



## THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

---

6201 College Boulevard • Overland Park, Kansas 66211-2422 • Telephone 913/339-1906

FOR RELEASE  
Thursday, July 31, 1997  
1:30 p.m. (Central time)

CONTACT:  
David Swank, chair  
NCAA Committee on Infractions  
University of Oklahoma

GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY  
PUBLIC INFRACTIONS REPORT

OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS---This report is organized as follows:

- I. Introduction.
- II. Findings of violations of NCAA legislation.
- III. Committee on Infractions Penalties.

**I. INTRODUCTION.**

This case involved the football, women's basketball and men's basketball programs at Grambling State University and primarily concerned violations of NCAA bylaws governing recruiting, practice seasons, academic eligibility and institutional control.

Grambling State University is a Division I-AA institution and a member of the Southwestern Athletic Conference. The university has an enrollment of approximately 6,200 students and sponsors eight men's and eight women's intercollegiate sports.

**A. CASE CHRONOLOGY.**

On three occasions during September and October 1995, the NCAA enforcement staff received information from several sources regarding possible NCAA violations in the football program at Grambling State University. On October 19, the enforcement staff interviewed a student-athlete from another institution, who had reported possible violations. The enforcement staff also interviewed the student-athlete's father. During the remainder of the fall of 1995, and continuing into early spring 1996, the enforcement staff continued to receive information from the student-athlete and his father, as well as from several other

individuals they had identified as potential sources of information regarding alleged NCAA rules violations on the Grambling State University campus.

On February 15, 1996, an NCAA director of enforcement wrote the institution's director of athletics to arrange on-campus interviews with university student-athletes, administrators and athletics department personnel and to request various documents. Due to scheduling conflicts with the institution and the enforcement staff, on-campus interviews did not take place until the week of April 29. On June 11, the director of enforcement wrote the institution's president to apprise him of the enforcement staff's desire to conduct further on-campus interviews, which occurred during the week of June 24.

On August 6, 1996, the enforcement staff asked the institution for additional information. At approximately that same time, the institution's president organized an internal review committee charged with the responsibility of addressing all information requests from the NCAA and investigating potential NCAA rules violations on the institution's campus.

On August 7, 1996, the NCAA group executive director for enforcement and eligibility appeals sent the institution's president a letter of preliminary inquiry advising that the enforcement staff was investigating possible NCAA rules violations in the areas of women's basketball, initial-eligibility certification and out-of-season practices in football.

On October 29, 1996, the enforcement staff asked the institution for additional information. The institution responded on November 22, and forwarded to the NCAA a draft copy of a report of its findings regarding potential NCAA rules violations.

On December 19, 1996, the enforcement staff issued a letter of official inquiry to the institution and an assistant football coach. On January 22, 1997, the enforcement staff sent a former women's basketball student-athlete copies of allegations in which she was named in the letter of official inquiry.

On February 27, 1997, the university submitted its response to the letter of official inquiry, including responses from two individuals not at risk under NCAA enforcement procedures. On February 27, the assistant football coach named in the allegations also submitted his response to the official letter. The women's basketball student-athlete did not respond to the allegations in which she was named.

On May 5, 1997, the enforcement staff conducted separate prehearing conferences by telephone with university representatives and the assistant football coach.

On June 2, 1997, representatives of the NCAA enforcement staff, the institution and the Southwestern Athletic Conference appeared at a hearing before the NCAA Committee on Infractions. The assistant football coach involved in this case was among those present.

**B. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS OF VIOLATIONS.**

The violations found by the committee may be summarized as follows:

- During the spring and summer of 1995, members of the football coaching staff had impermissible recruiting contacts with two transfer student-athletes prior to obtaining written permission from the NCAA institutions where the student-athletes were or had recently been enrolled.
- During the 1991-92 through 1995-96 academic years, members of the football coaching staff routinely observed workouts of prospective and enrolled student-athletes, which violated tryout and practice legislation.
- During the summer of 1995, an assistant football coach conducted impermissible instructional sessions for two prospective student-athletes, and provided improper recruiting materials to one of the prospective student-athletes.
- During the 1993-94 and 1995-96 academic years, a women's basketball student-athlete practiced, competed and received athletically related financial aid while academically ineligible and during the fall of 1993 a men's basketball student-athlete competed while ineligible.
- On one occasion in May 1995, an assistant football coach had an improper in-person recruiting contact with a prospective student-athlete during an evaluation period.
- There was a lack of institutional control.

**C. SUMMARY OF THE PENALTIES.**

In imposing the following penalties, the Committee on Infractions considered the corrective actions taken and the penalties self-imposed by the university, as detailed in Parts III-A and B of this report.

