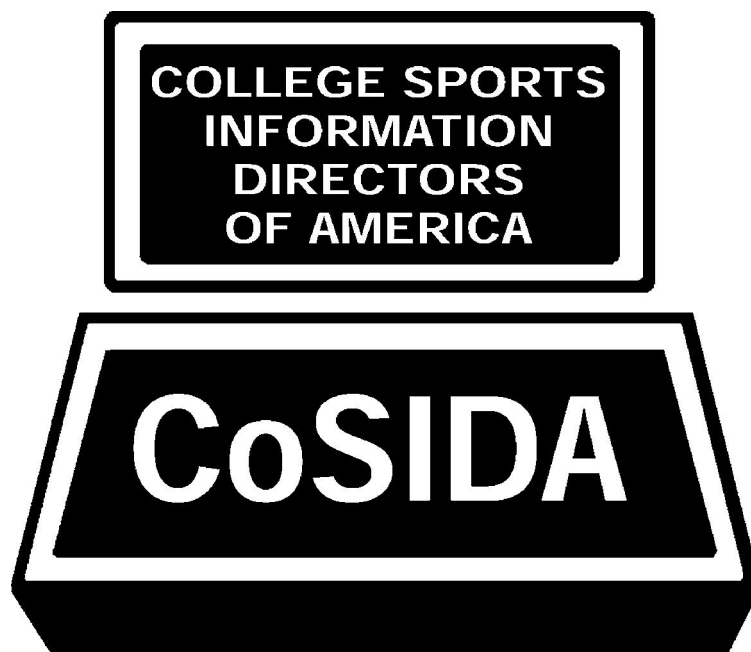


CoSIDA NEWS

Intercollegiate Athletics News from Around the Nation



NOVEMBER 16, 2006



COMMENTARY : Daddy presidents, can we have a playoff?

BY DAVE KINDRED THE SPORTING NEWS

Posted on Thursday, November 16, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/adg/Sports/173168/>

I began, "Lee, I'm going to write a column about a playoff..."

"Not so fast, my friend," he says.

Once a big-time coach working against Bo and Woody, now a TV star for the Worldwide Leader, the eternally effervescent Lee Corso wouldn't let me go on about my latest, greatest, this'll-solve-everything plan for a college football playoff.

He says, "Not going to be a playoff. Ever."

"But, Lee..."

"The presidents don't want it."

"Why..."

Corso, speaking at warp speed with the volume rising in proportion to his passion, says, "Because if you've got the name president, you don't have to give a reason. You say, 'This is it. Period. Done.'"

"OK, so the presidents run college football and they don't want a playoff for their usual bogus reasons: 'The sanctity of academics,' 'The purity of amateur sports.'"

"All that," Corso says. "So don't even ask for a playoff. It's like a kid asking his dad for a car. The dad says, 'No,' and the kid says, 'But, why, Dad, why?' And the dad says, 'Because I say so.' All the kid can do is go, 'OK, Dad.'"

I'll get back to Corso in a minute. He wants you to know exactly what he thinks of the Louisville-Rutgers game that matched undefeated teams with the winner believing it might maybe perhaps possibly could be invited to the national championship game. What Corso thinks is: Not ! Only he says it much more deliciously, and we'll open his mike right after we announce Dave's Playoff Plan That Will Fix Everything and Make the NFL Whimper Like a Schoolgirl: Invite 16 teams. Play every weekend in January. End of plan.

Brighter minds can figure out the trivial details. This I know for sure: We can trash the computers. By December, even Borat the Kazakh can name 16 teams of Cultural Learnings For Make Benefit Glorious Nation of America Pigskin. As for the daddy presidents' alleged concerns about academics and amateur sports, please, spare me that steaming pile of piffwaddle. We're grown-ups here. The real reason the football factory presidents don't want a playoff is simple: They make fabulous money this way. Why

share with the hoi polloi ?

So we have the Bowl Championship Series instead of a tournament. Instead of a George Mason doing its Cinderella thing, we wait for a computer to spit out, "Ohio State, Michigan — rematch." Instead of a month's worth of the sustained excitement that comes with March Madness, college football gives us one night of national championship suspense. That makes no sense financially, theatrically, athletically. It is a loser in every way except how it massages presidential egos.

Now, back to Corso on the possibility of an undefeated Big East champion getting into the BCS title game: "The BCS is designed to put the TWO BEST teams in the nation together, right ?" he asks, and, yes, as he often does, the TV star speaks in italicized capital letters. "It is a flawed system, obviously, but it is the only system we've got. And if it is designed to put the TWO BEST teams in the national championship game, then the Big East champion is NOT going to be in it. I don't care if they're undefeated through eight games this season or if they've won 28 straight games. They're still not one of the two best teams."

Corso's reasoning flows from his belief that the Big East is a second- (or third-) tier conference whose teams have yet to prove they belong with the big boys.

"With the exception of West Virginia beating Maryland," he says, "the Big East hasn't beaten anybody that I'd consider in the top half of a BCS conference."

Before last weekend's games, the Big East had beaten nine teams from other BCS leagues; only Maryland had earned bowl eligibility, and the nine were 38-48 for the season.

Quickly, Corso rattled off "at least 10 teams that could beat the Big East champion."

His list: Ohio State, Michigan, Florida, Texas, Auburn, Southern California, California, Notre Dame, Arkansas and LSU. "Have you seen LSU ? They are the best-looking physical specimens in the history of college football who ever lost two games."

Wait. Now we're getting somewhere. For our playoff, we would invite Corso's 10. We'd add Boise State and Rutgers. Bring in Louisville, Tennessee and Wisconsin. Fill out the bracket with either a Division II all-star team or the Oakland Raiders.

We'd play every Saturday in January.

We'd call it the Presidents Cup.

It would be Glorious.

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Today's News

Thursday, November 16, 2006

NCAA Defends Tax-Exempt Status as Congressional Scrutiny of Colleges Increases

By [BRAD WOLVERTON](#)

The National Collegiate Athletic Association, in a bid to justify its federal tax exemption, said this week that although big-time college-sports expenses continued to rise rapidly, athletics programs still had a largely educational mission.

In a 25-page [letter](#) to Rep. Bill Thomas, the California Republican who is chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, Myles Brand, the NCAA's president, said institutions in the association's top two divisions provided \$1.5-billion a year in athletics scholarships, much of which goes to low-income students who would otherwise not be able to attend college.

Mr. Brand's letter came in response to a sharply worded [letter](#) that Mr. Thomas sent the association last month, much of which centered around spending by big-time football and men's basketball programs and whether increasing commercial interests in those sports have led them to stray from their educational purpose ([The Chronicle](#), October 5).

While many observers assumed that Congressional interest in the finances of college sports would subside in January, after Democrats take control of the House of Representatives and Senate, that does not appear to be the case.

On Wednesday, Sen. Charles E. Grassley, the Iowa Republican and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, along with Max S. Baucus, the Montana Democrat who will become the committee's new chairman in January, announced plans to hold a hearing on December 5 on potential tax abuses by colleges and universities. According to committee staff members, the hearing will not focus on problems with big-time sports programs, but will likely touch on them.

Lessons Learned

In his letter to the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Brand said that the money brought in by the biggest college football and men's basketball programs -- \$2.4-billion annually -- helped subsidize participation opportunities for the 380,000 athletes in all three NCAA divisions, and that football and men's basketball programs offered as much educational value as other sports.

"The lessons learned on the football field or men's basketball court are no less in value or importance to those student-athletes than the ones learned on the hockey rink or softball diamond -- nor, for that matter, than those learned in theater, dance, music, journalism, or other nonclassroom environments," Mr. Brand said.

Mr. Thomas's letter had questioned why federal taxpayers should subsidize what he described as escalating coaches' salaries, costly chartered travel, and state-of-the-art athletics facilities.

Mr. Brand said that coaches' salaries were commensurate with other highly paid faculty members and within the range of reasonable compensation for federal tax purposes. Chartered planes, he argued, often cost less than commercial travel, and typically help athletes miss fewer classes. And universities often pay for new athletics

In response to Mr. Thomas's concerns about excessive spending in college sports, the NCAA said that intercollegiate athletics programs were no different than other nonprofit organizations that engage in activities designed to increase their revenues.

The NCAA asserted that, like other nonprofit groups, athletics programs should be allowed to increase their visibility by building new facilities and recruiting the best employees.

'No Crisis'

The main thrust of Mr. Thomas's inquiry -- and some of the most revealing responses from the NCAA -- deal with the finances of college sports and what institutions can do to control their spending.

While athletics spending has escalated at three times the rate of overall university budgets in recent years, the NCAA's letter said that there was "no crisis in athletics finances," as athletics operating budgets represented only about 4 percent of overall higher-education spending.

