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[March Madness Rules Compliance...](#)

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Shortly after retiring in 1987 as the NCAA's first executive director, Walter Byers was asked whether it was recruiting scandals, academic fraud, agents or what he thought would be the greatest threat to the future of the NCAA. Byers responded simply, "I believe gambling poses the greatest threat to the NCAA."

Today, legal and illegal wagering on the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball tournament is exceeded only by betting on the Super Bowl. Quite simply, gambling is a huge concern for everyone connected with intercollegiate athletics. The NCAA staff has done a good job in making student athletes and coaches aware of the rules about the prohibition sport wagering activities but a lingering problem remains concerning the awareness by staff members of the far reaching applicability of the rules. With Selection Sunday almost upon us, it is incumbent on athletics administrators to make all athletics department staff aware of the NCAA rules concerning gambling and how they apply to all student-athletes and athletics department personnel.

The applicable legislation, NCAA ByLaw 10.3, prohibits student-athletes and all staff members in an

athletics department from participation in sport wagering activities on any intercollegiate, amateur, or professional athletics competition. Sports wagering includes placing, accepting or soliciting a wager (on a staff member's or student-athlete's own behalf or on the behalf of others) of any type with any individual or organization on any intercollegiate, amateur, or professional team or contest. This includes pools or fantasy leagues in which an entry fee is required and there is an opportunity to win a prize. In other words, no student-athlete or anyone working in an athletics department may participate in a "friendly" office pool or neighborhood pool where everyone fills out a bracket and enters for a dollar or any amount of money. It is a violation of NCAA rules. Further, just because the institution's team is not in the tournament field doesn't mean the rule does not apply; it does apply.

Athletics administrators and compliance officials can't fail to make prohibition of gambling activities of any kind a point of emphasis, particularly during March Madness.

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