1. The committee adopted as its own the following penalties proposed and self-imposed by the institution:
  - Limitation to a maximum of two coaches who may recruit off campus for football, on the condition that this penalty continue through December 31, 1997.
  - Forfeiture of three men's basketball games during November and December 1993.
2. The committee found the penalties imposed by the university meaningful and significant. However because of the apparent lack of knowledge of recruiting rules by members of the football coaching staff, the lack of institutional control, and the participation of an ineligible women's basketball student-athlete, the committee imposed the following additional penalties:
  - Two years of probation.
  - Reduction by six in the number of permissible official visits in football during the 1997-98 academic year.

- Forfeiture of the women's basketball games in which an ineligible student-athlete participated during the 1993-94 and 1995-96 academic years.
- Requirement that the football coaches receive intensive on-campus compliance education and training from the university's compliance officer.
- Requirement that the institution continue to develop a comprehensive athletics compliance education program, with annual reports to the committee during the period of probation.
- Recertification of current athletics policies and practices.
- Show-cause requirement specifying that the assistant football coach involved in this case must attend an NCAA Regional Compliance Seminar.

## II. FINDINGS OF VIOLATIONS OF NCAA LEGISLATION.

### A. IMPERMISSIBLE RECRUITING CONTACTS WITH TRANSFER STUDENT-ATHLETES. [NCAA BYLAWS 13.1.1.3 AND 13.1.1.3.2]

During the spring and summer of 1995, members of the football coaching staff had impermissible recruiting contacts with two prospective transfer student-athletes prior to obtaining written permission from the NCAA institutions where the student-athletes were or had recently been enrolled. Specifically:

1. During the spring and summer of 1995, members of the institution's football coaching staff had impermissible telephone conversations for recruiting purposes with a prospective transfer football student-athlete who had attended another NCAA institution. During July 1995, football coaching staff members also offered, and the student-athlete accepted, athletically related financial aid to attend the institution. These recruiting contacts were impermissible under NCAA recruiting legislation because they occurred prior to October 18, 1995, the date the institution received written permission from the other institution to contact and recruit the student-athlete.
2. Beginning in April 1995 and continuing until late June 1995, members of the institution's football coaching staff had numerous impermissible recruiting contacts with a second prospective transfer football student-athlete who had been attending another NCAA institution. In addition, in early June 1995, an assistant football coach made impermissible in-person contacts with the student-athlete and his father at their home and encouraged the student-athlete to attend athletics workout sessions conducted by members of the institution's football coaching staff. These recruiting contacts were impermissible under NCAA recruiting legislation because they occurred prior to June 29, 1995, the date the university received a written release from the institution where the student-athlete had been enrolled.

**B. IMPERMISSIBLE OBSERVATION OF TRYOUTS AND OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICES.  
[NCAA BYLAWS 13.12.1, 17.1.1.1 AND 17.11.6]**

From at least the 1991-92 through 1995-96 academic years, football coaching staff members improperly observed prospective and enrolled student-athletes during team workouts in violation of NCAA legislation governing tryouts for prospective student-athletes and out-of-season practices for enrolled student-athletes.

On a routine basis, football coaching staff members observed visiting prospective student-athletes and members of the institution's football team engaging in summer and spring workouts, which consisted of seven-on-seven and one-on-one passing drills and generally occurred from 6 to 7 p.m. at the old stadium on the university's campus after the conclusion of strength and conditioning workouts that were supervised by football coaching staff members. The summer workouts, which began in June and continued until the first day of permissible practice, involved both prospective and enrolled student-athletes; and the spring workouts, which began in mid-February and continued until the first day of permissible spring practice, involved only enrolled student-athletes. These drills occasionally involved a combination of approximately 50 prospective and enrolled student-athletes. At least five prospective student-athletes were involved during the summer of 1995.

In January 1996, a member of the football coaching staff observed another prospective student-athlete display his athletics abilities while he visited the institution's campus. This impermissible tryout occurred in the university's old football stadium when the prospective student-athlete threw a football to unidentified individuals.

**C. IMPROPER SKILL INSTRUCTION AND RECRUITING MATERIALS PROVIDED TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETES. [NCAA BYLAWS 13.2.1, 13.4.1 AND 13.12.1]**

During the summer of 1995, on approximately three occasions, between the middle of June and the first day of permissible practice, an assistant football coach provided individual football skill instruction on the university's football practice field to a prospective student-athlete. The assistant coach also provided the prospective student-athlete with a copy of the institution's football playbook and arranged for him to attend individual film and playbook review sessions in his office prior to the prospective student-athlete's enrollment as a full-time student at the university, in an effort to facilitate his transition to the university's football program. On two of these occasions, another prospective student-athlete participated in the film review sessions.