Still, the NCAA said, university presidents are looking for ways to reduce potential financial stress in their athletics departments.

Mr. Thomas's questions suggested that football and men's basketball programs were the biggest spenders, and the NCAA's responses showed that to be the case.

Over all, NCAA institutions spend approximately \$7.75-billion a year on their sports programs, slightly less than the \$7.8-billion they bring in.

The 117 NCAA Division I-A football teams alone spent about \$1-billion during 2004-5, while the 326 Division I men's basketball programs spent about \$789-million.

While football is the bigger overall spender, men's basketball teams actually paid more money per athlete. Athletics departments in the NCAA's largest division spent \$158,000 in 2004-5 on each male basketball player, compared with \$74,000 for each football player.

Over all, the NCAA said, athletics operating costs have risen in recent years because of tuition and housing increases, the need for additional compliance personnel, new teams, rising travel and insurance payments, and higher salaries. Many of those expenses, Mr. Brand said, are outside the control of athletics departments.

The NCAA's letter also responds to the Ways and Means Committee's concerns about potential academic corruption in college sports.

Several of Mr. Thomas's questions centered around reports of athletes taking college courses that lack academic rigor and institutions steering athletes toward professors and academic majors that are less challenging.

The NCAA said that faculty members from each college or university determined each institution's courses, standards for instruction, and degree requirements -- and that the association did not intend to intrude on those decisions.



November 16, 2006

NCAA defends tax-exempt status

College sports are part of education, Brand says to query from congressional committee

By Mark Alesia

mark.alesia@indystar.com

November 16, 2006

NCAA president Myles Brand defended college sports' tax-exempt status, responding to questions from Congress by saying diverse competition from non-scholarship lacrosse to basketball's Final Four, however lucrative, is all related to education.

"The fundamental purpose of intercollegiate athletics is the education of student-athletes in both the classroom and on the field or court," Brand wrote in a 25-page response, made public Wednesday, to the House Ways and Means Committee. "The scale of the sport does not alter the fundamental purpose."

The next step could be congressional hearings. Last month, The New York Post reported that Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., would continue scrutiny of the NCAA should he become chair of Ways and Means, which will occur in January.

A spokesman for the committee, which received the response Monday, said no decision has been made on how to proceed.

Regardless, one tax law expert said the NCAA likely will receive attention from the Internal Revenue Service. In a letter last week, the IRS, which enforces tax law, identified colleges and universities as a priority for 2007.

The sharply worded inquiry to the NCAA, delivered last month, challenged the Indianapolis-based association to justify the education-based tax exemption in the face of multi-million-dollar salaries for coaches and growing commercialism.

Brand responded that athletes, including many from low-income families, receive \$1.5 billion annually in scholarships.

While saying that college sports is "not perfect," Brand touted recent changes that strengthened academic standards and accountability for athletes, improvements in financial reporting, and a recent task force of school presidents calling for greater control of spending.

Kansas City attorney Bruce Hopkins, an expert on non-profit law who has testified before Congress, noted that the NCAA's response used quotes from the House and Senate from 1950 saying that sports are related to education.

"There just isn't a whole lot of law on this subject," Hopkins said.

The NCAA letter also quoted a 1984 Supreme Court decision saying the association's role is "critical" in the "revered tradition of amateurism in college sports."

"The law supports the notion that college athletics advances educational purposes," Hopkins said. "But there's a separate body of law that deals with commercialism (by non-profits). It's a separate test."

The NCAA's response included a 30-page appendix on its legal reasoning. Said Wally Renfro, the NCAA's senior adviser to the president: "I don't think anybody knows what's going to happen next, but we're more than happy to continue to be responsive to the committee."

Since 2004, the Ways and Means Committee, which deals with tax issues, has looked into all non-profits, and held hearings specifically on non-profit hospitals and credit unions.

It's unclear how the changing politics of Congress will affect the NCAA. Rep. Bill Thomas, R-Calif., current chair of Ways and Means and author of the questions to the NCAA, will retire when his term expires in January. Rangel could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, chair of the Finance Committee, which oversees tax policy, requested that the NCAA send him a copy of its response to Thomas.

With the incoming Democratic majority in the senate, Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., is expected to become the new chair of the Finance Committee. Baucus could not be reached for comment.

Hopkins said that even if Congress drops the issue, the NCAA isn't in the clear.

An annual letter last week from the IRS said a priority for 2007 would be income unrelated to the tax-exempt purpose of colleges and universities.

"They don't identify athletics, but it's got to be a part of that," Hopkins said.

A spokesman for the IRS declined comment.

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- David Charlow, Executive Director of Financial Aid, Columbia U.

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Nov. 16

The NCAA Responds

Last month, Rep. Bill Thomas (R-Calif.), the departing chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, [sent an eight-page letter](#) addressed to Myles Brand that asked the National Collegiate Athletic Association president to justify the organization’s tax-exempt status.

Intercollegiate sports, as sponsored by the NCAA and its member colleges, are considered to fall within the scope of the tax-exempt mission of higher education. But in recent years, as many aspects of college sports have become big business, some have begun to question whether the association and big-time sports programs still deserve their current classification. In other words, as the Thomas letter bluntly asks: “Why should the federal government subsidize the athletic activities of educational institutions when that subsidy is being used to help pay for escalating coaches’ salaries, costly chartered travel, and state-of-the-art facilities?”

In a carefully worded [response](#) to the Congressional committee’s letter, the NCAA takes a familiar tack — asserting that it operates in the same sphere as the rest of higher education. Line after line in the 25-page document, which was delivered Monday to Capitol Hill and released to the public Wednesday, draws parallels between college athletes and their peers, and between Coach X and high-profile Professor Y.

On why the NCAA believes that college sports programs further the mission of their institutions: “Athletics contests are the laboratory for lessons taught in practice in the same way theatrical or musical performances provide practical application of the lessons taught in rehearsals,” the response letter says.

In explaining why it’s OK to funnel a disproportionate amount of resources into a certain sport, the NCAA letter notes that “[p]sychology 101 classes (because of their number and size) ... typically [generate] more revenue and, in effect, [subsidize] philosophy classes, which cannot draw enough students to pay for themselves. Revenue from football and men’s basketball is redistributed to pay for sports that generate little or no revenue.”

The NCAA’s letter begins by saying that Congress, the courts and the Internal Revenue Service — which has looked into whether colleges that participate in big-time sports conferences should pay “unrelated business income tax” on at least some of the revenue their sports programs earn — all have agreed that there is an educational value to having athletics as part of the comprehensive campus experience.

On balance, the response refrains from being overly defensive. For instance, the committee’s letter calls invalid the argument that college sports deserve their tax-exempt status because high-profile programs attract both donors and potential students to a university, because “federal taxpayers have no reason to care about increasing applicant pools at one university over another.”

The NCAA's response matter-of-factly states that taxpayers do care about individual universities, which is why they donate to their alma maters. Promoting large athletic programs, the response adds, is just a method of increasing a university's visibility — no different from drawing attention to new libraries or hot faculty hires.

Richard Southall, associate director of the Drake Group — a coalition of faculty members who outspokenly criticize big-time college sports — said that while the NCAA has done well staying on message, it hasn't put forth any new arguments. His group issued a statement Wednesday saying that "Myles Brand's assertion that college athletes are not professional and that the enterprise is not professional flies in the face of mountains of empirical research and facts."

The group says that it looks forward to working with Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), the presumptive Ways and Means chair when the 110th Congress begins in January. Already before last week's midterm elections, it was unclear how the House committee planned to deal with the NCAA response — aides had not indicated that any hearings would be held or that any follow-up letters would be sent.

Here is a look at how the NCAA answered questions on several topics related to its role in higher education.

Amateur Status of Football and Men's Basketball

When most critics speak about the increasing professionalization of the NCAA, they are referring to the two largest revenue-generating sports: football and men's basketball.

The committee's letter states that "corporate sponsorships, multimillion dollar television deals, highly paid coaches with no academic duties, and the dedication of inordinate amounts of time by athletes to training lead many to believe that major college football and men's basketball more closely resemble professional sports than amateur sports.... The exempt purpose of intercollegiate athletics ... is less apparent [than that of higher education], particularly in the context of major college football and men's basketball programs."

Brand responds by writing that "the lessons learned on the football field or men's basketball court are no less in value or importance to those student-athletes than the ones learned on the hockey rink or softball diamond — nor, for that matter, than those learned in theater, dance, music, journalism or other non-classroom environments. The fundamental purpose of intercollegiate athletics is the education of student-athletes in both the classroom and on the field or court. The scale of the sport does not alter the fundamental purpose."

