

# OCTOBER ISSUE CONTENTS

- Important Recruiting Dates
- Additions to CPOA
- NCAA News
- CPOA PA Topic of the Month
- Contact Sheets
- Internet Updates
- Referral Program
- Season End Updates
- Monthly Meetings
- Seminars

## **IMPORTANT OCTOBER RECRUITING DATES**

10-8: SAT Test

10-12: SAT Late Registration for November 5<sup>th</sup> Test

10-22: ACT Test

10-28: SAT Registration for December 3<sup>rd</sup> Test

## **RECENT ADDITIONS TO CPOA Pennsylvania**

Brent Heckel – Football – Greater Latrobe HS

Mark Dzubak – Football – Greater Latrobe HS

Jake Gibas – Football – Greater Latrobe HS

## **NCAA News**

### **Date Changes For Phone Calls to Hoops Recruits**

We have learned that the NCAA is now permitting earlier and more frequent telephone calls to potential Division I recruits in men's basketball.

Effective immediately, **Division I men's coaches may make one telephone call per month to a prospect, or the prospect's parents or legal guardian, on or after June 15 of the prospect's sophomore year in high school through July 31 following the prospect's junior year in high school. Then coaches may make two telephone calls per week beginning August 1 prior to the prospect's senior year in high school.**

Women's Division I hoops telephone dates also changed, but not as drastically as men's

**In women's Division I basketball, coaches may make one telephone call to a prospect or her parents during each of the months of April and May of the prospect's junior year in high school. Then one call may be made on or after June 1 through June 20 and one call may be made on or after June 21 through June 30 of the athlete's junior year in high school. Additionally, three telephone calls to a prospect or her parents may be made during the month of July following her junior year in high school, with no more than one call per week.**

These changes are significant, especially for boys. Last year, basketball was lumped in with all other sports (except football) when the first phone call could be made in March of the athlete's junior year. Now not only can men's coaches call nine months earlier, but they can call once per month instead of just one time

and make two calls per week just before senior year! Coaches in all other sports may phone prospects only once per week.

No changes in phone call rules were announced for NCAA Division II and III schools, the NAIA or junior colleges.

Division I men's coaches have succeeded over the past several years in lobbying for more freedom in recruiting what often amounts to blue-chip players. For example, only Division I male basketball recruits are permitted to take official visits prior to the beginning of their senior year in high school (they may go after January 1 of their junior year). This decision continues that trend.

We have updated the "Timeline For NCAA Division I and II Recruiting" that we sent out as an insert last month to reflect this change. As *The Prospector* goes to press, we have not yet received the 2005-06 NCAA guidebooks that spell out all significant rules changes, but to the best of our knowledge, there are no others regarding phone calls.

## **Proposed Women's Scholarship Increases On Hold**

For the first time since a change in the governance structure of NCAA Division I eight years ago, a significant number of schools has voted to override a proposal that had been approved by college presidents and athletic directors.

Division I no longer votes as a body on legislation at its annual convention in January. Instead, it appoints representatives to a "Board of Directors", made up of 16 college presidents. There is also a similar group of athletic directors that comprise the "Management Council" that reviews legislation before presenting it to the president's group. These boards meet four times per year, allowing Division I to practice a "rolling" style of law-making as opposed to Division II and Division III which still ballots on rules changes each year during their annual conventions. But due to the nature of the system for Division I, proposals can be suspended in a "referendum" if more than 100 D-1 schools agree to override the proposed legislation. That is what has occurred in the case of a proposed increase in scholarships for certain women's sports.

Proposal No. 04-21, was approved by the president's Board in April, but afterward a total of 116 Division I institutions submitted override votes. Proposal No. 04-21 would increase the maximum grant-in-aid limitations in women's gymnastics from 12 to 14, in women's volleyball from 12 to 13, in women's cross country/track and field from 18 to 20 and in women's soccer from 12 to 14. The proposal adds participation opportunities but a number of smaller Division I schools that do not fully fund scholarships in those sports feel they would be at a competitive disadvantage versus larger schools that do. One of the arguments against the measure is that schools with already strong programs in those sports will accumulate even more talent, thus taking away athletes who otherwise would have sought scholarship opportunities at other institutions. This opinion is the same one that led to the reduction in football scholarships from the days when the college football powers would have as many as 130 players on scholarship!

The Board of Directors is defending the original proposal, forcing a popular vote of all Division I members during a Legislative Review Forum on January 7 at the 2006 NCAA Convention in Indianapolis. Stay tuned.

