



REPORT ON THE
SPORTSMANSHIP
AND FAN BEHAVIOR
SUMMIT

February 20, 2003

Acknowledgements

The Sportsmanship and Fan Behavior Summit and this report represent the coordinated effort of numerous individuals within intercollegiate athletics, higher education and other constituent groups. Several organizations and individuals played instrumental roles, including the NCAA Football board of directors, Southeastern Conference staff, NCAA staff members, Karl Benson, Jim Delany, Tom Hansen, Wright Waters, Kevin Weiberg and Vince

Dooley (chair of the summit). Associate Professor Dan Wann and Professor Merrill Melnick are thanked for offering their research and findings, which helped ensure that summit discussions took place within proper theoretical frameworks. Finally, each of the nearly 150 participants at the summit (see Appendix A for a complete listing of participants) candidly offered their insight and experiences for the betterment of intercollegiate athletics.

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Introduction

Inappropriate fan behavior disrupts contests and tarnishes the spectator experience. In worst cases, it leaves students and fans severely injured and costs institutions and communities thousands in cleanup and restoration dollars. The well-played contests of student-athletes are often overshadowed by reports of spectator aggression through various media sources. Spectator aggression has been defined as “behavior that intends to destroy property or injure another person, or is grounded in a total disregard for the well-being of self and others.”ⁱ There appear to be two dimensions of the problem: the interaction between and among student-athletes, coaches, officials and fans during the event itself; and postgame riots, where destruction spreads into the greater campus community.

There are numerous positive traditions associated with intercollegiate athletics (e.g., fight songs and rallying cries, manners of dress). However, hostile traditions inconsistent with the values of sport have also crept into intercollegiate athletics (e.g., storming the field and tearing down goal posts, postgame riots). In the last few years, incidences of spectator aggression in intercollegiate athletics, particularly in football and men’s and women’s basketball, appear to be on the rise.ⁱⁱ Additionally, the number of on-field incidents between competing student-athletes and confrontations between coaches and officials appear to have increased.

In response, nearly 150 representatives from intercollegiate athletics, higher education and other key constituent groups convened February 20, 2003, in Dallas, Texas for a Sportsmanship and Fan Behavior Summit. The purpose of the summit was threefold: (1) to examine issues related to fan violence at or in conjunction with collegiate sporting

events; (2) to raise awareness and initiate national communication among key stakeholders; and (3) to identify possible best practices that can be compiled into a report for local application.ⁱⁱⁱ



Recent History

Northwestern University snapped its NCAA record 34-game losing streak with a 31-6 victory over Northern Illinois September 25, 1982. In the closing moments of the contest, a large number of the 22,078 fans stormed the field with 30 seconds left to play and tore down the north goal post. When the final gun sounded, the goal post collapsed and the fans carried it to the Northwestern bench.^{iv}

While the postgame celebration at Northwestern on that fall afternoon was not the first time fans tore down a goal post to celebrate their football team’s victory, there appears to have been an increase since that 1982 football game in recent years of college football and basketball fans storming fields and courts in the waning moments of contests in celebration of victory with increasing and dangerous frequency. Many of these celebrations have led to the destruction of property, as goal posts are torn down and

uprooted, and frenzied mobs of fans defy security and safety efforts to wreak havoc on stadiums, arenas and property in the institution’s surrounding community. In the anonymity of large crowds, the incivility of our society is being acted out.

These incidents of inappropriate fan behavior in recent years have known no geographical bounds, occurred at both the Division I-A and I-AA levels in football, taken place after institutions’ football and basketball teams both won and lost critical games, and occurred during regular and postseason play.

These and other incidents of spectator aggression precipitated the Sportsmanship and Fan Behavior Summit, as well as this report. [For visual reference of such events and their impact on contests and campus communities, please see the attached video.]