Still, the letter questions whether the NCAA is beholden to CBS, which televises the highly popular men's basketball tournament. Brand says that simply isn't true: "It just shows the popularity of the NCAA tournament," he writes. "Furthermore, if the American public also had the same popular interest in French lectures or accounting classes as they do in athletics, television would be just as eager to telecast those events and to sell commercial time to pay the rights fees. Transforming those academic offerings into commercialized events would not undermine the educational purpose for which the offerings are made."

Brand writes that although some are concerned that the NCAA added one game to the college football season and also expanded the men's basketball season, there is no sign that the extra games have had an adverse effect on athletes' grades. (The NCAA admits that bringing in extra ticket and television revenue is an added benefit.)

The committee's letter cites as a concern the statistic that at Division I-A schools, only 55 percent of football players and 38 percent of basketball players graduate — compared to 64 percent of the general student body. Brand says that although these low graduation rates are a concern, he believes that the [NCAA has made strides](#) to hold college programs more accountable for their players' academic performance.

Academic Reform

"We disagree with the fundamental assertion of the letter that intercollegiate athletics is not a part of higher

education,” Bob Williams, an NCAA spokesman, said last month. “Look at the emphasis on academic reform and it shows clearly how we feel.”

In the response letter, Brand explains the progress-toward-degree requirements that Division I athletes must meet before being eligible to compete. He also notes that according to data from freshmen entering college in 2004, Division I scholarship athletes on average earned higher SAT scores and grade-point averages than did their college-bound peers. (In a conference call last week, in response to a reporter’s question, NCAA officials said that they were not sure they could provide those scores and GPA’s by sport, to see how basketball and football players fared.)

“It is frustrating that there continue to be instances of low graduation rates for any teams, but progress on average is clearly being made and more will be,” the NCAA letter says.

Brand continues to say that the most accurate data on athletes’ classroom performance are the Academic Performance Rate – the real-time assessment of teams’ academic performance — and the Graduation Success Rate, the more long-term measure that takes into account athletes who transfer into NCAA Division I colleges and those who leave in good academic standing. The federal graduation rate has, for years, been the main measure — and generally didn’t provide the NCAA with favorable results.

On the topic of special admission for athletes, Brand’s letter says that “it must be emphasized that ‘special admissions’ are not limited to student-athletes. Most colleges and universities offer special admissions opportunities to a variety of students who have not met the academic standards generally applied to the student body. These special admissions are used to admit a small number of students, often low income non-athlete students with promise from disadvantaged educational environments.”

The committee’s letter expressed concern that athletes are being advised to choose less-than-challenging majors to improve their institutions’ results on academic indices. Brand responds that the NCAA is in the process of collecting data from athletes who have graduated over the past 10 years to see what degrees they selected, why those degrees were selected and whether they were steered toward specific degree programs. The results, he says, will be available in the spring. The response letter says the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act prevents the NCAA from releasing information about which professors students have or what classes they take (although some legal experts say that would only be so if the information were presented in a way that individual athletes’ outcomes were identifiable).

Escalating Costs

“There is no crisis in athletics finances,” the Brand letter states.

Responding directly to committee questions, the NCAA says that total annual operating revenues for all of its divisions are roughly \$7.8 billion. Of this amount, \$4.2 billion is generated from athletics sources such as ticket revenues, contributions, etc., the response states. “The remaining \$3.6 billion are funds allocated by the institution, state or other governmental entities for the benefit of student-athletes,” it says.

Brand says in the letter that although total athletics spending has outpaced the rate of increases in university spending over the last four years, athletics spending has not exceeded athletics revenues. Revenues are rising because of increases in scholarship costs, rising travel and insurance costs. “Many, but not all, of these factors are outside the control of the athletics department,” the letter states. “The ability of the NCAA to influence spending is limited.”

Thomas’s letter calls into question “excessive spending” on coaches’ salaries. Brand’s response: They are market-driven and on the same scale as salaries for top-tier faculty in medicine, engineering, law and other disciplines. The letter adds that just like a president’s compensation package, much of a coach’s money comes from outside sources.

Regulating coaches' salaries would potentially violate antitrust law, the letter states.

On college sports venues, which have become increasingly more expensive over the past decades: "These facilities, often paid for through bonds or charitable contributions, also generate revenue that offsets the operational cost of athletics that might otherwise be provided through institutional funds," the NCAA letter says.

"Through speeches, articles and most recently through the work of the Task Force [on the Future of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics], we have urged moderation in the growth rate of athletics budgets," Brand writes.

— [Elia Powers](#)

*The original story and user comments can be viewed online at
<http://insidehighered.com/news/2006/11/16/ncaa>.*

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Graduation rates can be deceiving

By Tim Dahlberg - Associated Press Sports Columnist

Thursday, November 16, 2006

The president of the NCAA went on the offensive the other day, taking on a couple of easy targets to make his case that most jocks aren't nearly as dumb as you might think.

Actually, Myles Brand says, they might be smarter than the average college student, no matter what the apparently not-so-bright media and an equally ignorant congressman try to lead you to believe.

"There really is no excuse for getting this information wrong," Brand said.

Brand used the federal government's own statistics to make his case that student-athletes fare better in college than those who don't play intercollegiate sports. And the best statistic was one that showed 63 percent of athletes who entered college in 1999 graduated within six years, compared with 61 percent of regular students.

Pretty impressive stuff, and you can't go wrong going after two professions people love to hate. If only Brand had thrown lawyers in there, too, he could have scored a rare trifecta of easily bashed targets.

Pretty timely too, considering the NCAA has just a few more days to answer a bunch of questions from the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee about graduation rates and the fate of \$545 million in tax-free money the NCAA gets every year from CBS to broadcast the men's basketball tournament.

Brand will surely trumpet the figures in his report to Congress as proof that the NCAA's efforts to get some sort of control over the academic side of college athletics are working.

And, to be sure, he's got some reason to brag.

Under his watch, the NCAA has for the first time instituted penalties on schools who don't graduate a decent portion of their athletes. Ninety-nine teams at 65 colleges and universities lost scholarships this year because they weren't graduating enough players.

For the first time, coaches are being forced to give more thought to academics than just knowing the name of the team's tutors. It's causing them to think twice about the kind of player they might recruit, and what they need to do for players once they're enrolled at school.

So give Brand a pat on the back for forcing the issue. It's long overdue from an organization whose only priority for years seemed to be finding out whether Jerry Tarkanian gave a kid lunch money or offered him a ride in his car.

But numbers aren't always what they seem. And these numbers are no exception.

Yes, more athletes are graduating. They should, because part of the deal at most colleges and universities is that athletes get tutors, structured study times and, in general, a lot more academic help than the average student who has trouble even finding an adviser to help him fill out a class schedule.

Some even get special classes to take to help them along. Who can forget the final exam for the University of Georgia's Coaching Principles and Strategies of Basketball class, where players had to answer such questions as how many halves are in a game and how many points you get for a three-point shot.

But the troubling thing is not how many are graduating, but who is doing the graduating.

If you're a female rower on scholarship, odds are very good you'll get a diploma. That's not surprising because a lot of college rowing teams were formed simply to meet Title IX requirements, and those who get scholarships are highly motivated to attend college.

The numbers, though, are still dismal for the athletes you see on television.



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UW's BCS shot unlikely from start

Pre-season rankings seem to be indicator

By JEFF POTRYKUS

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Posted: Nov. 15, 2006

Madison - Despite being poised to finish the regular season at 11-1 and probably no worse than No. 9 in the Bowl Championship Series standings, the University of Wisconsin will need a miracle, akin to Moses parting the Red Sea, to secure a BCS bowl berth.

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That situation has sparked debate about the BCS and UW's weak non-conference schedule, which includes a 2-8 Buffalo team that visits Camp Randall Stadium on Saturday.

The consensus among pundits appears to be that if the Badgers, who finished 7-1 in the Big Ten Conference, would have played a tougher non-conference schedule they would be in the hunt for a BCS bowl berth and perhaps in the running for a national title.

Yet is the issue that simple? Is the cumulative record of UW's non-conference foes (13-27) the No. 1 reason UW is on the verge of being left out of the BCS? Or has the fact UW was not ranked in the pre-season polls played a greater role?

Let's examine both sides of the debate.

If the Badgers had played a strong non-conference foe before their Big Ten opener they would have been cracked the national rankings sooner than they did.

Perhaps. UW was unranked and an unknown quantity after beating Bowling Green, Division I-AA Western Illinois and San Diego State entering the conference opener at then-No. 6 Michigan on Sept. 23.

Yet the 27-13 loss to the Wolverines likely would have dropped UW out of the national rankings. UW remained unranked for two more weeks and finally moved into the No. 25 spot in the Associated Press poll after a 41-9 victory over Northwestern in Week 6.

