The University of Southern Mississippi Office of Athletic Compliance

March, 2013

The Compliance Educator

Secondary Infractions Worth Reading About

17.1.6.1 – Daily and Weekly Hour Limits. In softball, team exceeded the permissible practice hours by 25 minutes. As a penalty, practice was reduced by 50 minutes.

16.11.2.1 - Extra Benefits. Football athletes received impermissible benefit of transportation from airport. Students are ineligible until repayment is made.

11.7.1.1.1.1. - Non Coaching Staff Members. In men’s basketball a noncoaching staff member impermissibly instructed an athlete on his shot. Letter of reprimand issued and staff member barred from next two practices.

13.10.6 – Introduction of Prospective Student-Athletes. Institution publicly recognized a high school basketball team at a home event. Letter of caution issued.

13.4.1.2 – Electronic Transmissions. Assistant coach sent a direct message via Facebook to PSA. The PSA sent a direct message to Head Coach asking him to review his film, to which the assistant responded. It was found the PSA was a sophomore and could not receive such communication.

13.10.2 – Comments Before Signing. The athletics’ department Facebook page posted a link to a news article about a prospect prior to the prospect signing an NLI.

12.1.2.1.6 – Preferential Treatment, Benefits or Services. Three athletes received benefits based on their status as athletes. They received free drink tickets on various occasions from a local night club employee. Athletes were ineligible until repayment was made.

13.2.1 – Offer and Inducements. Coach gave two free tickets and sideline passes to a former football athlete who brought his godson, a current recruit. Letter of admonishment issued and the recruit must pay for value of ticket before eligible at institution.

Eligibility Center Information...

At this time of year, the NCAA Customer Service Center often hears from prospective student-athletes and parents who have been told they must immediately "complete or finalize their amateurism certification". Unfortunately, they are trying to do so earlier than they the system will allow. As a reminder, prospective student-athletes enrolling in the fall will be able to request final amateurism certification no earlier than April 1. Prospective student-athletes will have completed the amateurism questionnaire during the registration process. So long as the registration is complete, a prospective student-athlete may sign a National Letter of Intent and participate in official visits. If the Student Details Report states “Incomplete Web Entry” under the amateurism link, the sports participation section is incomplete. Please share this information with your coaching staffs and prospects.
RWG Recommends Suspension of Proposals

After reviewing significant membership feedback, the Rules Working Group recommended the Division I Board of Directors modify two proposals adopted in January. The Board meets May 2 in Indianapolis.

Despite extensive outreach by the Rules Working Group, some in the membership recently expressed concern about the possible adverse impact the changes would have on college coaches, administrators and university resources, in addition to the impact on prospects and their families.

Some coaches and administrators expressed concern deregulation in this area might lead to a recruiting arms race that will overwhelm prospects, college coaches and athletics department budgets. Much of the anxiety is specific to football, though the concerns could translate to any sport.

The working group members recommended the following:

Proposal 11-2, which eliminated the definition of recruiting coordination functions that must be performed only by a head or assistant coach, be suspended until appropriate modifications can be made. Proposal 13-5-A, which eliminated restrictions on printed materials sent to prospects, be suspended to allow for a broader discussion of the rule.

Suspending both rules means neither will become effective unless and until appropriate modifications are made.

Because the working group agreed to suspend 11-2, members felt that action addressed many of the concerns with 13-3, which eliminated restrictions governing modes and numerical limits on recruiting communication.

Suspending 11-2 will eliminate the fears about having an unlimited number of staff members contacting prospects an unlimited number of times. The rule also is expected to relieve a significant monitoring burden from the shoulders of compliance administrators.

Working group members noted that football coaches are currently permitted to make an unlimited number of telephone calls to prospects during the fall contact period, which runs from late November until the Saturday prior to the National Letter of Intent signing day in February. Given this, the practical impact of 13-3 will be to permit unlimited calls for only a few additional months.

Men’s basketball has operated without numerical or mode restrictions on recruiting contacts for nearly a year and all feedback have been positive. Believing some of the concerns have been allayed, the working group agreed to recommend that the Board not take action to modify 13-3 so that the benefits of the rule can be realized.

Two New Interps Released in February

Noncoaching Staff and Student-Athletes Speaking at Banquets:
noncoaching staff members without sport specific responsibilities (e.g., athletics director) are permitted to speak at a banquet attended by prospects provided the noncoaching staff member does not have contact with the prospects (or their parents/legal guardians) and does not make a recruiting presentation. Furthermore, it is permissible for a currently enrolled student-athlete to speak at such a banquet provided he/she does not make a recruiting presentation and the promotional activity legislation is satisfied. If their attendance is not at the direction of an institutional staff member, then they could have contact with the prospects in attendance.

Definition of Registration with the Eligibility Center:
A prospect is considered to be registered with the Eligibility Center once the individual has successfully completed the online registration process on the Eligibility Center website, which includes an agreement to the Ethical Conduct statement, and has made a successful payment or indicated that he or she is eligible to receive a fee waiver. The prospect will receive an email confirming successful registration with their 10-digit NCAA ID. To qualify for a fee waiver, the prospect must have already received a fee waiver from ACT or SAT.