

Ok, so I was pissed to see Coach Sampson bought out. I completely understand that the rules are the rules and he violated them. I can't even argue that the punishment doesn't fit the crime. Coach Sampson appears to be a repeat offender. What I have a problem with is the NCAA and this situation is emblematic of exactly what is wrong with the organization.

The NCAA is an organization that supposedly prides itself on making sure that athletes are students and attend college with the intent to be students. What the NCAA fails to understand, IMHO, is that often students attend college with a specific goal or dream in mind. It may be to graduate and become an accountant, a musician, an artist, a teacher and any number of other professions. Every student who goes to school, post high school is given every opportunity and encouraged to maximize their effort and optimize their resources to achieve their goals. Unless of course they happen to attend a school that is a member of the NCAA and their goal is to be a professional athlete. In those cases, the NCAA does everything it can to make sure that the athlete is not a typical or traditional student.

For these student athletes, rather than doing every thing possible to excel in their chosen field, they face rules and restrictions that are exceeded in quantity and complexity only by the US Tax Code.

One summer I visited Indiana and there were some players working out and playing on the Assembly Hall court. After watching a few minutes, I walked in the hall and there were a bunch of other players just standing outside. Waiting. I of course asked why they weren't on the court with their teammates. Turns out that no more than 4 players could be on the court at one time. Imagine telling a cello player they couldn't practice with more than 4 members of their school orchestra. This was just the first of a list of inane rules that the compliance officer who was at the gym went on to list.

yes, there was someone there who was in charge of enforcing the NCAA rules.

I wasn't able to find exact numbers, (hopefully a reader can provide them), but I would hazard a guess that many Division 1 schools spend more money on NCAA analysis, presentation and compliance than they do on many of their academic programs. How sad would it be if my alma mater Indiana University, spends more money trying to deal with the NCAA and its rules than it does on its history or math programs ?

Which takes me back to IU. Every few days or so, I get an email from a current or former student asking why I don't donate enough money to build a state of the art arena on campus. Now you know why. The chances of me giving money to any school that doesn't offer the opportunity for their student athletes to accomplish their dreams are slim and none. Withdraw from the NCAA and we can talk.

Of course that won't happen. The NCAA money (which as I am told, funds more athletics and not academics) is bigger than a check I could write and what fun is it not having anyone you can play against. For now.

At some point, hopefully someone will spend the time to put together sports alliances completely outside traditional high school and college ruling bodies that will allow students to be passionate and work hard for their dreams both on the court and field and in the classroom. Which is exactly what happens overseas in most sports.

The supremely talented and promoted can still prosper in the current system, but for those who are willing to make up for whatever they may lack in natural gifts with hard work, and good tutoring, the NCAA doesn't make dreams come true, they do their unknowing best to kill dreams.

Coach Sampson deserves his share of the blame, and he is accepting the consequences. When are we going to realize that the NCAA deserves more than its share of blame. They are dream killers, not enablers. Thats reason enough to end the NCAA reign.