Bret Bielema's team had little chance to make a run at the BCS title game, barring winning the Big Ten title, because it was not ranked in either pre-season poll. (UW received votes in both polls and technically was tied for No. 32 in the AP poll with Arkansas and No. 32 in the USA Today poll.)

This argument appears to have merit when the history of the BCS is studied. In the eight-year history of the

BCS (1998-2005), the average pre-season ranking of the teams that reached the BCS title game was No. 6. The lowest pre-season ranking in the AP poll was the 2000 Oklahoma team, which opened the season at No. 19.

The 2000 Sooners, coming off a 7-5 mark the previous year, defeated Kansas State in the Big 12 title game and then beat Florida State in the Orange Bowl to finish 13-0 and win the BCS title.

Oklahoma's non-conference schedule that season: Texas-El Paso, Arkansas State and Rice. After winning those three games, the Sooners were No. 14 in the AP poll.

The 2003 Louisiana State team won the BCS title by defeating Oklahoma, 21-14, in the Sugar Bowl. That LSU team finished 13-1, with the lone loss to Southeastern Conference rival Florida in Week 6.

LSU's non-conference schedule that season: Louisiana-Monroe, Arizona, Western Illinois and Louisiana Tech. However, the Tigers were No. 14 in the AP pre-season poll and moved up to No. 11 after beating Louisiana-Monroe, Arizona and Western Illinois.

The 2001 Nebraska team sparked the most heated debate in the history of the BCS. That team, ranked No. 4 in the pre-season AP poll, suffered a 62-36 loss at Colorado in Week 12 and thus failed to qualify for the Big 12 title game. Nevertheless, Nebraska finished No. 2 in the final BCS standings and was embarrassed by No. 1 Miami, 37-14, in the Rose Bowl.

Nebraska's non-conference schedule that season included one top-notch opponent, Notre Dame. Nebraska beat the Irish, 27-10, in Lincoln. The Irish were ranked No. 17 at the time but finished 5-6 and out of the polls. The Cornhuskers' other three non-conference foes were TCU, Troy State and Rice.

Of the eight teams currently ahead of UW in the BCS standings, only No. 6 Rutgers (9-0) and No. 7 Arkansas (9-1) were not ranked No. 14 or higher in the AP pre-season top poll.

Rutgers had fewer votes than UW in the AP pre-season poll - the Scarlet Knights were No. 38 - but has passed UW because it is unbeaten and one of its victories came against then-No. 3 Louisville in Big East Conference play.

Rutgers' non-conference schedule this season: North Carolina, Illinois, Ohio University and Howard.

No one can call UW's 2006 non-conference schedule formidable and maintain a straight face. However, UW was originally scheduled to open with Oregon State instead of Bowling Green. Oregon State officials asked out of the two-year agreement, which was to begin in 2005, for financial reasons. Oregon State handed No. 3 Southern California its only loss this season and is 4-3 in the Pacific 10 and 6-4 overall.

More important, however, it appears UW's pre-season poll position and its Sept. 23 loss at Michigan have been the most significant obstacles preventing the Badgers from securing a BCS berth.

From the Nov. 16, 2006 editions of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
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Norfolk lawyer says he paid college stars

By TIM MCGLONE AND KYLE TUCKER,

© November 16, 2006

Last updated: 1:44 AM

NORFOLK - Atlanta Falcons cornerback and Hampton native Jimmy Williams and NBA rookie Shawne Williams received more than \$100,000 in cash and other items from a Norfolk lawyer while they were college athletes, according to lawsuits filed against the players.

The lawyer, Carl C. La Mondue, is seeking repayment, plus interest, of \$55,109 from Jimmy Williams and his father and \$49,494 from Shawne Williams, according to the lawsuits filed Nov. 8 in Norfolk Circuit Court.

Jimmy Williams and Shawne Williams, who are not related, have not yet responded to the lawsuits. Both turned pro in the spring.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association prohibits its athletes from receiving benefits or signing with an agent while in school. The prohibition extends to family members and friends. The association rules state that prohibited benefits "may include, but are not limited to, transportation, money and gifts, regardless of the benefit or whether or not you use the benefit."

A spokeswoman for the NCAA said the association would not comment on potential or current investigations.

Jimmy Williams was an All-American at Virginia Tech, where he played four seasons as a defensive free safety and cornerback. School officials said Wednesday they were reviewing the allegations.

Jimmy Williams and his agent did not return phone calls.

An official of the University of Memphis, where Shawne Williams played one season before jumping to the NBA, said the university would investigate the allegations.

Happy Walters, the Los Angeles-based agent for Shawne Williams, said Wednesday that the allegations are "frivolous."

La Mondue, whose Web site says his firm is "ready to assist entertainers and athletes negotiate and prepare contracts," said Wednesday that he "did not want to comment on this."

"These are matters that are private," he said.

His suits did not specify why he paid the players.

While Jimmy Williams was a student at Virginia Tech, he and his father received from La Mondue \$8,700 in merchandise, including clothes and shoes, phone service, hotel rooms and a tattoo, according to the suit. The remaining \$46,000 and change were given in cash, the papers say. It does not itemize what was received by the father or the son.

The cash and merchandise were given between November 2004 and November 2005, the suit says. Jimmy Williams was a junior and senior at Tech those years.

Cash withdrawals ranging from \$300 to \$600 were made during that time in Ghent, Hampton and Blacksburg, the suit says. La Mondue says he is owed \$1,500 by Jimmy Williams and his father for an appearance at the Hampton Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. La Mondue says he is owed \$310 for the tattoo.



Jimmy Williams, left, and Shawne Williams. ap file photos

La Mondue also asserts that he is owed \$2,187 for a shopping spree on Sept. 12, 2005, in which clothes, shoes and a car stereo were purchased, and a \$500 cash transfer from that day.

Jimmy Williams was drafted by the Falcons in April and promptly bought a \$250,000 to \$300,000 Lamborghini. By then, he had signed with Phoenix-based agent Ethan Locke. His salary has been reported at \$275,000 this year, plus a \$625,000 signing bonus.

Virginia Tech officials said Wednesday they were not aware of the lawsuit, but upon learning of it they said they would review the allegations.

"Could it be a problem? Yeah, I guess it could be. This is the first I've heard of it," said Tim Parker, Virginia Tech's assistant athletic director for compliance.

"It's an interesting question," he said. "If this guy expected something in return... expected Jimmy to sign with his agency or endorse something on the back end, obviously that could be a problem."

Parker said any college student may obtain a credit card without violating NCAA rules, but going outside the banking system could be a problem. "It doesn't seem like the normal way, if someone was going to break a rule, that they would do it out in the open like that, charging things in their name."

Shawne Williams, a Pennsylvania native, left the University of Memphis after his freshman year and was signed this year by the Indiana Pacers. The 6-foot-9 rookie, reportedly being paid nearly \$1.4 million this year, has yet to play a regular season game.

La Mondue says in the suit that he gave Shawne Williams more than \$9,700 in hotel rooms, airfare and 2 1/2 years' worth of cell phone service. The rest was provided mostly in Western Union cash transfers, the suit says.

Walters, who signed on as Shawne Williams' agent in May when he was drafted, said the suit contains "a lot of wrong information."

"From what I understand from both parties, there's nothing there," he said by phone. "You get this all the time with athletes."

When asked whether his client received anything from La Mondue, Walters replied: "He did not, as far as I know. Unequivocally, he did not."

Bob Winn, Memphis' assistant athletic director for external affairs, said he planned to take the lawsuit to the school's attorney. "It certainly catches us off guard," he said.

He said the school instructs athletes upon arrival about the NCAA rules regarding gifts. He said the school works "to make sure we cover those areas very explicitly." Student-athletes sign documents saying they will follow the rules, he added.

Winn said the school is sensitive to such allegations because in the 1980s it lost two players who accepted gifts.

"It is a point that we take to heart here."

- Reach Tim McGlone at (757) 446-2343 or tim.mcglone@pilotonline.com.

[Print Page](#)

Newberry players put aside NCAA debate for playoff game

By PETE IACOBELLI

NEWBERRY, S.C. - Josh Stepp loves being an Indian and is proud to carry the nickname into Newberry's first playoff game, despite the NCAA's lingering dispute with the college.

This week, Newberry administrators agreed to resolve the issue with the NCAA by the fall of 2008, a move that got the school off the governing body's list of censured members _ and earned it a home game Saturday against Albany State.

Even if that hadn't happened, Stepp knows the Indians would've had plenty to play for.

"We know who we are as a team and we know that we play for Newberry College," he said Wednesday. "And you could take everything off our uniforms and put our helmets plain and we'd still go out and play for each other and for Newberry College and our coaches.