| Year | Location | Event/Sport | Details |
|------|---------------------------|---|---|
| 1999 | East Lansing, Michigan | Michigan State – Duke (Final Four)/ Men's Basketball | Michigan State lost to Duke and 132 people (71 of whom were MSU students) were arrested during and after riots that resulted in overturned cars, burned furniture and police firing tear gas. ^v |
| 2001 | West Lafayette, Indiana | Purdue – Notre Dame (Final Four)/ Women's Basketball | On the night and following morning that the Purdue women's basketball team lost to Notre Dame, a four-block area around the West Lafayette campus suffered more than \$60,000 in damage caused by riots and vandalism. ^{vi} |
| 2002 | Clemson, South Carolina | Clemson – South Carolina/Football | A 67-year-old sheriff's deputy was crushed under a pile of students and fans and lost consciousness after he unsuccessfully tried to keep them from attacking the Clemson goal posts. ^{vii} |
| 2002 | Bloomington, Indiana | Indiana – Maryland (Final Four)/ Men's Basketball | Upset by Indiana's loss to Maryland, an estimated crowd of 6,000 students and fans had to be broken up by police with tear gas. About 30 people were arrested on charges of public intoxication, criminal mischief and disorderly conduct. Four others were charged with battery on a police officer. ^{viii} |
| 2002 | Huntington, West Virginia | Miami (OH) – Marshall/ Football | A Miami Ohio assistant coach was arrested for allegedly shoving a celebrating fan who was among hundreds running onto the field after Marshall's last-second victory. ^{ix} |
| 2002 | Macomb, Illinois | Western Kentucky – Western Illinois (Division I-AA playoffs)/Football | Several student-athletes from both teams received single-and multiple-game suspensions for kicking, punching and striking players with their helmets after Western Illinois was beat, 31-28. ^x |
| 2002 | Morgantown, West Virginia | West Virginia – Virginia Tech/Football | West Virginia students set fires on campus and tore down the goal posts at Mountaineer Field, even though the game was won at Virginia Tech's stadium. ^{xi} |
| 2002 | Minneapolis, Minnesota | Iowa – Minnesota/Football | After Iowa's victory that clinched the team's share of a Big Ten title, Iowa fans tore down Minnesota's goal posts and attempted to take them out of the Metrodome. ^{xii} |
| 2002 | Honolulu, Hawaii | Cincinnati – Hawaii/ Football | Cincinnati and Hawaii players had to be separated by police after the game. After Hawaii's 20-19 defeat of Cincinnati, opposing players could be seen shoving and throwing punches. Fans threw water bottles and trash at Cincinnati players as they received a police escort from the field. ^{xiii} |
| 2002 | Pullman, Washington | Washington – Washington State/ Football | After the University of Washington's triple overtime defeat of Washington State, Washington football student-athletes and coaches were pelted with bottles, plastic souvenirs and other debris by the Washington State fans. ^{xiv} |
| 2003 | East Lansing, Michigan | Michigan State – Texas (Regional Finals)/Men's Basketball | Fans overturned four cars, tipped vending machines and set fires in trash bins after the Spartans lost in the NCAA tournament. Police officers in riot gear dispersed the crowd using tear gas. Seven people were arrested on charges of disorderly conduct, six of them Michigan State students. ^{xv} |
| 2003 | Minneapolis, Minnesota | Minnesota – New Hampshire (Frozen Four)/Men's Ice Hockey | Rioters, who threw rocks, broke windows, set fire to cars (including a TV news van) and looted businesses, caused an estimated \$100,000 in damage. It was the second consecutive year of celebratory riots occurring after Minnesota won the NCAA men's ice hockey championship. ^{xvi} |

Theoretical Background

Why do students and fans engage in unsportsmanlike and aggressive behavior? According to research by Professors Dan Wann and Merrill Melnick, this question must be analyzed from psychological and sociological perspectives. Psychological approaches to spectator aggression tend to focus on the impact of specific aspects of a spectator's personality and unique physical factors found within spectator environments. Conversely, sociological viewpoints tend to rely on the impact of larger sociological phenomena such as culture, social structure and social environments. However, it is essential to both perspectives to recognize that there are four levels of spectator aggression, and policies must be developed to address each level of aggression.

- **Level One** – Spontaneous reaction by an individual or small group to individual events that occur during a contest (e.g., verbal taunts or throwing projectiles after a bad call).
- **Level Two** – Premeditated acts by a large group (e.g., rehearsed chants intended to demean coaches, student-athletes or officials by a group of students).
- **Level Three** – Thousands of fans storming the court or field after a game, oftentimes destroying property in the process.
- **Level Four** – Riots that occur after the event, involving the same number, if not more, of fans as level three, and that occur beyond the stadium or arena. Unlike fans in level three, many of those involved in level-four riots did not attend the game.

