.

A few states have more stringent rules on the subject. The Michigan High School Athletic Association has banned participation in any all-star games, punishable by a one-year suspension from interscholastic athletics. And Michigan athletes are unable to participate in the Youth Bowl because the MHSAA governs grades 7 through 12; at least one eighth-grade player had to turn down an invitation or risk being ineligible for athletics through the first half of his freshman year of high school.

Locally, though, participation is up to the players invited.

"This is the way youth sports are going," said Eric Levenberry, a D.C. police sergeant whose 14-year-old son, E.J., will play linebacker in the unlimited weight eighth-grade game. "To have a national all-star game, when I thought about it, it was just a matter of time, somebody was going to do it.

"There are positives and negatives, too, to playing in this game. The negative thing, I told my son, is you're a marked man now. Everybody is going to try to make a name off you."

Said Chris Ensor, a 5-8, 175-pound lineman from Pasadena, Md., who also will play in the unlimited weight game: "Because it is being shown to a lot of people, there will be a lot more pressure than any other game. All of our other games, we would do our thing and go out and have fun. This game you want to do your best and show that you're good."

Youth Bowl organizers are quick to point out a few facts about this weekend's games. Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis, former Denver Broncos wide receiver Ed McCaffery and former Utah Jazz great Karl Malone all have sons playing in the games. Another player, eighth-grader Reeve Koehler -- a 6-4, 260-pound lineman from Hawaii -- already has been offered a scholarship to play for Hawaii. (The NCAA prohibits official, written scholarship offers until Sept. 1 of a player's junior year in high school.)

"I don't know if he has problems getting into PG-13 movies, but with that size, I don't think so," said Kristian Dyer, a spokesman for SportsLink LLC, the New Jersey-based company founded by McGuinness that operates the games.

Koehler won't be the only oversize youngster on the field. Dyer noted that the offensive linemen for the East team in the eighth-grade unlimited weight game have an average weight of 260 pounds. The teams were selected by SportsLink by sifting through

thousands of highlight tapes and nominations from high school and youth league coaches nationwide, Dyer said.

"It's a good thing if parents and kids understand it's about the love of the game and that it's about performance so far," said Donnie English, who coaches for the Pasadena Chargers youth team and will be coaching the East team in the seventh-grade game. "It's kind of like the honor roll or some other academic honor. It doesn't mean they're going to Harvard. This doesn't mean they're going to play for the Cleveland Browns or Ohio State. Where it goes wrong is when parents think, 'Oh, my kid is going [division I] because he's in this game.' "

Another key ingredient in these types of games is branding. The games in San Antonio are sponsored by Football University, which runs invitation-only, three-day football training sessions. Last year, the group ran sessions at 18 locations across the country; this year, it has plans to expand to 30 locations. The cost: $549 per session.

"The more visible FBU is, the better we are," McGuinness said, noting that participation in a Football University session has nothing to do with being selected to any of his group's all-star games. "We find [these games] to be a great promotional vehicle as well."

Last year, SportsLink invited American Youth Football to stage an all-star game in conjunction with the All-American Bowl. But McGuinness said he did not consider the game a national all-star game because participants were limited to those involved with AYF organizations, whereas this year's games will take players from any youth leagues.

AYF has since partnered with the Under Armour All-America Game, which will be held Sunday night in Orlando. The AYF all-star game, which comprises players in seventh and eighth grades from the 14 teams that played in the AYF national tournament, will be held Sunday afternoon. Under Armour has an agreement to be the supplier of apparel and footwear to AYF.

"Our core consumer is 10 to 24," said Steve Battista, a senior vice president for Under Armour. "We feel a responsibility to continue to further their progress in sport."

Athletes and Colleges Feel a Recruiting Pinch

MARK VIERA
The New York Times
January 14, 2009

Morgan Moses is one of the top-rated high school offensive linemen in the country. He is 6 feet 7 inches, weighs nearly 350 pounds and has scholarship offers from colleges like Alabama, Tennessee, Ohio State, Virginia and Virginia Tech.

