



## ***News Release***

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### DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON INFRACTIONS ISSUES DECISION ON UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

INDIANAPOLIS---The NCAA Division I Committee on Infractions has penalized the University of Southern California for violations in its football, men's basketball and women's tennis programs.

The violations span almost four years, primarily involving agent and amateurism issues for a former football student-athlete and a former men's basketball student-athlete. The committee noted that the violations in this case strike at the heart of the NCAA amateurism principal, which states that intercollegiate athletics should be motivated primarily by education and its benefits.

Regarding the individuals who triggered NCAA agent rules and the former student-athletes in this case, the committee stated, "Their actions also threatened the efforts of the NCAA and its member institutions to sponsor and support amateur competition at the collegiate level."

The findings in this case include a lack of institutional control, impermissible inducements, extra benefits, exceeding coach staff limits, and unethical conduct by an assistant football coach.

The penalties include four years probation; a two-year football postseason ban; a one-year basketball postseason ban; vacation of regular and postseason wins for all three involved sports; scholarship reductions for football and basketball; and recruiting restrictions for men's basketball. They also include a \$5,000 financial penalty; forfeiture of revenue from the 2008 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship Tournament; and limitations for the access granted to boosters and non-

university personnel to team charters, sidelines, practices, locker rooms and camps for men's basketball and football. The university must also disassociate itself from three boosters, including the former football and men's basketball student-athletes involved in this case. As a part of this disassociation, the university will not be able to accept financial contribution or other assistance for the athletics department from these individuals or provide them with any benefit and privileges. In addition, the assistant football coach received a one-year show-cause penalty, which prohibits him from engaging in any recruiting activity with prospective student-athletes.

According to the public report, "The general campus environment surrounding the violations troubled the committee." When citing the lack of institutional control finding, the committee noted the university failed to heed clear warning signs; did not have proper procedures in place to monitor rules compliance; failed to regulate access to practice and facilities, including locker rooms; and in some instances failed to take a proactive stance or investigate concerns. As a result, three different individuals who triggered NCAA agent rules committed violations involving the former football and men's basketball student-athletes.

Beginning in October 2004 and continuing until November 2005, the former football student-athlete, his stepfather and his mother agreed to form a partnership with two individuals to form a sports agency. Shortly after the agreement was reached, the former football student-athlete and his family began asking for financial and other assistance from the partners. During the course of this relationship, the agency partners gave the former football student-athlete and his family impermissible benefits including several thousand dollars, an automobile, housing, a washer and dryer, air travel, hotel lodging and transportation, among others. Because of the receipt of these benefits, the former football student-

athlete competed while ineligible. This ineligibility began at least by December 2004 and encompasses the 2005 Orange Bowl game and the entire 2005 football season, including postseason competition.

On January 8, 2006, one of the agency partners called the assistant football coach asking for assistance in convincing the former student-athlete to adhere to the agency agreement or reimburse the partners for the money and benefits they provided. The assistant football coach failed to alert the university compliance staff of this information and later provided false and misleading information to the enforcement staff regarding his knowledge of the violations. Based on these actions, the committee found the assistant football coach violated NCAA ethical conduct rules and violated NCAA legislation by failing to report knowledge of possible violations.

The former football student-athlete and his family also received benefits from another sports marketing agency during his time at the university. On a number of occasions from November 2005 to January 2006, an individual who triggered NCAA agent rules provided impermissible benefits to the former football student-athlete, as well as his friends and family. These benefits included air travel, transportation, lodging and repairs to the automobile that was purchased by the previous agency partners.

Although the former football student-athlete participated in an interview with the enforcement staff, he refused to cooperate fully with the investigation. He failed to provide the requested information that, if it existed, could have substantiated his claim that he was not involved in NCAA rules violations.

The case also includes multiple impermissible inducements and extra benefits for a former men's basketball student-athlete, his brother, his girlfriend and his girlfriend's mother. From August 2006 through May 2008, a representative affiliated with a professional sports agency and his associate

provided cash, lodging, transportation, meals, air travel, professional personal trainers, a cell phone, wireless service, a television, watches, shoes, and clothing, among other benefits.

The former head men's basketball coach, assistant men's basketball coach, institutional compliance staff, faculty athletics representative, and athletics director all knew this representative had previously committed two separate NCAA violations. One of these violations involved the former men's basketball student-athlete and in the other violation, the representative was found to have provided benefits to a student-athlete. These university officials also knew that the representative was acting as the point person in the recruitment of the former men's basketball student-athlete, yet failed to take steps to monitor this recruitment.