"It doesn't matter to us. We just want to play ball," Stepp said.

Newberry was among 18 schools the NCAA listed as having "abusive" and "hostile" nicknames, imagery or mascots. Leaders at the Division II school have staunchly defended their Indian name. In a letter to NCAA President Myles Brand in 2005, Newberry College President Mick Zais wrote that "it was the height of arrogance for the NCAA to presume to speak on behalf of all Native Americans."

On Sunday, the NCAA said the only way Newberry would've been removed from its list was to agree to a name change.

As Zais has said several times this week since the agreement was revealed, that the school was forced to choose between principle and denying its athletes the rewards that come with success.

"I think the bottom line ... is that the NCAA put the college in an untenable position," Zais said Wednesday.

"At the end of two years, we may end up changing our nickname, that is an option," Zais said.

The agreement lets the school use its nickname and imagery until fall 2008.

Zais is closely following a lawsuit brought by the University of North Dakota, also on the NCAA's list for its Fighting Sioux nickname. The trial is set for April 24 and Newberry leaders are hopeful a decision in North Dakota's favor would mean Newberry would not have to give up its nickname.

Stepp, a senior, supports staying as Indians. "It's something special to me and my teammates. It's something special to all of us to graduate as a Newberry College Indian," Stepp said. "We should do everything possible to keep it that way."

For now, though, the school is thrilled at hosting the first-round game. Newberry, whose enrollment of 840 is the smallest among Division II football playing schools, has already had a landmark year with its first South

Atlantic Conference title and first 10-victory season.

"I think if I'd have took bets, I'd have probably won a lot of money this year on how far the program's come," said Zak Willis, the Indians' fourth-year coach.

Athletic director Andy Carter said he and Willis expected it to take six years to bring such success to the small campus. "It's a different environment when you're coming off of one and ten and three and seven (records) to attract personnel to your team, but that happened anyway because they could see the vision that coach Willis had laid out for this football team," Carter said.

Newberry had its 10-0 start ruined last week against rival Presbyterian, which won the annual fight for the Bronze Derby with a 10-0 victory.

Willis hasn't seen any changes in his team's strong practice habits since the defeat and thinks they'll be ready to take on Albany State (7-3). The winner will travel for a second-round game Nov. 25 against undefeated North Alabama (10-0).

Newberry receiver Tymere Zimmerman, a former Clemson recruit, says there's no reason for the players to get down because of what's ahead with the playoffs.

"We have friends who play Division One football, and they're always in the spotlight," Zimmerman said. "This is our chance to play where they play at. We just have to go out and make the best of it."

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Historically black schools fight for relevancy

The Florida Classic at the Citrus Bowl will draw a big crowd, but black college football isn't what it once was.

Andrew Carter
Sentinel Staff Writer

November 16, 2006

Four decades later, Larry Little still sees the blur that was the fastest man in the world.

It was late in 1963, Little's freshman season at Bethune-Cookman, a day when he wanted a piece of Florida A&M punt returner "Bullet" Bob Hayes.

"I ran down the field. I left my feet maybe 10 yards before I could get to [Hayes]," Little says now. "And by the time I landed, he was in the end zone.

"Here I was going to hit the fastest man in the world, but I didn't even touch him."

Bethune-Cookman and FAMU play again Saturday in the Florida Classic, in the Citrus Bowl, in front of 70,000 fans -- the bands, the alumni reunions, all that. It's B-CC and FAMU, but not like it was back in the days of Little, who later made the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and Hayes, who won two gold medals in Tokyo in the 1964 Olympics and helped change NFL passing attacks with Dallas in the late 1960s.

It's not like it was before Jim Crow died, back when the best teams at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were among the best teams in the country. Back then, elite black high-school football players dreamed of going to Tallahassee to play for Jake Gaither at FAMU, or to Grambling in Louisiana to play for Eddie Robinson.

"Take most of them [now] that's on FSU, Miami and Florida; put them all on one team," says Billy Wilson, who played for Gaither in the late '50s and later coached at A&M. "God dog, that's what you had at A&M -- those kinds of athletes."

The football past at HBCUs is as rich as the present is dire. These days, HBCU programs fight for athletes, attention and money. They fight for upgrades in facilities, for recognition.

They fight for relevancy, all the while clinging to a glorious past that has grown more distant over the decades.

'It's always a revenue issue'

The past and present of HBCU football meet in Tallahassee on Florida A&M's campus, in a building off Wahnish Way, across the street from the Jake Gaither statue.

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Listed on a modest sign above the entrance to the Florida A&M football headquarters are the Rattlers' accomplishments, which include 28 conference championships and 13 national titles. Open the doors, and long trophy cases line the hallway to the reception area. Coach Rubin Carter likes to show recruits the hardware when they visit.

"When you've been around for 100 years, you have a lot to show," Carter says, "so you try to keep them dusted off."

If only a quick dusting truly could restore the luster. Most of the time, the things obscuring the once-bright gleam at HBCUs are far more serious.

"It's a lack of dollars," Carter says. "You have to do more with less. It's always a revenue issue at HBCUs."

FAMU is one of 22 HBCUs competing in NCAA Division I-AA football. The Rattlers are one of nine football-playing teams in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC), a league made up entirely of HBCUs. The other HBCU league is the 10-team Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC). Two HBCUs -- Savannah State and Winston Salem State -- are I-AA independents; another, Tennessee State, is a member of the Ohio Valley Conference.

Since the I-AA playoffs began in 1978, one HBCU has won the championship -- FAMU, in the inaugural year of the tournament. And since the I-AA playoffs expanded past a four-team format in 1980, an HBCU has appeared in the semifinals twice -- South Carolina State in 1981 and FAMU in 1999. No HBCU has won a I-AA playoff game since '99.

SWAC teams haven't competed in the playoffs since 1998. That's when the league decided instead to play a season-ending conference championship game, a move the MEAC is considering.

Though one HBCU conference doesn't compete on a national level and another is examining whether to stop competing nationally, leaders say their programs still matter.

"You look at the Florida Classic. You look at the State Fair Classic [Grambling vs. Prairie View in Dallas]. You look at the Bayou Classic [Grambling vs. Southern in New Orleans, a game televised by NBC]," says SWAC Commissioner Robert Vowels, talking about games that routinely draw at least 50,000 fans. "Those games are not going away because people still believe in HBCU football."

Then there's the other side -- the non-"Classic" games. Last weekend, fewer than 2,000 showed for Alcorn State's game at Alabama A&M. Fewer than 3,000 showed for North Carolina A&T's home loss to Elon and for Morgan State's loss to South Carolina State. The most-attended MEAC game was FAMU's loss to Hampton in Tallahassee, which drew almost 14,000.

In April's NFL draft, teams selected three players from HBCUs. Ten years ago, 17 HBCU players were drafted. In the past 15 years, nine HBCU players have been taken in the first round -- but none since 2000, when Jackson State teammates Sylvester Morris and Rashard Anderson went 21st and 23rd, respectively.

Doug Williams, a former Grambling star and the Super Bowl XXII MVP with the Washington Redskins, listens to the facts and figures and offers a simple explanation. "At the end of the day," he says, "everything is not a level playing field."

Williams, now a personnel executive with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, is talking about the same obstacles Carter often mentions: the lack of funding and the absence of up-to-date facilities.

Without those two things, Williams says, it's impossible to expect HBCUs to compete as they once did, when they were the only option for the elite black athlete.

Leaders of HBCUs, though, say their mission hasn't changed over the years -- and because of that, they say, neither has their place in the sports world.

"I look at relevancy in terms of [whether we] are enhancing our society," MEAC Commissioner Dennis Thomas says. "Are we giving opportunities for African-American males? That, to me, is what it's all about."

Glory years are gone

Williams isn't bashful about talking about his years at Grambling, during the 1970s, when he was one of the best quarterbacks in college football. "We felt like we could beat anybody we played," he says.

That was when Robinson was in his coaching prime, and every Grambling game was a show.

"We got five or 10 top players a year from Florida," says James Harris, the Jacksonville Jaguars' vice president of player personnel who was a quarterback for Grambling in the '60s. "We got five or 10 of the top players from Texas every year. We'd have five or 10 top players from the state of Mississippi. You look how talented teams are in those states now and put those [black] players on Grambling. That's how good we were."

FAMU under Gaither was the same way.

"[Gaither] got the best," says Ken Riley, who played at FAMU from 1965-69 and later coached there from 1986-93.

"He got the cream of the crop. . . . Everybody wanted to go to a winner."

Old-timers such as Williams, Harris and Riley knew integration would change things. They might not have foreseen, though, a time when a Pro Football Hall of Famer couldn't even get a 17-year-old player to give him any time.

