

Educational Column - 1 Educational Column

Title:

Recruiting or Scouting Services Subject to Approval in Basketball and Football (I)

Item Ref: 1

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Educational Column:

In the sports of basketball and football, NCAA Division I institutions should note an institution is not permitted to subscribe to a recruiting or scouting service unless the service has been approved by the NCAA pursuant to an annual approval process. If a service meets both of the following conditions, then the service must be approved by the NCAA in order for an institution to be permitted to subscribe to the service.

1. Meets Definition of Recruiting or Scouting Service.

A recruiting or scouting service is defined as any individual, organization, entity or segment of an entity that is primarily involved in providing information about prospective student-athletes. This definition includes but is not limited to:

- a. Any service that provides information only to paid subscribers;
- b. Any service that is only available to a select group of individuals (e.g., coaches), regardless of whether there is a charge associated with the service; or
- c. Any service that provides information to the public free of charge.

However, a recruiting or scouting service is not an individual, organization, entity or segment of an entity that, incidental to its primary purpose, provides information about prospective student-athletes that is generally available to the public (e.g., news media).

2. Requires a Subscription.

A recruiting or scouting service requires a subscription if:

- a. Information about prospective student-athletes is provided only to paid subscribers; or
- b. Information about prospective student-athletes is only available to a select group of individuals (e.g., coaches), regardless of whether there is a charge associated with accessing the information.

Even if a service meets the definition of a recruiting or scouting service, the service is not considered to require a subscription if a staff member must register with the service to access information about prospective student-athletes but the service provides the same information to the general public at no cost.

The following scenarios are intended to assist the membership in applying the above.

Scenario No. 1.

Information.

RecruitingService1.com offers an expansive online database that provides scouting information about high school and preparatory school student-athletes exclusively to paid subscribers.

Analysis.

RecruitingService1.com meets the definition of a recruiting or scouting service and requires a subscription to access its information. Therefore, the website would need to be approved by the NCAA for the institution to be permitted to subscribe to the service.

Scenario No. 2.

Information.

ExampleShowcase.com is a prospect showcase operator that maintains an online database of its participants. These profiles include the showcase participants' demographic information, individual statistics and highlight films. Access to the showcase's website is limited to showcase participants and other paid subscribers.

Analysis.

ExampleShowcase.com meets the definition of a recruiting or scouting service because access to the showcase participants' profiles are available only to a select group of individuals and paid subscribers. Additionally, the website would need to be approved by the NCAA for the institution to be permitted to subscribe to the service.

Scenario No. 3.

Information.

RecruitingService2.com offers a platform where high school and preparatory school student-athletes are permitted to create an online athletics profile for distribution. The website provides the opportunity for these individuals to upload athletics statistics and highlight film to their athletics profile. Although all of the website's information is available to the general public, RecruitingService2.com requires individuals to create a username and password prior to accessing its content.

Analysis.

RecruitingService2.com meets the definition of a recruiting or scouting service; however, the entirety of its information is available to the general public free of charge. Therefore, the website would not need to be approved by the NCAA for the institution to be permitted to access the service.

Scenario No. 4.

Information.

ExampleRivalries.com is an online media website that publishes information regarding the top high school rivalries in the country. As part of its content, the website profiles five high school student-athletes per week in its "Top 5" and displays their individual statistics and demographic information. Access to the website and its content is available to the general public.

Analysis.

ExampleRivalries.com does not meet the definition of a recruiting or scouting service because the information it provides about prospective student-athletes is incidental to its primary purpose of covering competition between high school teams with historic rivalries. Additionally, the website's content is available to the general public. Therefore, the website would not need to be approved by the NCAA.

Scenario No. 5.

Information.

RecruitingService3.com is an online database that compiles athletics and demographic statistics of high school and preparatory school student-athletes. The website's information is available free of charge to any registered user; however, RecruitingService3.com requires each registered user account to be linked to a collegiate institution's email account.

Analysis.

RecruitingService3.com meets the definition of a recruiting or scouting service and requires an institutional email address to access its information about prospective student-athletes. This requirement limits the availability of its information to a select group of individuals. Therefore, the website would need to be approved by the NCAA for the institution to be permitted to subscribe to the service.

[References: NCAA Bylaws 13.14.3 (recruiting or scouting services), 13.14.3.1 (basketball and football), 13.14.3.2 (sports other than basketball and football) and 13.14.3.3 (subscription limited to approved services -- basketball and football); staff interpretation (11/14/2013, Item No. a), official interpretation (09/20/2013, Item No. 1) and staff interpretation (04/01/2011, Item No. a)]

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References

Legislative References			Other
Div.	Number	Title	References Educational Columns: <u>3</u>
I	13.14.3	Recruiting or Scouting Services.	Educational Columns: 0
I	13.14.3.1	Basketball and Football.	Proposals: 0
I	13.14.3.3	Subscription Limited to Approved Services -- Basketball and Football.	
I	13.14.3.2	Sports Other Than Basketball and Football.	