The committee also found the football program violated coaching staff limit rules. In August 2008, the former head football coach hired a consultant for the entire 2008 regular playing season. The consultant attended practice sessions, analyzed video footage of contests, and discussed with the former head football coach his observations and analyses of the university's special teams. These activities led the university to exceed the maximum number of countable coaches.

Further, from November 2006 to March 2009, a former women's tennis student-athlete used an athletics department long-distance access code to make 123 unauthorized international telephone calls to family members. The total value of the calls is more than \$7,000.

The committee acknowledged the difficulty of the investigation. Investigations of amateurism cases are often laborious given the significant effort by those involved to avoid leaving a paper trail or other evidence. It also noted that a number of the key individuals, including the involved former football and basketball student-athletes, refused to cooperate fully with the investigation. Finally, in the case of

men's basketball, credible information surfaced during the time that the football allegations were being actively investigated.

In determining the penalties, the committee considered the university's self-imposed penalties, corrective actions, and cooperation. The committee seriously contemplated imposing a television ban penalty in this case. However, after careful consideration, it ultimately decided that the penalties below adequately respond to the nature of violations and the level of institutional responsibility. The penalties, some of which were self-imposed by the university and adopted by the committee, are below.

- Public reprimand and censure.
- Four years of probation from June 10, 2010, through June 9, 2014. The public report further details the conditions of this probation.
- Postseason ban for the 2009-10 men's basketball season (self-imposed by the university).
- Postseason ban for the 2010 and 2011 football seasons.
- One-year show-cause penalty for the assistant football coach (June 10, 2010, to June 9, 2011). The public report further details the conditions of this penalty.
- Vacation of all wins in which the former football student-athlete competed while ineligible, beginning in December 2004. This vacation includes participation in any postseason competition, including football bowl games.
- Vacation of all wins in which the former men's basketball student-athlete competed during the 2007-08 regular season (self-imposed by the university). The committee also stated this vacation must include participation in any post-season competition, conference tournaments and NCAA championships.

- Vacation of all wins in which the former women's tennis student-athlete competed while ineligible between November 2006 and May 2009 (self-imposed by the university). The committee also stated this vacation must include participation in any post-season competition, conference tournaments and NCAA championships.
- Reduction of football athletics scholarships to 15 initial grants and 75 total grants for each of the 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 academic years. This represents a decrease of 10 scholarships for each of the three seasons.
- Reduction of men's basketball athletics scholarships from 13 to 12 for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years (self-imposed by the university).
- Reduction of the total number of recruiting days in men's basketball by 20 days (from 130 to 110) for the 2010-11 academic year (self-imposed by the university).
- A \$5,000 financial penalty (self-imposed by the university).
- Remittance of the \$206,200 the university received for its participation in the 2008 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship Tournament (self-imposed by the university). In addition, the committee noted the university must also forfeit all future distributions scheduled for this appearance.
- Disassociation of the former football student-athlete, the former men's basketball student-athlete and the representative who provided extra benefits to the former men's basketball student-athlete. This disassociation includes the refusal of any financial or recruiting assistance, as well as other conditions, which the public report further details.
- Release of three men's basketball prospective student-athletes from their letters of intent (self-imposed by the university).

- Prohibition of all non-university personnel, including boosters, from traveling on football and men's basketball charters; attending football and men's basketball team practices; attending or participating in any way with university football and men's basketball camps, including donation of funds; and having access to the sidelines and locker rooms for football and men's basketball games. The public report further details appropriate exceptions for these limitations.

The members of the Committee on Infractions who reviewed this case include Paul Dee, lecturer of law and education at the University of Miami and formerly the institution's athletics director and general counsel. He is the chair of the Committee on Infractions. Other members are Britton Banowsky, commissioner of Conference USA; John S. Black, attorney; Melissa Conboy, deputy director of athletics at University of Notre Dame; Brian Halloran, attorney and the manager/general counsel of Painted Hills Wind Developers; Eleanor Myers, faculty athletics representative and law professor at Temple University; Josephine (Jo) R. Potuto, the Richard H. Larson Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Nebraska College of Law; and Dennis Thomas, the commissioner of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference and formerly director of athletics at Hampton University.