"When I was coaching, they wouldn't even answer the door when I knocked on it," says Little, whose coaching stops include B-CC and North Carolina Central, another Division II HBCU.

Lorenzo Edwards, an Edgewater High senior who's one of the top prospects in the country, says he hasn't received one recruiting letter from an HBCU.

"I guess they didn't think they'd have a chance," he says. "But I think of it as you never know who [a prospect's] parents are, you never know who they are inside, if they really want to go to your school. Sometimes, you've just got to take risks."

Edwards, though, admits he never has heard of Gaither, who died in 1994. That today's generation doesn't know of the past isn't a surprise to Carter.

"I don't think they're really aware of the history, especially at our institution because it goes back such a long way," he says. "What we try to do is we try to let them know who Coach Gaither was."

He's a man who won 203 games and lost 36. He's a man who competed for titles and won more than his share. But if some in the MEAC have their way, the league's teams might not compete for national titles much longer. The league is considering playing a season-ending championship game, with the winner possibly playing the SWAC titlist.

"We would love to have a game like that happen," Vowels says.

Thomas says his conference still is researching it: "The facts will lead us to the appropriate conclusion."

To those who know about the HBCU's financial struggles, the MEAC's discussions are a foregone conclusion.

"A lot of times, [when] you get into the playoffs, you wind up spending more money than you actually get," Riley says. "They're not making any money, and maybe they stand to make more money by going the other route."

Some don't like alternative

For some players, the thought of giving up the chase for a national title isn't appealing. FAMU quarterback Albert Chester shakes his head at the thought of playing instead for what would amount to a black national championship.

"That's kind of aiming low," he says. "It'd be nice to compete for a national championship, not just a black college championship. That's garbage. A national championship -- that's what you want."

"You don't want to be the best in just black college football. What is black college football? A lot of black people play football. Let's win a national championship."

It's an attitude Gaither would've liked. And it's not hard to see where Chester gets his inspiration.

He's standing in a room filled with trophies, some a little dustier than others, all reminders of a time when it wasn't that rare to see the fastest man in the world dodge a future Hall of Famer and sprint for six.

Sentinel staff writer Alan Schmadtke contributed to this report. Andrew Carter can be reached at acarterb@orlandosentinel.com.

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PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Football ticket, or a ticket to misbehave?

By Allison M. Heinrichs

TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Thursday, November 16, 2006

Two years ago, Andrew Allen had to get out of his car to direct his wife through a "minefield" of broken glass and trash ringing Heinz Field after a University of Pittsburgh football game.

It was the last straw. Fed up with intoxicated, disrespectful fans, Allen gave up his Pitt Panthers season tickets. After watching Steelers fans yell obscenities and threaten a Cleveland Browns fan and his young son, he stopped going to Steelers games.

"I just gave up on the whole experience," said Allen, 65, of Mt. Washington. "I would have to say that Attila the Hun would have been much more orderly. The behavior around Heinz Field was the following: Everybody'd drink until they got so sick, they'd throw up all over the parking lot, break glass and throw trash everywhere."

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review examined police reports filed 10 hours before, during and after 24 games at Heinz Field last year through September. Of the 37 incidents reported, 30 -- more than 80 percent -- detailed thefts, alcohol-related offenses and assaults. Twenty-five incidents -- or 68 percent -- happened on days when kick-off was after 4 p.m., even though that accounts for fewer than half the games.

With the Backyard Brawl -- the annual Pitt vs. West Virginia University football rivalry -- kicking off at 7:30 tonight, security will be stepped up in the parking lots surrounding Heinz Field.

"There will be a little bit more (security) because it's West Virginia," said Alco Parking President Merrill Stabile. "It's become party central."

Lt. Martin Sanders, a Pittsburgh firefighter, was suspended without pay after calling in sick to attend an evening Steelers game on Oct. 15, where he is accused of exposing himself and fighting with security guards and officers. Sanders' lawyer said his client was intoxicated. Sanders is awaiting trial on charges including assault, indecent exposure and resisting arrest.

The Steelers and Pitt would not provide statistics on the number of complaints filed in the stadium or the number of people ejected. Steelers spokesman Dave Lockett said it was not the team's policy to disclose the numbers. Pitt referred comments to Jimmy Sacco, Heinz Field's executive director of stadium management. He did not return phone calls.

The parking lots surrounding Heinz Field open five hours before kick-off, but for

evening games fans often arrive hours before that and park along streets to begin tailgating.

"The later games allow more opportunity to ingest alcoholic beverages," said Lt. Christopher Ragland, a Pittsburgh police officer based in the North Side.

Many people say they aren't concerned with the drinking and profane language that keep others away, and fans still turn out in droves for games at Heinz Field. It's a 10-year wait for season tickets to Steelers games.

"I've never had a problem and, as you can see, we have a lot of people here," said Mitchell Ackerman, of Beaver Falls, Beaver County, who has had Steelers season tickets since 1970. He brought his son, Austin, 7, to a large tailgate party before attending the recent Steelers-Broncos game.

The parking lots that play host to pre-game tailgating are owned by Alco Parking, which employs off-duty city police officers to monitor them. Alco does not keep statistics on complaints.

"Occasionally people will do things as a result of their tailgating activities that cause damage, and that's another reason why we try to control it as best we can," said Stabile. "Football's dent cars. We're not interested in killing people's fun, but we can't allow people to have fun at the expense of others."

Leonard Zaichkowsky, a sports psychologist at Boston University who researches fan behavior, said the high cost of tickets gives some fans a sense of entitlement to behave how they want. Season tickets range from \$550 to more than \$2,000 for the Steelers, and \$99 to \$315 for Pitt.

"The customers feel they have some rights associated with paying, say, \$100 for a ticket. It's misplaced rights -- misbehaving and being obnoxious," he said. "When you prompt rowdy fans, they tell you, 'Damn it, I'm paying big bucks, I want to enjoy myself.' "

A crowd mentality fuels negative behavior such as excessive alcohol consumption and bad language, Zaichkowsky said.

"It is somewhat of a contagious thing, too," he said. "People feel they can hide behind others. Normally sane people start misbehaving when they see others acting that way."

Duane Schick, a Pittsburgh patrolman who worked game days in the stadium and on the North Side for three years, refuses to patrol them anymore "for any amount of money."

"Normal people that, if you deal with them during the week, they would say, 'Hello officer,' but for some reason during game days it's a contest of who can get the drunkest, and normal people have no respect," Schick said. "It's like the ticket to the game is their ticket to act like an idiot."

The Philadelphia Eagles used to be known for having the rowdiest fans in the National Football League, and a night court was installed in their old stadium to

send a message that such behavior wouldn't be tolerated. At the new Lincoln Financial Field, Eagles fans rank "on the better side of average" for their behavior, said Leonard Bonacci, director of event operations at the field.

The Eagles managed to stem fan misbehavior by creating a hot line that people can call anonymously from cell phones to immediately report complaints. Security staffers monitor the complaint area and take appropriate action -- which could include revoking a fan's season tickets, Bonacci said.

"We were the first stadium in the country to launch that hot line," he said. "Everybody walks around with a cell phone, so it's the best way to put 120,000 eyeballs on each other."

The Steelers also have a hot line -- 412-697-7766 -- that people can call during games to report misbehavior, Lockett said.

"If people have a problem, they should call and let us know what the problem is," he said.

This year, Penn State University barred alcohol consumption in the parking lots around Beaver Stadium during games. The policy came after Penn Staters shoved and showered obscenities on the Ohio State marching band before last year's game.

More than a third of the 904 alcohol-related incidents reported to University Police during football games last year happened during the Ohio State-Penn State game. More than 20 people were hospitalized with alcohol poisoning, said Tyrone Parham, assistant director of police services at Penn State.

"It's three-and-a-half hours less of people drinking" since the policy was instituted, Parham said. "We used to have people tailgating in the lots who had no intention of going to the game, and they couldn't care less who is playing or what the score is. Now these people have to pack up and leave when the game starts, unless they stop drinking.

"So far it's working," he said. "We have less people going to the hospital, less issues with general fan behavior."

Beer isn't sold at Pitt football games, and alcohol sales are cut off by the start of the fourth quarter during Steelers day games and at the end of the half during night games.

Zaichkowsky said that the way to reverse rowdy fan behavior isn't necessarily to beef up security and that banning alcohol isn't realistic -- Coors Brewing has a \$300 million, five-year sponsorship deal with the NFL.

"I'm still a big fan of education," he said. "I don't think we do enough of that. We need to educate people on what it means to be a good fan. We've got these incredible scoreboards that advertise all kinds of things. We should use them to remind people what a good fan is, what a good sport is."

