

Athletic Public Relations

RECRUITING

Presence of Media During Recruiting Contact (13.11.1)

A member institution shall not permit a media entity to be present during any recruiting contact made by an institution's coaching staff member.

Comments Prior to Signing (13.11.2)

Prior to the signing of a prospect to a National Letter of Intent or an institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid, a member institution may comment publicly only to the extent of confirming its recruitment of the prospect. The institution may not comment generally about the prospect's ability or the contribution that the prospect might make to the institution's team; further, the institution is precluded from commenting in any manner as to the likelihood of the prospect's signing with that institution.

***Interpretation:** Newspaper Articles. A local newspaper may print a picture that includes both prospective student-athletes and enrolled student-athletes, provided the newspaper includes an informational article on the prospects and enrolled student-athletes, the newspaper is not affiliated with the institution, and the picture and story were not arranged by the member institution. (11/92 staff interpretation).*

Evaluations for Media, Recruiting Services (13.11.2.1)

Athletics department staff members shall not evaluate or rate a prospect for news media, scouting services or recruiting services prior to the prospect's signed acceptance of the institution's written offer of admission as a student and/or written tender of financial assistance to be provided upon the prospect's enrollment.

Radio/TV Show (13.11.3)

A member institution shall not permit a prospect or a high school, college preparatory school or two-year college coach to appear, be interviewed or otherwise be involved (in person or via film, audio tape or videotape) on:

- (a) A radio or television program conducted by the institution's coach;
- (b) A program in which the institution's coach is participating; or

- (c) A program for which a member of the institution's athletics staff has been instrumental in arranging for the appearance of the prospect or coach or related program material.

Interpretation: *Booster who works with a media entity having contact with prospective student-athlete: A media entity (e.g., radio, talk show host, newspaper reporter) who also is a representative of an institution's athletics interests may have contact with a prospective student-athlete, provided the contact is through a normal working relationship and not for the purpose of recruiting the prospective student-athlete. During a member institution's coaches show, the institution may not permit the name or picture of a prospect to appear in a sponsor's congratulatory commercial (staff interpretation 11/91).*

Prospect's Visit (13.11.4)

A member institution shall not publicize (or arrange for publicity of) a prospect's visit to the institution's campus.

Introduction of Prospect (13.11.5)

An institution may not introduce a visiting prospect at a function (e.g., the institution's sports award banquet or an intercollegiate athletics contest) that is attended by media representatives or open to the general public. It is not permissible for a member institution to make a general introduction of a visiting prospect at any function or gathering.

Photograph of Prospect (13.11.7)

It is permissible for an institution to photograph a prospect during a campus visit to be used in the institution's permissible publicity and promotional activities (e.g., press release, media guide), but the photograph may not be given to the prospect.

Announcement of Signing (13.11.8)

Publicity released by an institution concerning a prospect's commitment to attend the institution shall occur only after the prospect has signed a National Letter of Intent or subsequent to the prospect's signed acceptance of the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid. Such communications shall be limited to those media forms normally used by the institution.

Interpretations:

Press Release. A member institution may include in a press release announcing the signing of a new prospect, the name(s) of prospects who previously have signed with the institution in that sport to date (5/90 staff interpretation).

Video Clips. It is permissible for an institution to show video clips of a prospect through its normal media outlets (e.g., television, Web sites) during its announcement of the prospect's signing, provided such publicity occurs only after the prospect has signed a National Letter of Intent or subsequent to the prospect's signed acceptance of the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid with the institution. Further, an institution may produce a single highlight film (per sport) that includes all of its signed prospects to show to its boosters in conjunction with booster club functions. The subcommittee noted that although other prospects may appear in the video clips, the focus of the clip must be related to the prospect who has committed to the institution. (7/21/99 Official)

Independent Announcement by Prospect (13.11.8.2.2)

Press conferences to announce a signing may be arranged independently by the prospect (or the prospect's family), provided there is no arrangement or involvement whatsoever by the institution or representatives of its athletics interests.

Staff Member Presence (13.11.8.3)

Institutional staff members are expressly prohibited from personal contact with media representatives at the site of the signing or at any other prearranged site when a prospect accepts an offer made by the institution. This does not preclude the presence of bona fide media representatives who are employed on a part-time basis by the institution.

Recruiting Advertisements (13.4.5.1)

The publication of advertising or promotional material, by or on behalf of a member institution, designed to solicit the enrollment of a prospective student-athlete is not permitted. Accordingly, a member institution may not buy or arrange to have space in game programs or other printed materials published to provide information concerning the athletics

participation or evaluation of prospects (e.g. recruiting publications) for any purpose whatsoever, including advertisements, a listing of prospective or enrolled student-athletes who will attend the institution and informative materials related to the institution.