**D. IMPROPER PARTICIPATION BY TWO INELIGIBLE STUDENT-ATHLETES. [NCAA BYLAWS 14.3.1.1-(b), 14.3.1.4.1, 14.4.3.1-(b) AND 14.11.1]**

During the 1993-94 academic year, the institution improperly certified two basketball student-athletes. As a result, the student-athletes practiced, competed or received athletically related aid while they were ineligible. Specifically:

1. During the 1993-94 and 1995-96 academic years, a women's basketball student-athlete practiced, competed and received athletically related financial aid while ineligible because her American College Test (ACT) score had been invalidated. The institution failed to obtain her score from the national testing agency prior to her 1993 fall enrollment, as required under NCAA rules at that time, and initially certified her as eligible based on a June 1993 ACT score obtained from her high-school transcript. The testing agency subsequently questioned the score and requested institutional testing personnel to administer another test for her to validate the previous score. The student-athlete failed to attain the necessary score and ACT invalidated the previous qualifying score. Because the institution was not listed as a direct recipient of the student-athlete's ACT examination scores, it did not receive the results of her February 1994 retest and never learned about the invalidation.

As a result, the student-athlete practiced, competed and received athletically related financial aid during the 1993-94 academic year while ineligible. She was not enrolled during the 1994-95 academic year, but re-enrolled during the 1995-96 academic year and again practiced, competed and received athletically related aid while ineligible. [Bylaws 14.3.1.1-(b), 14.3.1.4.1 and 14.11.1]

2. In November and December 1993, a men's basketball student-athlete participated in five men's basketball contests while ineligible because he had not completed 24 credit hours during the previous academic year, as required by NCAA satisfactory-progress legislation. [Bylaws 14.4.3.1-(b) and 14.11.1]

**E. IMPROPER RECRUITING CONTACT DURING AN EVALUATION PERIOD. [NCAA BYLAWS 13.02.4.2 AND 30.11.5]**

On one occasion in May 1995, an assistant football coach made an in-person, off-campus recruiting contact with a prospective student-athlete at his high school during an evaluation period, a time when in-person off-campus contacts are not allowed. The initial contact was inadvertent but the coach proceeded to speak with the prospective student-athlete, even though he was aware such contact was impermissible.

**F. LACK OF INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL. [NCAA CONSTITUTION 2.1.1, 2.1.2 AND 2.8.1, AND BYLAW 6.01.1]**

The scope and nature of the violations in this case demonstrate a lack of appropriate institutional control in the monitoring of the institution's football program and in certifying the initial and continuing eligibility of basketball student-athletes during the 1993-94 through 1995-96 academic years. Specifically, the university failed to:

1. educate adequately its football coaching staff on NCAA rules regarding contacts with prospective transfer student-athletes, and to establish and communicate procedures for monitoring the contact and recruitment of transfer student-athletes, as evidenced by the impermissible contacts and recruitment that occurred in Finding II-A;
2. monitor the out-of-season athletically related activities of the institution's football team to ensure that coaching staff members charged with weight training and conditioning activities were not engaged in activities that constituted tryouts or out-of-season practices, as evidenced by the continuous nature of the violations detailed in Finding II-B;
3. monitor the official and unofficial visits of football prospective student-athletes to prevent activities that constituted impermissible athletics tryouts, as detailed in Findings II-B and C;
4. comply with NCAA initial eligibility legislation requiring institutions to obtain standardized collegiate entrance examination test scores directly from the national testing agencies when determining initial eligibility, which would have allowed the institution to learn about the invalidated score described in Finding II-D-1; and
5. maintain documentation and to monitor contacts and evaluations by football coaches to prevent impermissible recruiting contacts, such as the violation detailed in Finding II-E.

In addition, the institution failed to report potential NCAA violations in a timely and accurate manner. The institution

reported to the Southwestern Athletic Conference in May 1994 that an ineligible men's basketball student-athlete had participated in two games in December while he was ineligible, as detailed in Finding II-D-2. This information was not reported to the NCAA enforcement staff and was inaccurate because the student-athlete participated in five games while ineligible. This failure to report violations timely and accurately to the NCAA illustrates the inadequate knowledge by athletics department personnel regarding procedures for certifying academic eligibility and for reporting potential NCAA violations.

### **III. COMMITTEE ON INFRACTIONS PENALTIES.**

As set forth in Parts I and II of this report, the Committee on Infractions found that this case involved several major violations of NCAA legislation.