## **Merit Aid and Prepaid Feeling Tuition Pinch**

An old truism about becoming "a victim of one's own success" appears to be an apt description for some popular student financial aid programs. After years of rave reviews for helping families cash-flow the cost of college, merit-based gift aid and prepaid tuition programs are struggling to keep up with skyrocketing tuition.

Both programs sprang up in a succession of states in the mid to late 1990s, appealing to middle-class families who sought relief from tuition increases that often dwarfed the inflation rate and to political leaders anxious to keep bright students from leaving the state for college.

But after several years in which state spending on higher education has slowed or declined and tuition rates have risen at a record pace, merit scholarships and prepaid-tuitions plans are experiencing financial strain, so much so that policy makers in the 26 states that offer one or both types of plans must alter or even dismantle them.

In Kentucky, debate over the future of the state's prepaid-tuition program, which allows families to pay for a future college education at current prices, is furious. Millions of dollars in debt, critics of the prepaid plan

in the Kentucky legislature want it permanently closed to new enrollees and warn that taxpayers could end up footing the bill if nothing is done.

In neighboring West Virginia, legislators are seeking to control costs for the Promise Scholarship, which pays tuition at any of the state's public colleges for high-school graduates with at least a 3.0 grade-point average who also meet certain requirements on standardized tests. The price tag for the merit-aid program swelled in 2005-6 to \$39-million, from a projected \$27-million.

But cutting the programs is unpopular with the middle class families that use them most and politicians are wary of rankling those moderate voters. In Florida, the political heft of the state's prepaid-tuition program, the nation's largest, has actually helped keep tuition rates among the lowest in the nation, despite arguments by public-college officials that tuition must rise for their institutions to improve and to meet enrollment demand.

There is evidence that the great tuition explosion of the first decade of the new century is slowing. Nationally, tuition and fees increased 10.4 percent in 2004-5, down from 14.1 percent the previous year, according to the College Board. State spending on higher education increased 3.8 percent, after declining the previous year.

Still, prepaid plans in five states are now closed to new enrollments. And some observers warn that without changes, both those plans and merit scholarships remain susceptible to future cycles of tuition inflation and state budget cuts.

The Ohio program stopped accepting new enrollees in October 2003, and barred its 13,000 account holders from purchasing new shares, which pay a portion – not all - of future tuition. The Ohio prepaid was losing money rapidly and though the state legislature has reinstated caps on annual tuition increases at state schools, the plan has not reopened. Virtually the same scenario has occurred in the state of Texas. A contributing factor that Ohio and other states have experienced is disappointing returns on their prepaid investments due to a sluggish stock market.

While the prepaid plans present more of a long-term problem for the states that offered them, the crunch affecting state-based merit scholarships is being felt right now.

Nevada legislators voted this spring to tighten academic eligibility requirements and redirect money from an unclaimed-property fund to erase a \$40-million shortfall in its Millennium Scholarship program, which is financed by the state's share of the national tobacco settlement.

Georgia governor Sonny Purdue has proposed an amendment to the state Constitution to protect funds for the HOPE Scholarship, the first and largest broad-based state merit-aid program. The ballot initiative would prevent state legislators from using revenue from the state lottery for anything other than the scholarship and pre-kindergarten programs.

In West Virginia, where tuition rates in 2004-5 jumped higher than they had in 14 years, legislators directed more than \$10-million from general revenue to the state's Promise Scholarship after costs exceeded the \$27-million set aside this year from state approved gambling revenues. But they made it clear that Promise, whose expenses have mounted further because participation exceeded expectations, had to go on a financial diet. The scholarship's board is considering stiffening academic standards, introducing a financial-means test, or changing the structure of the program so that students would receive a set dollar amount rather than a full-tuition scholarship.

In 2003-4, the most recent year for which data are available, 14 states spent \$1.2-billion on merit aid. In the last year, two more states, South Dakota and Massachusetts, have started merit-based scholarships.

We write about these programs occasionally to demonstrate the reality of financial aid. When a worst-case scenario for funding aid occurs, such as the combination of sharp tuition increases with declining state funding, a sluggish stock market and a steady increase in the number of students enrolling in college, a catastrophe can occur. Yet many parents assume the money will come from somewhere and fail to make contingency plans in case it does not. Among the wisest of these plans is to have many choices for their son or daughter's college needs. That's where CPOA comes in.