Interpretation: All Media. A member institution may not purchase advertising (e.g. season tickets, athletics program) to be aired during the broadcast or telecast of a high school contest. 13.4.5.1 is applicable to all media forms.(official 8/92)

Interview to Recruiting Publication (13.4.5.1.1)

An institutional coaching staff member may not provide an interview for an article that will appear in a recruiting publication or newsletter.

Media Guides, Recruiting Brochures (13.4.5.2)

A member institution may not develop a separate media guide or recruiting brochure to send to the media or alumni that does not meet the specifications outlined in 13.4.1-i.

13.4.1 (i) Publications - An institution may produce either a recruiting brochure or media guide (but not both) in each sport it sponsors and provide it to a prospect. The publication may have only one color of printing inside the covers.

Miscellaneous Promotions (13.4.5.3)

Member institutions and their representatives of athletics interests are prohibited from financing, arranging or utilizing recruiting aids (e.g. newspaper advertisements, bumper stickers, message buttons) designed to publicize the institution's interest in a particular prospect.

13.4.5.3 NCAA or Conference Championship Posters (13.4.5.3)

An institution hosting an NCAA or conference championship may produce a poster promoting the championship and send it to a high-school coach and/or his or her educational institution. It is not permissible to send such a poster to a prospect.

WEB SITE INFORMATION

It is permissible for a institution's web site or an athletics department staff member's personal web site to include information related to the institution's athletics programs and a hyperlink to the institution's athletics web site, provided neither the institution's web site nor the athletics department staff member's personal web site contains:

- (a) information regarding prospective student-athletes, except as permitted under Bylaw 13.11.8;
- (b) any hyperlink to the web site of a recruiting/scouting service or a non-institutional publication that reports primarily on the institution's athletics program;
- (c) recruiting videos or other audio/video materials, except as permitted under Bylaw 13.4.2.1. [References: Bylaws 13.4.1 (printed recruiting materials) and 13.4.2.1 (highlight film/ videotape/audio tape)]

Institutional Web Site Links to Non-institutional Publication/Recruiting Service: It is not permissible for an institution's website to provide a hyperlink (i.e., direct link) or make direct reference to either the website of a non-institutional publication that reports primarily on the institution's athletics program or a recruiting/scouting service, inasmuch as such activity is considered to be a non-permissible endorsement of the publication and/or scouting/recruiting service. [Reference: 11.3.2.7 (Non institutional publications that report on athletics program) and 11.3.2.10 (recruiting service consultants)].

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Interpretations:

Use of Student-Athlete's Name or Photo on T-Shirts. When a student-athlete is involved in permissible promotional activities per 12.5.1, it is not permissible to use the student-athlete's name or picture on any items (e.g., T-shirt) other than printed materials if a commercial logo also appears on the item. (8/31/94 Staff)

Advertisements That Appear on the Same Page as the Picture of a Student-Athlete with Remaining Eligibility. A commercial advertisement that appears in an institutional athletics publication (e.g. media guide, game program) that appears on the same page as the name or picture of a student-athlete with remaining eligibility is not limited to the sponsoring company's officially registered regular trademark or logo, name, address and telephone number, provided the name or picture of the student-athlete is not included as part of the advertisement. (7/94 Official)

Use of student-athlete's name or picture in pocket-team guide. A company operating independent of an institution may produce a pocket-team guide utilizing the names and pictures of the institution's student-athletes with remaining eligibility without jeopardizing the eligibility of such student-athletes. The committee noted that it would be permissible for the institution to be involved in verifying the accuracy of the information contained in such a guide. It would not, however, be permissible for the institution (or the company, acting on behalf of the institution) to provide such an item to prospective student-athletes. (4/93 Official)

Corporate Trademark/Logo on Billboard. It is permissible for the regular officially registered trademark or logo of a commercial company to appear on a billboard as part of a permissible promotional activity that includes the name or picture of a student-athlete with remaining eligibility, inasmuch as a billboard is considered a printed material. (8/96 Official)

Promotions Involving Commercial Locations/Sponsors (12.5.1.1.2)

A member institution or a charitable, educational or nonprofit organization may use the appearance, name or picture of an enrolled student-athlete to promote generally its fund-raising activities at the location of a commercial establishment, provided the commercial establishment is not a cosponsor of the event and the student-athlete does not promote the sale of a commercial product in conjunction with the fund-raising activity. A commercial establishment would become a cosponsor if the commercial establishment either advertises the presence of the student-athlete at the commercial location or is involved directly or indirectly in promoting the activity.