#### **A. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE UNIVERSITY.**

In determining the appropriate penalties to impose, the committee considered the institution's self-imposed corrective actions. Specifically, the university:

1. Required the head football coach to participate in an intensive rules review with the faculty athletics representative's office.
2. Directed the faculty athletics representative and compliance officer to monitor recruits while on campus.
3. Cautioned in writing all coaches to take steps to avoid impermissible tryouts of prospective student-athletes, with notice that failure to do so may result in termination of employment.

#### **B. PENALTIES PROPOSED AND SELF-IMPOSED BY THE UNIVERSITY.**

The Committee on Infractions adopted as its own the following penalties proposed and self-imposed by the institution:

1. Only the two football coaches specified by the university may recruit off campus. The committee adopted this penalty on the condition that it continues through at least December 31, 1997.

2. The institution forfeited three men's basketball games won by the institution and in which an ineligible student-athlete participated on November 29 and December 4 and 7, 1993.

**C. ADDITIONAL PENALTIES IMPOSED BY THE COMMITTEE ON INFRACTIONS.**

The Committee on Infractions agreed with and approved of the actions taken by the university, but it imposed additional penalties because of the lack of knowledge of recruiting rules by members of the football coaching staff, the lack of institutional control and the participation of an ineligible women's basketball student-athlete for two academic years.

The committee chose not to impose all of the presumptive penalties permitted under Bylaw 19.6.2.1 because of the relatively limited nature of the violations and the actions taken by the university to institute appropriate corrective measures and to self-impose a meaningful penalty upon its football program. The additional penalties imposed by the committee are:

1. Two years of probation from June 2, 1997, the date of the hearing.
2. The number of expense-paid visits to the institution's campus in football shall be reduced by six during the 1997-98 academic year, which limits the institution to 50 official visits under current rules. The institution may not carry forward any unused official visits banked from the 1996-97 academic year and may not bank any unused official visits during the 1997-98 academic year for use during the 1998-99 academic year.
3. The institution shall forfeit all women's basketball games in which an ineligible student-athlete participated during the 1993-94 and 1995-96 academic years.
4. The university's head and assistant coaches must attend intensive rules education sessions with the institution's compliance director, emphasizing NCAA legislation regarding on-campus recruiting, tryouts and coaches' role in recruiting.
5. During this period of probation, the institution shall:
  - a. Continue to develop and implement a comprehensive educational and monitoring program on NCAA legislation, including seminars and testing, to instruct the coaches, the faculty athletics representative, all athletics department personnel and all university staff members with responsibility for the certification of student-athletes for admission, retention, financial aid or competition;
  - b. Submit a preliminary report to the administrator for the Committee on Infractions by October 1, 1997, setting forth a schedule for establishing this compliance and educational program; and
  - c. File with the committee's administrator annual compliance reports indicating the progress made with this program by May 1 during each year of the probationary period. The reports should emphasize

the monitoring of on-campus recruiting. The reports must also include documentation of the university's compliance with the penalties adopted and imposed by the committee.

6. The institution's president shall recertify that all of the university's current athletics policies and practices conform to all requirements of NCAA regulations.
7. In accordance with Bylaw 19.6.2.2-(1), the institution shall show cause why it should not be penalized further if it fails to require the assistant football coach involved in this case to attend an NCAA Regional Compliance Seminar in the spring of 1998.

---

As required by NCAA legislation for any institution involved in a major infractions case, Grambling State University shall be subject to the provisions of NCAA Bylaw 19.6.2.3, concerning repeat violators, for a five-year period beginning on the effective date of the penalties in this case, June 2, 1997.

Should Grambling State University or the assistant football coach who participated in the processing of this case appeal either the findings of violations or penalties in this case to the NCAA Infractions Appeals Committee, the Committee on Infractions will submit a response to the members of the appeals committee, with a copy to any party who may appeal. This response may include additional information in accordance with Bylaw 32.10.5.

The Committee on Infractions wishes to advise the institution that it should take every precaution to ensure that the terms of the penalties are observed. The committee will monitor the penalties during their effective periods, and any action contrary to the terms of any of the penalties or any additional violations shall be considered grounds for extending the institution's probationary period, as well as imposing more severe sanctions in this case.

Should any portion of any of the penalties in this case be set aside for any reason other than by appropriate action of the Association, the penalties shall be reconsidered by the Committee on Infractions.

Should any actions by NCAA Conventions directly or indirectly modify any provision of these penalties or the effect of the penalties, the committee reserves the right to review and reconsider the penalties.

NCAA COMMITTEE ON INFRACTIONS

Richard J. Dunn  
Jack H. Friedenthal  
Roy F. Kramer  
Frederick B. Lacey  
Beverly E. Ledbetter  
Yvonne (Bonnie) L. Slatton  
David Swank (chair)