

# Fraud: a part of intercollegiate athletics

by Mark Naison and Jim Ford

Special to The Tar Heel

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Recent revelations of fraud and favoritism in college athletics dramatize what many people have believed for a long time: Big-time intercollegiate athletics is one of the most corrupt and exploitative areas in American sports.

The payoffs, bribes and doctored transcripts so graphically exposed in the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearings on the National Collegiate Athletic Association are only one part of the story. Just as serious is the placing of scholarship athletes into programs that give them almost no time to attend classes in return for the spurious promise of a "free education" and a shot at making the pros.

No systematic statistics have ever been compiled on the percentage of scholarship athletes who graduate with their class—or ever. But the records of some highly successful athletic institutions suggest a problem of staggering dimensions.

It can be argued that examples like Texas Western University, where none of the starters on the 1966 NCAA championship basketball team received degrees, or Arkansas, where only one of 25 black scholarship athletes graduated, are not representative of the vast majority of educational institutions that field big-time sports programs in this country. Yet, on what seems to be a daily basis, the nation's sports pages contain an ever expanding list of controversies associated with intercollegiate sports programs. During the first three weeks in May the following items appeared in the *Washington Star*:

- Lawrence Boston, a senior basketball forward, became the 11th Maryland player among the last 20 recruited by head coach Lefty Driesell to leave school without graduating on time.

- Dexter Manley, a first-string linebacker on the Oklahoma State University football team, claimed he couldn't remember the name of the dealer from whom he bought his Mercury Cougar or the name of the construction company where he worked to pay for the car. At least six other OSU athletes were also known to be driving late-model Cutlasses.

- Coach Frank Lollino of Chicago's Westinghouse High School said that his star senior forward Mark Aquirre had been offered cash, cars and trips by recruiters the coach declined to name. In addition, Lollino said he and his wife were offered trips to Hawaii and jobs by two men if he helped with their recruiting efforts.

- John Parker, a much-travelled college football player, said Wichita State University gave him \$600-\$700 a month and a new car for his services.

- Old Dominion University English professor Robinson Gehman sparked a university investigation by alleging that assistant basketball coach Jerry Busone pressured him not to flunk All-America basketball player Nancy Lieberman.

The NCAA and the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women, according to Physical Education professor Charles B. Corbin of Kansas State University, "should be the voice of the universities. However, in recent years the NCAA and the AIAW have not been a collection of university representatives but a collection of representatives of the vested interests of college athletics. The two are not the same." Because delegates to the regulatory associations "were athletic department representatives, not true representatives of the universities, costs skyrocketed and studies showed that 100 of 129 Division I schools were running deficits in college football."

What can be done to turn college athletics around?

For one thing, concerted action by faculty, student and community organizations (such as a university or local F.A.N.S. chapter) to draw attention to the problem of the professionalization

of college athletics and to propose solutions at the local level is essential.

Another useful step would be for university presidents to look beyond athletic department representatives for solutions to the growing sports dilemma. For example, Stephen Horn, president of California State University at Long Beach, represents his own institution at



Lawrence Boston

NCAA and AIAW meetings. It would be also appropriate for university presidents to establish blue ribbon commissions (which include representatives from the student body) to study and report on the overall effectiveness of athletic departments, with special emphasis to be placed on determining whether satisfactory intramural programs and recreational facilities are available to all students.

A third step—one that would reduce the disparity between the athletic factories and other schools—would be greater sharing of TV revenue among all NCAA members. Presently, only teams that appear on local and network telecasts share in the distribution of broadcast receipts.

In testimony before the House subcommittee, representatives from Mississippi State University and the University of Denver, schools which have felt the axe of the NCAA's arbitrary enforcement of regulations, said there was only one way to bring about genuine reform in intercollegiate sports. They called upon Congress to enact legislation to create a national intercollegiate athletic board which would in effect strip the NCAA and AIAW of their power, and achieve the following objectives:

- Examine collegiate sports programs, with the power to investigate and subpoena.

- Require athletic departments to publish annual financial statements with detailed breakdown on recruiting expenses and make them available to students, faculty and the public.

- Require universities to annually report the percentage of scholarship athletes who receive degrees and graduate with their classes, and to provide this information to prospective recruits.

- Guarantee student athletes a "property right" to participate in college sports, which would in effect provide athletes with the right to be represented by counsel in all negotiations with athletic departments regarding academic or athletic status.

One thing clearly emerges from the recent disclosures and congressional investigation: The problems of intercollegiate athletics in the United States are reaching crisis proportions. Sweeping reform—such as the kind that is not likely to result from the people who have perpetuated and benefited from the present system—is necessary.

Mark Naison teaches Afro-American studies at Fordham University and coordinates sports coverage for *In These Times*.

## Ford ponders future playing plans

Fans all over the country continue to wonder where Carolina's all-time leading scorer, Phil Ford, will finally end up playing next year.

Ford has said that he would rather not play in Kansas City with the Kings who

drafted him in the first round. Phil has thus been looking for some alternatives. A team from Italy offered him \$100,000 a year to play with them. However, more recently, Seymour Kilstein, president of the Lancaster Red Roses of the Eastern League matched that offer.

Kilstein plans to meet with Ford's agent, Donald Dell, within a week to talk over the offer.

—R.L. Bynum

## Nuclear power

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Until the question of where and how to store it is solved, the company will be keeping it at the plant.

In view of alternative energy sources, the utility industry voluntarily formed the Electric Power Research Institute to conduct research and development programs. Among such programs are the research, development and demonstration projects in which CP & L is an active participant. The \$179 million RD&D project's budget supports research in such areas as coal gasification, liquefaction, fuel cells, energy storage, advanced combined cycle power plants, and the breeder reactor, as well as the energy sources of fusion, solar and geothermal power.

According to local authorities on radioactivity, adequate technology exists to safeguard nuclear power plants, thereby supplying the area with much-needed electric power for the future.

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