But the economy has begun to factor into his family's discussions about how far he will go from their home in Richmond, Va. While his mother, Marion, said she wanted her son to choose the right university for him, she said the family's ability to watch him play would "make a big impact on the decision."

"I can tell you already," Marion Moses said in a telephone interview, "I am not going to be able to make every game that he would have if he would go to California."

The economy has affected college sports programs across the nation, and recruiting is another area that is starting to be touched by tightening budgets of universities and the prospects they are seeking.

Some smaller universities have scaled back on recruiting trips or found new ways to identify talent. Coaches have had to answer tough questions about the financial assistance available to nonscholarship athletes. Some high school recruits and their families are considering the costs associated with living far from home.

Still, some of the most prominent programs have not yet cut recruiting efforts. U.C.L.A., for instance, is looking to trim costs in some areas, though not in its recruiting budget, said Dan Guerrero, the university's athletic director. And Notre Dame has commitments from 17 highly rated prospects from across the country.

Dick Baddour, the North Carolina athletic director, described recruiting as the lifeblood of a program. "You've got to be careful if you're cutting back on recruiting," he said. "That would be a major issue for us."

But other programs have had to rethink their approach to finding athletes.

Colorado College, a private institution of about 1,900 students, consistently fields one of the country's top N.C.A.A. Division I men's hockey teams. To stay within its budget, the program has reduced its recruiting reach in talent-rich areas like the Northeast and Canada. Coaches at the college typically make one stop in the Northeast to watch the prep school hockey tournaments around Christmas and make four trips to Canada, spending up to five days there for each visit. This season, they have skipped the prep school tournaments and will make one fewer trip to Canada.

“I think we have to be a little more selective in determining our trips these days because things are costlier,” Coach Scott Owens said. “And it’s not just airfare, but hotels have been more expensive, and then rental cars and gas and those things. I think the answer to the question is we have to be a little bit wiser with our recruiting dollars.”

At Amherst College, coaches have been asked to be more selective when sending out a bulk of recruiting letters and encouraged to send e-mail messages to recruits instead of worrying about telephone bills.

Amherst, a Division III college in Massachusetts, is mobilizing its alumni in an effort to have select graduates monitor their local newspapers and academic honor roll announcements to identify potential recruits. The college’s athletic director, Suzanne R. Coffey, said the alumni recruiters might meet on conference calls with coaches to discuss their findings.

“Before the financial crisis occurred, we were talking about ways to identify prospects outside our normal channels,” Coffey said. “Then in the past couple of months, we said this is the type of thing that will make even more sense with financial constraints even more prevalent.”

Another area of concern for administrators includes the relative uncertainty of financial aid availability for nonscholarship athletes.

Certain government loan programs have been protected through legislation, but some prospective students have had difficulty obtaining private loans because of the credit crunch.

“The biggest place we are seeing an impact is actually with families’ and parents’ credit ratings,” said Christopher Penn, the chief media officer for the Student Loan Network, which provides loans and related information to students and families. “We’ve seen a huge drop-off in people who don’t meet the credit credentials. You’re going to need every last point on your credit score you can.”

The issue of financial aid has typically been felt at Division III colleges, which do not award athletic scholarships. But now, it can also affect athletes at the Division I level.

For a private university like Wake Forest, which costs nearly $50,000 a year to attend, the difficulty associated with obtaining certain financial aid can pose problems for recruits not receiving athletic scholarships.

Although the university said its full-time students with need received an average of $30,300 in the 2008-9 academic year, the Demon Deacons’ men’s soccer coach, Jay Vidovich, said prospects’ parents had shown an increased awareness of how the economic package factored into the decision.

“I’m not a financial analyst or anything, so I can’t make any sweeping statements, but it’s always been a major hurdle for us anyway,” Vidovich said. “I don’t know how it’s going to shake out. It’s not like, ‘Yeah, what a great opportunity.’ It’s like, ‘Yeah, that’s a very nice opportunity; I hope we can afford it.’ I’m hoping we can still stay very competitive.”