There are various micro (individual) and macro (group) level causes for spectator aggression in intercollegiate athletics. Theories related to each are outlined below:

Individual

Identification – Fans form strong bonds and identify with their teams (e.g., fans who “bleed the school colors”). The successes and failures of the team are also the successes and failures of the individual fan. Great wins or disappointing losses are felt deeply by the fan and may be expressed by aggressive or violent behavior.

Social Learning Theory – Fans learn to act aggressively by watching the aggressive acts of others. For example, the poor sportsmanship of coaches and student-athletes leads to poor sportsmanship among fans. Also, media highlights of spectator aggression and fan violence on college campuses contribute to fans adopting similar behavior because fans see media coverage as validation or promotion of the activity.

Need for Excitement – In greater society, opportunities for people to take risks have been decreasing in recent decades, leading people to search for excitement in activities that carry a degree of personal risk (e.g., spectator aggression).

Deterrents – Spectator aggression is the result of weak negative sanctions and the public's failure to condemn the violence. This theory, however, is limited inasmuch as it assumes the fan is a rational thinker (at the time of deviance) and that he/she has accurate information about the ramifications of his/her actions.

Alcohol – Alcohol can lead to an increase in fan aggression. It provides fans with a type of liquid confidence to do things they normally would not. Institutions can easily address alcohol consumption near and/or during athletics events through increased enforcement of open container and underage drinking laws. However, alcohol prohibition should not be viewed as a panacea. Eliminating alcohol from the intercollegiate athletics environment will not eliminate incidents of fan violence. There are multiple reactions to alcohol consumption, and the vast majority of people involved in sports riots are not inebriated.

Anonymity – Large crowds enhance a person's perception that he or she is anonymous. When this anonymity is coupled with the belief that any punishment meted out will fall on someone else, fans may feel more emboldened.

Group

Expressive Sports Riots – The emotional arousal engendered by the outcome of the game, be it joy and ecstasy or grief and anger, leads to a loss of normal restraint, or disinhibition among groups of fans.

Emergent Norms Theory – Deviant behavior becomes more likely as crowds adopt antisocial behavior they consider appropriate for a particular period of time or situation. As more people get involved, the rest of the fans conform to the antisocial behavior.

Convergence Theory – Greater numbers of homogeneous people in a crowd (e.g., a large student section) lead to higher levels of arousal and lessened inhibitions, thereby increasing the likelihood of collective behavior (e.g., taunts, storming the field).

Contagion Theory – Ideas, moods and behaviors begin with one person and can become rapidly communicated and accepted by crowd members. Thus, once a few fans decide to run onto the field or begin rioting, the other fans in the area can quickly adopt that behavior.

Culture – For many fans, it has become tradition to exhibit poor sportsmanship. Fans sometimes interpret spectator aggression, when repeatedly shown on television or learned from parents or peers, as approval. In a broader sense, sport is just a microcosm of greater society's developing culture of violence.

For purposes of the summit, representatives from The Ohio State University offered their experience as a case study. Ohio State was scheduled to battle its long-time rival, the University of Michigan, in a classic late-season showdown November 20, 2002. Over the previous 50 games, the series was tied at 24-24-2. Since 1922, more people attended the Ohio State-Michigan game than any other college football matchup. With a win on its home field that day, Ohio State could advance to the Bowl Championship Series championship game. It was the 99th meeting between the two institutions in their long and storied Big Ten Conference rivalry.

For a lot of fans (many of whom were underage), alcohol consumption in relation to the contest began as early as the Friday night before the game and continued through “Kegs and Eggs” events on the morning of the contest. On game day, many fans could be seen publicly drunk and carrying open containers of alcohol on the streets and parking lots surrounding Ohio Stadium.

After Ohio State’s 14-9 defeat of Michigan, throngs of the 105,539 fans in attendance rushed the field of Ohio Stadium in celebration. Ohio State staff planned to allow some running onto the field, have police personnel at the goal posts to help prevent injury, and disperse the crowd when it was prudent to do so. However, when fans attempted to rip down the south goal posts they were

doused with pepper spray and, therefore, were unsuccessful. Other fans could be seen ripping up the turf to commemorate the victory.

Later that evening, after local bars had closed for the night, students and others took to the streets of Columbus, Ohio, in a celebratory riot. The riot that night and following morning was more destructive and violent than when fans stormed the field immediately after the win over Michigan. More than 100 fires were set, cars were overturned, storefront windows were smashed, and bottles and rocks were thrown at law enforcement officers and firefighters as they tended to the situation. It was noted that although many of the rioters (mostly young, white males) were Ohio State students, a large number of them were either students from other colleges, high school students, non-student residents from the Columbus area or other non-student “outsiders.” The riots placed a significant fiscal burden on the community as well, costing the city nearly \$125,000 in overtime pay for police alone.