Interpretations:

Distribution of Commercial Products in Conjunction with an Institutional Promotion. An institution is permitted to distribute discount coupons or packages as part of an institutional promotion that also includes the distribution of items (e.g., poster) that include the names or pictures of student-athletes with remaining eligibility. (3/95 Staff)

Promotional Videotapes Airing in Commercial Establishment. A promotional video that includes the names and pictures of student-athletes with remaining eligibility may not be aired on video monitors at local commercial establishments if the commercial establishment is involved in any manner in promoting the activity (e.g. initiating the request for the video). (9/94 Official)

Student-Athletes Appearing on Ballots in Commercial Establishments. It is not permissible for the names or pictures of student-athletes with remaining eligibility to appear on a ballot displayed in a commercial establishment that is being used for the purpose of selecting a recognition award. (2/96 Official)

Commercial Advertisement (12.5.1.4)

It is permissible for a student-athlete's name or picture, or the group picture of an institution's athletics squad, to appear in an advertisement of a particular business, commercial product or service, provided:

- (a) The primary purpose of the advertisement is to publicize the sponsor's congratulations to the student-athlete or team;
- (b) The advertisement does not include a reproduction of the product with which the business is associated or any other item or description identifying the business or service other than its name or trademark;
- (c) There is no indication in the makeup or wording of the advertisement that the squad members, individually or collectively, or the institution endorses the product or service of the advertiser;
- (d) The student-athlete has not signed a consent or release granting permission to use the student-athlete's name or picture in a manner inconsistent with the requirements of this section; and
- (e) If the student-athlete has received a prize from a commercial sponsor in conjunction with participation in a member institution's promotional activities and the advertisement involves the announcement of receipt of the prize, the receipt of the prize is consistent with the provisions of 12.5.2.3.3 and official interpretations approved by the Management Council.

Promotion by Third Party of Highlight Film, Videotape or Media Guide (12.5.1.9)

Any party other than the institution or a student-athlete (e.g., a distribution company) may sell and distribute an institutional highlight film or videotape or an institutional or conference media guide that contains the names and pictures of enrolled student-athletes only if:

- (a) The institution specifically designates any agency that is authorized to receive orders for the film, videotape or media guide;
- (b) Sales and distribution activities have the written approval of the institution's athletics director;
- (c) The distribution company or a retail store is precluded from using the name or picture of an enrolled student-athlete in any poster or other advertisement to promote the sale or distribution of the film or media guide; and

- (d) There is no indication in the makeup or wording of the advertisement that the squad members, individually or collectively, or the institution endorses the product or services of the advertiser.

Player/Trading Cards (12.5.1.1.3)

A member institution or recognized entity thereof (e.g. fraternity, sorority or student government organization), a member conference or a noninstitutional charitable, educational or nonprofit agency may distribute but may not sell player/trading cards that bear a student-athlete's name or picture.

***Interpretation:** Advertising the Availability of Player Cards at Commercial Establishments. A third party distributor of institutional player cards would be permitted to promote the availability of the player cards at its commercial establishment, provided the distributor does not utilize the names or pictures of student-athletes to promote the availability of the cards at the commercial establishment. (7/90 staff)*

Use of a Student-Athlete's Name or Picture Without Knowledge or Permission (12.5.2.2)

If a student-athlete's name or picture appears on commercial items (e.g. T-shirts, serving trays, playing cards, posters) or is used to promote a commercial product sold by an individual or agency without the student-athlete's knowledge or permission, the student-athlete (or the institution) is required to take steps to stop such an activity in order to retain his or her eligibility for intercollegiate athletics.

***Interpretation:** Use of Student-Athlete's Nickname or Number on Commercial Items. It is not permissible for a commercial entity to use a student-athlete's nickname or likeness (e.g. silhouette of student-athlete that includes the student-athlete's number) on commercial items without jeopardizing the student-athlete's remaining eligibility. It is permissible for a commercial entity to sell a commercial item that includes a student-athlete's jersey number accompanied by a slogan (e.g. "You must be 21 to win the Heisman") without jeopardizing the student-athlete's eligibility, provided the item does not contain the student-athlete's name (or nickname) or picture (or likeness). (12/93 Staff, 8/98 Official)*

Purchasing of Advertisements Involving Non-institutional Publications:

An institution may permit a non-institutional publication that reports primarily on an institution's athletics program to purchase advertising space in an institutional publication (e.g., game program) or an institutionally-controlled media outlet (e.g., institution's coach's show or web site), provided the opportunity to purchase such advertising space is open to the general public on an equal-access basis at the established rate. Similarly, it is permissible for an institution to purchase advertising space in a non-institutional publication that reports primarily on the institution's athletics program or a media outlet controlled by the non-institutional publication (e.g., the non-institutional publication's web site).
(12/9/99 Official)