Skeptics might be moved to quip that the strain being felt by states with pre-paid tuition programs and merit scholarships proves another truism: "Everything has its price". It does. These days many states are in the midst of deciding if and how they will pay it.

## **NCAA Working With Hurricane Victims**

Who says the NCAA is a heartless bureaucracy?

Several NCAA member schools - assisted by quick action from the Association to permit latitude in applying an assortment of bylaws - struggled in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to salvage opportunities for student-athletes to compete this fall, while others opened the doors of campus athletics facilities to temporarily house evacuees from the storm-ravaged Gulf Coast.

Two Division I institutions most directly impacted by wind damage and severe flooding in New Orleans - Tulane University and the University of New Orleans, whose campuses were shut down indefinitely by the storm - pledged to put teams back on fields and courts as soon as possible.

In fact, Tulane's women's soccer team - after relocating to Birmingham, Alabama - played only five days after the hurricane passed through New Orleans on August 29.

However, the University of New Orleans announced it was forced to cancel its women's volleyball season - after a 4-0 start by that team - and now is working to salvage its full men's and women's basketball schedules and spring sports competition.

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## **CPOA PA Topic of the Month**

### **The Best Time to Start**

The best time to start actively marketing yourself to college coaches is when you have made the decision that you want to play sports in college. If you know, as a freshman or as a sophomore, that you want to play college level sports – reach out to the college coaches immediately. Let them know that you are a good student, a good athlete, and a good citizen. Let them know that their school and their team will be a better place with you than without you. Let them know that you can contribute the academic quality of the school and the athletic quality of their team.

Start by doing some research and make a list of all schools where you can compete academically and athletically, not just the schools you already know. Write to all of these coaches and update them on your academic and athletic progress once or twice a year. Prepare highlight videos and full game tapes for them to view and update the tapes as your skills get better. Email and call the coaches to separate yourself from the pack.

It's never too early to start, but if you wait too long, someone else who started earlier and with a greater sense of urgency may win your roster spot.

### **CONTACT SHEETS**

Remember to keep track of all questionnaires, calls, etc from college coaches with the contact sheets found in your STUDENT PACKET. Email me at [martin.rock@cpoapa.com](mailto:martin.rock@cpoapa.com) if you need additional copies!

### **NCAA ELIGIBILITY CLEARINGHOUSE**

Every CPOA PA Student-Athlete has received a NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete as part of the STUDENT PACKET you received when you joined the program. In this guide, you find instructions on how to apply for your NCAA Eligibility

Clearinghouse Number. Eligibility is based on what core courses have been completed, SAT scores and overall GPA in core courses. NCAA approved core courses, by high school, can be found at <http://actrs7.act.org/ahs>. STUDENTS APPLY FOR THEIR NCAA ECN AT THE END OF THEIR JUNIOR YEAR. HOWEVER, IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO REVIEW ELIGIBILITY AS EARLY AS THE SOPHOMORE YEAR TO ENSURE THE CORRECT COURSES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED! For more information about the process, email [martin.rock@cpoapa.com](mailto:martin.rock@cpoapa.com) for a NCAA Guide or call 888-ASK-CPOA (CPOA Program Members Only).

### **INTERNET UPDATES**

If you have update information for your Internet profile, please forward to [martin.rock@cpoapa.com](mailto:martin.rock@cpoapa.com). Remember that you automatically receive (2) two free updates per year. If you've upgraded your program to receive unlimited updates you can send updates every day/week if you'd like. Updates take approximately 72 hours to be made online.

### **REFERRAL PROGRAM**

Do you know of a high school student athlete with the ability to perform at the collegiate level? A teammate from high school? Club team? From the newspaper? If so, contact your CPOA representative at [martin.rock@cpoapa.com](mailto:martin.rock@cpoapa.com) and if that athlete signs with CPOA PA, **you receive a \$50 referral fee!**

### **Season End Updates**

Attention fall sport athletes, your season end update forms which were mailed to you are **now overdue**. There are hundreds of coaches out there awaiting an update on your stats, awards and accomplishments from the past season. Please complete these and return to your CPOA representative immediately.

### **RECRUITING SEMINARS**

CPOA Pennsylvania is planning to conduct several recruiting training sessions over the next few months. These sessions will include the basics of the recruiting process, how to choose the right college, review of NCAA rules and regulations, and how to best navigate this important process of college selection. Please let us know if you have interest in hosting one of these sessions for your teammates (students/parents) or teams/booster clubs (coaches).