Allison M. Heinrichs can be reached at aheinrichs@tribweb.com or (412) 380-

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College football contracts are dotted with extras and provisions

Posted 11/16/2006 1:32 AM ET

By Jodi Upton and Steve Wieberg, USA TODAY

Head football coaches' contracts with NCAA Division I-A schools can be more than a matter of money. Here are some of the more unusual provisions of current deals:

The perks

•**Lifetime care:** Air Force's Fisher DeBerry will get a lifetime monthly annuity after he steps down — \$7,000 a month if he coaches through the 2006 season, a figure that rises to \$9,000 a month if he coaches through the 2010 season. His wife would collect two-thirds of the monthly amount if he dies before she does.

•**No rocking chair here:** Colorado State wrote a retirement clause into 69-year-old Sonny Lubick's contract extension in January. If he retires before January 2, 2010 Lubick can stay at the school for up to two years as a \$75,000-a-year "public relations and fundraising consultant."

•**Sharing the cost of education:** Florida's Urban Meyer gets \$100,000 a year for family educational expenses.

•**Getting away:** Hawaii's June Jones gets 10 economy-fare round-trip tickets a year for personal use or use by his family "to any destination in the United States."

The penalties

•**You cheat, you pay:** Arizona State's Dirk Koetter must pay up to \$300,000 in damages if he's fired for NCAA or conference rules violations. Arizona's Mike Stoops must pay \$100,000.

•**Cost of being a Michigan man:** LSU's Les Miles must pay \$500,000 to leave before his contract expires at the end of 2011 — \$1.25 million if he leaves for Michigan, where he played, graduated with a degree in economics and coached under Bo Schembechler and Gary Moeller.

The parochial

•**No more November surprises:** Auburn pledges to Tommy Tuberville that neither the school president nor athletics director or anyone acting under their authority "shall discuss or negotiate directly or indirectly Auburn's prospective employment of any other person as Head Football Coach of Auburn" without giving Tuberville prior notice. That's to avoid a repeat of a messy 2003 episode in which then-President William Walker, athletics director David Housel and two Auburn trustees flew to Kentucky to talk to Louisville's Bobby Petrino two days before Tuberville coached the Tigers against Alabama.

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Says Tuberville: "This is a volatile job. It can be over before you know it — as I found out in 2003."

•**Fancier digs:** California's Jeff Tedford gets \$500,000 if he's still coach when Cal plays its first game in a renovated Memorial Stadium, a project he has advocated. Construction on a new athletics training center is scheduled to start after this season, though the city of Berkeley plans to sue to block the project because of concerns about the stadium's earthquake-threatened location on the Hayward Fault. Work on the stadium itself, including a "seismic retrofit" designed to withstand an earthquake of 8.0 magnitude on the Richter scale, wasn't to begin until 2008 or 2009, depending on fundraising.

•**In honor:** Georgia's Mark Richt commits \$30,000 in both 2006 and 2007 toward a \$150,000 endowed scholarship in the name of David Jacobs, a starting nose tackle who suffered a career-ending stroke in 2001.

A little bit extra

•**Road receipts:** Marshall's Mark Snyder gets 20% of the net proceeds (after travel and game expenses) from one non-conference road game of his choice per year, up to \$50,000. He can share the money with his assistants.

•**Standing by his president:** Oklahoma contributes an average of \$750,000 a year toward an "anniversary benefit" paying Bob Stoops \$3 million on Dec. 31, 2008, marking his 10th anniversary at the school. He forfeits the money if he leaves for another coaching job before then, though he'll get a prorated portion if he leaves in 2007 or 2008 in conjunction with David Boren's departure as president. Stoops also gets 35 hours of private air travel a year.

Performance matters

•**Winning it all:** An undefeated run to a national championship is effectively worth \$1.18 million to Arizona State's Dirk Koetter (\$1.05 million for a 12-0 regular-season finish, \$125,000 for reaching the Bowl Championship Series title game and \$5,000 for a final No. 1 poll ranking). He gets \$781,500 if ASU loses once during the regular season and goes on to win it all.

•**Mark of a good season:** Doug Martin's contract with Kent State is automatically renewed for an additional year if the Golden Flashes have a .625 winning percentage in the Mid-American Conference or finish in the top two in the MAC's East Division. They're 4-2 in the league and second in the division with two games left.

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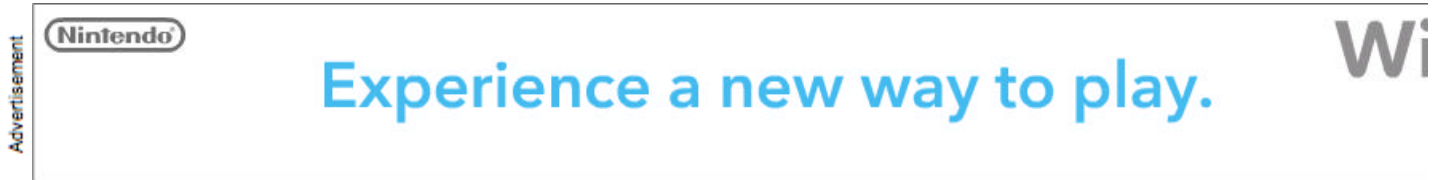
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Posted 11/16/2006 1:01 AM ET

By Jodi Upton and Steve Wieberg, USA TODAY

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Pick any numbers you like to define college football's premier teams — points scored, yards allowed.

Or the big money earned by their coaches.

The sport's dizzying salaries spiral has come to this, a USA TODAY study finds: The million-dollar coach, once a rarity, is now the norm. Head coaches at the NCAA's top-level schools are making an average of \$950,000 this year, not counting benefits, incentives, subsidized housing or any of the perks they routinely receive. At least 42 of the 119 Division I-A coaches are earning \$1 million or more this year, up from five in 1999.

Jim Tressel, coach of No. 1-ranked Ohio State, and Mack Brown, who steered Texas to the national championship a year ago, are among the nine coaches making more than \$2 million. Iowa's Kirk Ferentz will pocket a guaranteed \$4.6 million in an atypical 13-month period ending next June, including \$1.8 million in one-time payments. With the incentive bonuses he still can earn, he could push his take to more than \$4.7 million. That's the most among the 107 coaches for whom USA TODAY could obtain a contract or other official document showing compensation.

Oklahoma's Bob Stoops is the only coach in that group who has cleared the \$3 million-a-year bar in guaranteed pay, although Ferentz likely will join him in 2007.

Coaches' contracts these days offer far more than just the basic salary. In scrutinizing contracts, USA TODAY found all kinds of perks: personal use of private jets, low-interest home loans, land deals, million-dollar annuities, pricey luxury suites at schools' stadiums, use of vacation homes and family travel accounts.

Texas' Brown received a \$1.6 million "special payment" for his 53rd birthday in 2004, before his contract was renegotiated.

The perks vary from coach to coach, but at least one car, country club memberships and tickets for varsity sports events are *de rigueur*.

About 10% of coaches get a cut of ticket revenue; Oregon's Mike Bellotti got \$631,000 last season under such a provision.

Incentive bonuses, raises and automatic contract extensions are promised for winning specific games or specific numbers of games, helping guide players to graduation, keeping players out of trouble and completing individual years of contracts.

USA TODAY could not obtain figures for 11 coaches, including Notre Dame's Charlie Weis, who is likely among the higher earners. Notre Dame is a private school that declined the newspaper's request for salary information, and his salary does not appear on the school's most recently available tax records.

Access to compensation information for the coaches in Pennsylvania, including Penn State's Joe Paterno, is being decided as part of a lawsuit that has reached the state's supreme court.

"Is (Ferentz's compensation) fair?" says Gary Barta, who took over as Iowa's athletics director in August, inheriting the high-end contract accorded Ferentz, a two-time Big Ten Conference coach of the year with a 6-5 record this season. "I'm not going to judge that. Is it the reality across the country? Yes. We want to keep Kirk here. The marketplace drives what we pay ... and right now the

marketplace is aggressive."

Competition for proven coaches is keen, not only among colleges but increasingly from the National Football League. Its teams have hired four college head coaches in the past five-plus years — Nick Saban from Louisiana State, Dennis Erickson from Oregon State, Steve Spurrier from Florida and Butch Davis from Miami (Fla.) — giving them contracts averaging \$2.5 million to \$5 million per year. NFL teams also have flirted with Stoops, Brown and Ferentz, among others.

"Just like the high-end housing market can pull up the mid-range housing market," NFL coaching salaries can affect college coaching salaries, says Gary O'Hagan, manager of the sports marketing and representation firm IMG's coaches' division, which represents NFL and college coaches.