To enable their parents to watch games in person and to reduce travel costs to and from campus, athletes may decide to stay closer to home, said Tom Lemming, a national football recruiting analyst.

It has largely not happened yet — for Moses, the lineman from Virginia, it has just entered into the discussion — but it could be around the corner.

Programs like Southern California or Florida will continue to draw talent from a national base, Lemming said, but those a step or two down may have to look closer to home.

“For most of the country, it will be more regionalized,” Lemming said. “They’ll have to recruit within a 300-mile radius more than they have in the past.”

That has rung true at Alabama State, a historically black university in Montgomery, Ala. Its football program has outlined parameters for recruitment, although its campus is near deep talent pools in Florida and Georgia.

“We find that we can sell the student-athletes if they’re 300 miles or less to Montgomery, Ala.,” Ron Dickerson, the university’s interim athletic director, said in a telephone interview before his retirement Jan. 1. “And we’re hoping it’s not going to last for a long time. We’re hoping that the downside is just for a year or two.”

Fallout from high school tourney ban

Andy Katz
ESPN.com
Monday, January 19, 2009

The consensus over the NCAA's move to ban coaches from attending April weekend tournaments was this: The only thing that will change will be the lack of coaches in attendance.

The tournaments will go on. The powerful summer-league coach will become even more of a force in the recruiting process, and the high school kids will still miss classes on Friday to get to these events at various places, like Pittsburgh, for a weekend schedule of games.

Oh, and the type of coach that will get hurt the most by this is the one that gets a job in March and early April needing one-stop shopping to fill up his roster for the coming season, or at least needing to get into the late recruiting pool for the November signing period.

"The events will go on; they've all got funding from sneaker companies," said Pittsburgh associate head coach Tom Herrion, who has been a longtime assistant at Providence and Virginia and a onetime head coach at the College of Charleston.

"As long as the national recruiting analysts are there, kids will go," Herrion said.

Longtime assistant coach Scott Duncan, currently at UCLA and formerly at stops like Oregon, New Mexico, Washington State and Northern Illinois, said finding a time in the spring to evaluate players will be difficult.

"You're going to have to do it on a Tuesday or Wednesday, go to the high school to see if there is a workout, to see if they can find a gym unoccupied, get a 5-on-5 together," Duncan said. "The reason it's Tuesday or Wednesday is this: Monday, the kids will be returning from the trip, and many of them travel on Thursday late to get there for Friday-Saturday-Sunday."

Duncan said if a coach is hired in March or April and he can't attend these weekend events, the coach could be forced into recruiting a player sight unseen.

"You're going to have to rely on AAU coaches, scouting-service people and a lot of word of mouth, as well as videotape," Duncan said. "The athletic directors and presidents aren't going to change the format of these events. I understand we're not sending the right message by going when they're missing school. But the tournaments will happen, absolutely. A number of those AAU [or summer-league coaches] are making a salary

from the shoe company that is equal to a college assistant, and the pressure to play is immense."

Duncan said those coaches won't stand for the players not going to the event if they're on the team.

"It's going to have a huge effect on recruiting," Duncan said.

The idea from the NCAA was to curtail high school players' missing school. But no one that ESPN.com talked to over the weekend saw that as changing.

"I thought they also wanted to take away the power of the AAU coaches, but I think it puts more power in them," said Jim Storey, who runs a tournament called the Cactus Classic in Tucson, Ariz., in May. His tournament is during the dead period in recruiting, but he still has attracted some of the top players in the West.

"People are still going to hold the tournaments, and kids will still miss class time. And since there won't be enough time to evaluate players, the AAU coach will have more power because the recruiting will have to go through him to see what's going on," Storey said. "It's like the lack of text messaging, too. That rule made it to where you had to contact the AAU coach more, too. You had to recruit the kid through the coach."

Herrion said he doubted that the NCAA would allow the recruits to take unofficial visits to the nearby campus at an event, especially now that coaches can't attend them. That would be considered an unfair advantage if the local school could have contact and no other coaches could.

