

Sports Wagering

NCAA Official Position/Statement

The NCAA opposes all forms of legal and illegal sports wagering on college sports. Sports wagering has become a serious problem that threatens the well-being of the student-athlete and the integrity of college sports.

- The explosive growth of gambling has caused a noticeable increase in the number of sports wagering-related cases processed by the Association.
- The Internet has made it easier than ever for student-athletes to place bets, providing easy access, virtual anonymity, and essentially no supervision.
- Student-athletes are viewed by organized crime and organized gambling as easy marks.
- When student-athletes gamble, they break the law and jeopardize their eligibility.
- When student-athletes become indebted to bookies and can't pay off their debts, alternative methods of payment are introduced that threaten the well-being of the student-athlete or undermine an athletic contest - such as point-shaving.

NCAA Policy

- The NCAA membership has adopted specific rules prohibiting student-athletes, athletics department staff members, and conference office staff from engaging in sports wagering (Bylaw 10.3). NCAA national office employees are also prohibiting from engaging in sports wagering.
- Sports competition should be appreciated for the inherent benefits related to participation of student-athletes, coaches, and institutions in fair contests, not the amount of money wagered on the outcome of the competition.
- A student-athlete involved in sports wagering on the student-athlete's institution permanently loses all remaining regular-season and postseason eligibility in all sports.
- A student-athlete who is involved in any sports wagering activity that involves college sports or professional athletics, through a internet gambling, bookmaker, a parlay card or any other method employed by organized gambling, will be ineligible for all regular-season and postseason competition for at least one year.

Some NCAA Activities to Limit Sports Wagering

- The NCAA conducts background checks of officials and umpires in the Division I Men's and Women's basketball tournaments; Division I football bowl games, the Men's Frozen Four (ice hockey) and the College World Series.
- The NCAA expanded its sports wagering presentations from the eight teams competing in the Men's and Women's Final Fours to all 32 teams in the Division I Men's and Women's basketball regional sites. These presentations include NCAA staff and an FBI special agent.
- The NCAA also educates student-athletes and coaches on the dangers of gambling by producing information materials for them; conducting locker room visits; holding information sessions at annual compliance seminars; has developed an interactive educational website on sports wagering for its student-athletes; and providing on-campus compliance officers with sports wagering educational resources.
- The NCAA has developed a Web site to educate student-athletes, coaches, athletic administrators and the general public about NCAA rules about sports wagering. The Don't Bet on It Web site (www.dontbetonit.org) can be customized for the individual student-athlete by gender, sport and division. CBS basketball commentator Clark Kellogg, a former Ohio State University student-athlete, serves as host throughout the navigation of the site.

- The NCAA works closely in sharing pertinent information on sports wagering and organized crime with the FBI and the U.S. Attorney General's advisory groups, the NFL, the NBA, the NHL, MLB, campus security officers, coaches associations, and campus student life personnel.
- The NCAA has developed sports wagering curriculum for high schools, in conjunction with the National Federation of High Schools and the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, which will be rolled out next month to high schools across the U.S.
- The NCAA initiated conversation with gaming officials in Las Vegas and has re-established those relationships, providing a better understanding of what's happening with NCAA contests included in sports books.

Student-Athletes and Bracket Contests

- NCAA member colleges and universities have defined sports wagering as putting something at risk – such as an entry fee - with the opportunity to win something in return. Because of this, student-athletes, coaches and administrators may not participate in bracket competitions where there is both a required entry fee and an opportunity to win a prize.
- While strongly discouraged, student-athletes and administrators may participate, under current NCAA rules, in bracket contests, including Facebook and similar activities, where there is no entry fee but a possibility of winning a prize. Some NCAA member schools, however, have chosen to ban student-athletes from participating in these types of bracket contests.

Bracket Office Pools and Promotions

- Office pools and similar games are illegal in most states, and we have learned that these types of pools are often the entry for youth to begin betting.
- The NCAA is aware of office pools in excess of \$100,000, and the magnitude of the revenue generated could negatively impact the spirit of the sport.
- The NCAA wants to send a clear message that money does not have to be involved in order for the NCAA basketball tournament or other sporting contests to be fun.
- The NCAA continues to work with its corporate champions and partners to encourage them to use other types of promotional games. When our partners have used bracket-focused promotions, we've insisted that a random drawing component be added.

Internet Gambling Bill

- In October 2006, President Bush signed legislation making it much more difficult to send money to Internet gambling sites. Any Internet casino that attempts to accept credit card payments, Internet bank transfers or any other illegal gambling payments will be blocked from doing so. The Act has placed significant roadblocks in the path of people who have become accustomed to easy access to online sports books.
- In July, the National Football League, Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association and the National Hockey League joined the NCAA in sending a letter to Congress urging the passage of this legislation.

Sports Wagering Study

- NCAA President Myles Brand formed a national task force in 2004 to recommend strategies to counteract sports wagering among student-athletes and further analyze the data from the 2003 National Study on Collegiate Sports Wagering and Associated Health Risks.
- This study represented the first effort to collect information on sports wagering and associated behaviors from a nationally representative sample of student-athletes. It was groundbreaking in both the scope of inquiry and in breadth/number of student-athletes participating (greater than 20,000 student-athletes across all divisions and most championship sports).
- Key findings:
 - Of 388 men's basketball players surveyed, 17 admitted to at least one of the following extreme gambling behaviors: taking money to play poorly in a game; knowing a teammate who took money to play poorly in a game; been threatened or harmed because of sports wagering; been contacted by an outside source to share inside information; actually providing inside information on a game.
 - Of 2,000 football players surveyed, 102 admitted to at least one of the following extreme gambling behaviors noted above.
- This research shows that no campus is immune to the problems of sports wagering. Every institution needs to review its sports-wagering education program to ensure it is reaching its student-athletes and the entire campus community.
- A follow up study will be conducted within the next year, with results expected to be announced in 2008.