The coaching market isn't always so logical, says Peter Likins, the recently retired president of the University of Arizona and head of an NCAA panel on fiscal responsibility. Even presidents and trustees can fall prey to the impulse to overpay for the promised glitter of a winning season.

"These are emotional decisions," Likins says of the hiring process.

Multimedia is driving force

Feeding the salary spiral, insiders and critics say, is a tidal wave of money from schools' lucrative television and apparel contracts — and from the latest skyrocketing revenue sources, multimedia and marketing rights deals for entire athletic programs or entire campuses.

For example, Auburn in April signed a nine-year, \$51.3 million multimedia and marketing rights deal with ISP Sports; starting in 2008, Auburn's guaranteed annual rights fee will rise 138% to \$5.7 million. While the deal covers all Auburn sports teams, its value is connected largely to fan and advertiser interest in football, says athletics director Jay Jacobs.

Football coach Tommy Tuberville is being paid an average of \$1.5 million a year under provisions related to Auburn's deal with ISP Sports — for TV, radio and related personal appearance work — during his seven-year contract, which began in 2005.

"The fact is, today, the majority of (a football head coach's) salary comes from the multimedia rights," Jacobs says.

Above all, schools are driven to maintain or shore up a sport that's the revenue-generating backbone of most overall athletics programs.

At Texas, for example, the return on the sizable investment in Brown is a pre-eminent football program that last season won the school's first football national championship in 35 years and accounted for 62% of all the Longhorns' athletics revenues, turning a \$42 million profit. Football essentially underwrote 17 other sports at the school that don't make money — all but men's basketball and baseball.

Not all athletic departments are self-supporting. Between 80% and 95% of Division I-A athletic departments still rely on either the university's general fund or student fees to balance the budget, according to NCAA financial reports obtained by USA TODAY and other academic studies.

When football coaches are the face of the athletic program, however, they are more and more often claiming marquee salaries. Increasingly, they are turning to sports agents to exact what they consider a fair share.

Conflicting messages?

As their take grows, so do critics' concerns about the distortion of sports' importance in its higher-education setting. The chancellor of Texas' university system, Mark Yudof, earned \$693,677 last year, according to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Brown makes about four times as much.

Louisville paid its full-time professors an average of \$95,024 a year ago, according to the state's Council on Postsecondary Education. That's less than half what coach Bobby Petrino would receive as a bonus for getting the Cardinals to a Bowl Championship Series game; Petrino is guaranteed a little more than \$1.6 million annually, not including sweeteners like a gasoline allowance of \$10,000 a year.

"What kind of message does that send?" says Smith College sports economist Andrew Zimbalist. "What does that say about the value system? What does that say to students?"

Even the man who so richly rewarded Ferentz at Iowa is conflicted. "When you have a football coach or a basketball coach who makes multiples of three to six times what the university president makes," says Bob Bowlsby, who left Iowa in July to become the athletics director at Stanford, "I think there's probably something a little out of whack."

Iowa's president made \$390,250 last year, according to *The Chronicle*.

The rise in salaries caught the eye of the House Ways and Means Committee, which in October asked the NCAA to justify why such a revenue-generating enterprise deserves tax-exempt status.

Chairman Bill Thomas, R-Calif., in a letter to association President Myles Brand, contended "excessive compensation ... makes less revenue available for other sports, causes many athletic departments to operate at a net loss, and may call into question the priorities of educational institutions."

Thomas went on to ask: "What actions has the NCAA taken to encourage its member institutions to curb excessive compensation for college coaches?"

Brand has urged schools not to spend beyond their means, on facilities as well as on coaches. But the NCAA can't set financial parameters for individual schools without violating antitrust laws.

Brand's answer to Congress, in part: Much of the big money paid to coaches is underwritten by media, apparel and other outside entities, and isn't coming out of university coffers, and those coaches hardly differ from schools' faculty stars, who also have tenure.

Incentives run gamut

The Division I-A Athletic Directors Association conducts its own salaries survey, including the 1999 tally that found five million-dollar coaches, and executive director Dutch Baughman says there's one area where schools are trying to hold the line: incentives.

Because of faculty complaints about "additional compensation for (coaches) doing things they should be doing anyway," Baughman says, both the number and value of incentives are being reduced. Still, USA TODAY's study found they're common:

- At 83 schools, more than \$23 million in on-field performance bonuses are at stake as coaches and their teams approach the 2006 postseason. Florida's Urban Meyer will pocket \$37,500 for getting the Gators to next month's Southeastern Conference title game; he will effectively get another \$137,500 if the Gators win it and qualify for a Bowl Championship Series game, \$50,000 more if they get to the BCS national title game and an additional \$100,000 more if they win that.

- Maryland's Ralph Friedgen receives \$50,000 in any year in which he, his players or coaches essentially behave themselves — if there are no violations of university student conduct or academic rules that result in action by the school's office of judicial programs; no arrests, indictments or convictions for "any criminal or suspected criminal conduct"; and "no neglect or willful conduct" that the athletics director deems a violation of NCAA rules.

- Texas' Brown gets \$20,000 if the football team's graduation rate is at least 50%-54% (the Division I-A average is 66%) and rises to \$100,000 at 75%.

Top conferences, top salaries

Overall salary packages are the biggest in college football's six biggest, richest conferences — the Atlantic Coast Conference, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, Pacific-10 and SEC. There, excluding bonuses, USA TODAY found the average coach's salary is \$1.4 million. That's more than three times the average of \$419,000 in Conference USA, the Mountain West, Western Athletic, Mid-American and Sun Belt.

"I don't think people are going to pay the salaries if they don't have the money," says Texas athletics director DeLoss Dodds. "If you've got the revenue, you're going to stay in the marketplace. If you don't, you can't."

That's the rationale at Iowa, where Ferentz, in his eighth season as the Hawkeyes coach, has won 44 games and two Big Ten championships in the past five seasons. The financial aspects of his original eight-year contract were to "not be renegotiated within

three years" of its October 2004 signing, but nonetheless were this May.

The school is counting on revenues from private suites, outdoor club seats and other amenities geared to wealthier fans to cover the cost of an \$87 million stadium renovation. Sustaining football's success is key to keeping those patrons happy, and the 51-year-old Ferentz is seen as the instrument of that success.

"And so," Bowlsby says, "negotiation with a coach who had brought great stability to the program seemed to make good sense. Now, I never in my wildest dreams thought that I would be negotiating a contract with a coach with a \$2.8 million base. But that's where we've gotten to."

A former NFL offensive line coach, Ferentz has seen his value spike in the wake of approaches in recent years by rival colleges and pro teams. He interviewed with the Jacksonville Jaguars after the 2002 season. Ferentz withdrew from consideration. He received a \$72,800 raise, according to *The Des Moines Register*.

Ferentz's compensation was re-worked again in May. His base salary is \$1.4 million this year, and he's guaranteed another \$1.4 million in supplemental compensation for radio and TV and other obligations. He also got a \$400,000 longevity bonus for still being at Iowa last June 1 and a \$1.4 million "one-time lump sum payment" when the school reworked his deal.

Ferentz can get \$75,000 for getting his team to a bowl game that pays at least \$1 million to each team.

He has made a point of giving back, donating \$100,000 with his wife, Mary, to Iowa's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences several years ago, and last week announcing gifts of \$150,000 to the college and \$250,000 to the University of Iowa Children's Hospital.

Ferentz was a 10th-grader in Pennsylvania when he decided he wanted to coach for a living. He's still doing it for love, not the money, he says, though "I've learned it's silly to leave money on the table. ... I've learned, too, that they fire you besides hire you. It's the reality of what we do."

Are players overlooked?

The schools have their own realities. Those straining budgets to pay their marquee coaches top dollar have been forced to tighten their belts elsewhere. And to seek out additional revenue. Transylvania (Ky.) University accounting professor Dan Fuls, who conducts the NCAA's biennial study of athletics finances, says the use and amount of student fees as a supplement are trending up, especially at schools without big football stadiums or significant ticket sales.

The more coaches are paid, meanwhile, the louder the argument that the sport's most essential personnel — players allowed little more than scholarships covering room, board, books and tuition — are under-compensated and exploited. "They're saving tens of millions by not paying their players," Zimbalist says. "So they spend it on coaches."

Individual institutions could take a stand. Says Baughman: "I'm waiting to see one of those schools step up and say, 'At the next time of a coaching change, we will not be in this marketplace.'"

Fuls expects football revenues to level off, and that could force schools to apply the brakes. But not shift into reverse.

"I don't think you can unring the bell. I don't think we're going to one day decide these coaches aren't worth the money and start paying them \$800,000 a year again," Bowlsby says. "How does that happen? I think the answer is it doesn't."

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