"We expected this to happen [not getting it overturned]," Herrion said. "It's disappointing. At the end of the day, the young kids are hurt by the lack of exposure. We'll be fine. The schools that get hurt are the mid-majors that can't evaluate the massive volumes of players in one place."

National Association of Basketball Coaches associate director Reggie Minton said there wasn't "enough traction" in the voting by the coaching members to send a strong overturn message to the NCAA convention, held last week in Maryland.

• Meanwhile, Minton said he anticipates some form of the NBA early-entry draft date rule change to occur. The ACC proposed a 10-day post-Final Four deadline to say whether you're in or out for the draft, beginning in 2010. NBA spokesperson Tim Frank said the date for declaring and withdrawing for the NBA draft is part of the collective bargaining agreement. So technically, if this were to pass, a player could say he's returning to college but then still declare for the NBA draft later in April.

The legislation didn't get a ruling at the convention. More discussion is needed, and Minton said he expects the time to be massaged, possibly longer than 10 days, but

shorter than the seven weeks players have now to decide on whether to stay in the draft.

Minton said the communication with the NBA and the NCAA has never been better. When given the scenario that a player could say he's returning to college, say within 15 or 20 days after the Final Four, but then still declare for the draft by the NBA's deadline, Minton said: "The difference is he won't be allowed to come back. If you declare, you would be finished with college, whether you're drafted or not."

What could occur if this were to happen in 2010 is that agents could spend that two-week gap between the NCAA and NBA deadline trying to re-convince a player to go in the draft. We'll see what happens, but if this rule had been in place in 2008 you can almost guarantee that North Carolina players Ty Lawson, Wayne Ellington and Danny Green wouldn't have returned to UNC. They were all prepared to stay in the draft until the final days of the deadline in June.

Minton says NBA teams spend all season evaluating the player, so there is enough time. The teams, though, like to do workouts in the spring and the players want those to get a truer reading on draft status. If this is passed, you'll likely see -- at least in the early stages -- more players gamble without workouts and stay in the draft. Eventually, it will work its way out.

Kansas looking into Self's encounter with prized recruit

Steve Wieberg
USA TODAY
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Bill Self apparently has some explaining to do.

A Kansas official said Monday that the school is looking into an item on the Springfield (Mo.) News-Leader website describing a brief, potentially NCAA rules-breaking encounter between the Jayhawks' basketball coach and a prized prospect, Raleigh, N.C., point guard John Wall, after a high school tournament game in Springfield last week.

According to the News-Leader, Self was outside the Word of God Christian Academy locker room when Wall emerged and congratulated him on winning and playing well. "I'm not supposed to be talking to you, and you know that," the newspaper quoted Self telling the player, "but I just wanted to tell you that was a great win."

The problem: This is a no-contact, evaluation-only period in which NCAA recruiting rules prohibit "any face-to-face encounter that is prearranged (e.g., staff member positions himself or herself in a location where contact is possible) or that takes place … at the site of organized competition or practice … regardless of whether any conversation occurs."

They also bar "any dialogue … in excess of an exchange of a greeting."

The 6-4 Wall, who had 41 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists in Word of God's championship-game victory vs. Olympia (Fla.), was chosen tournament MVP. He's regarded as the nation's top unsigned senior prospect.

Jim Marchiony, a Kansas associate athletics director, said Self had informed school officials of the exchange "and we've begun to discuss it internally. … I don't know exactly what happened so I don't know if the contact was legal or illegal. That's what we have to find out."

After his team defeated Texas A&M Monday night, Self confirmed to the Kansas City Star that he did interact with Wall.

"It's accurate," Self told the paper after the 73-53 victory. "After the game was over, like I always do, like every coach always does, I had to catch a plane, I had to go back and tell the coaches, you know, 'Congratulations, good win.' As I approached, I shook a hand and said, 'I can't talk to you, but you played really well.'

"If that exchange, which is all it was, is a problem, then our administration will deal with it. I certainly by no means am going to deny that that happened, but the reason I was back in the back was to go say hi to the coaches after a game."