These events were a worst-case scenario for Ohio State administrators and community members. Thus, in preparation for the Ohio State-Michigan game, representatives from the university and the Columbus community instituted several initiatives to prevent the aforementioned exhibitions of spectator aggression. Those initiatives included:

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| <p>1. Educational Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Party Smart kits • Safe partying signs on light posts • Inclusion of the topic in new student orientation video • On- and off-campus student educational programs <p>2. General Appeals for Calm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public service announcements with famous OSU alumni • E-mail from student-government to students • E-mail from president to students • Press conferences <p>3. Alternative Activities for Celebration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food giveaways • Game day concerts • “Late Night” programming | <p>4. University/Community Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University area safety committee • University area task force • Meeting series held by mayor <p>5. Police and Liquor Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 Columbus police present on foot and bikes throughout day and evening • 800 volunteer ushers • Undercover liquor control agents to monitor postgame parties <p>6. Appeals for Parental Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to parents of students living on “problem” streets • Residence hall newsletter to parents • Parent association newsletter <p>7. Partner with Property Managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings with property managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property managers notify OSU of large parties • Student housing legal clinic with landlords <p>8. Direct Contact with Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door visits by various OSU staff • Discussions with Greek community • Door-to-door distribution of flyers <p>9. Environmental Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emptying city dumpsters before weekend • Parking bans • Community ambassadors program <p>10. Enforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim suspension of students arrested • Use Web site to post pictures and identify students • Cooperation between university and city law enforcement to identify and prosecute participants |
|---|--|--|

The institution and the greater Columbus, community should be commended for their diligence and determination in taking steps to prevent the riot. Few other schools and communities may have been more proactive or better prepared. Beginning before the season and continuing until game day, Ohio State took various steps to provide a safe and positive competitive

environment. [It should be noted that some of Ohio State’s preventive measures led to immediate backlash from students, fans and alumni who felt that their rights as spectators were being infringed on.] Yet, their efforts failed to prevent fans from storming the field of Ohio Stadium or the celebratory riots that later ensued.

Areas of Emphasis

Summit attendees were divided into specific discussion groups to address the issues of sportsmanship and fan behavior. The groups were categorized based on five core issues: (1) institutional game management; (2) campus environment/community relations; (3) student and fan behavior/alcohol abuse; (4) coach and player behavior; and (5) role and responsibility of the media. These categories are not mutually exclusive, but were separated for ease of understanding and analysis.



Institutional Game Management

The nature of competition itself tends to engender a hostile environment among student-athletes, coaches, officials and fans. However, many institutions compound this by trying to create difficult and intimidating environments (with rowdy student sections as the primary vehicle) for opposing teams and fans. Institutions invest time and promotional resources to encourage rabid fanaticism. However, by creating such environments, institutions make themselves and their events susceptible to poor sportsmanship and fan behavior.

Institutions must acknowledge the difference between civil and lawful fan behavior. It is difficult to make a crowd civil, but it is within the control of the institution to address

unlawful behavior. Underage drinking, open containers, destroying goal posts and coming onto the field of play are all against the law. Institutions should not excuse those behaviors because of tradition or environment. The “our house” environment athletics departments create does not mean security and institutional representatives should forgo their responsibility by not enforcing security measures. If expectations are clearly stated and consequences widely known, university and community police can act decisively when any disorderly behavior occurs in or around a stadium or arena.

Issues related to institutional game management can be subdivided into three groups: those actions the institution takes before the contest, during the contest, and immediately after the contest. More than any of the other four topical areas, issues surrounding game management may be most within the control of the institution. Thus, institutions should be diligent in discussing and implementing initiatives to ensure appropriate institutional control of sportsmanship and fan behavior before, during and after a contest.



Before The Contest

- Before to the football season, numerous institutions analyze their football schedules and attempt to identify contests that have the potential to generate incidents of poor sportsmanship and fan behavior. Logically, these contests generally occur late in the season (e.g., championship games, tournament contests), and/or are rivalry games. Nonetheless, institutions should attempt to maintain a consistently high level of preparation before every contest. The potential for a serious episode of fan violence is present wherever fans gather to watch a sports event.^{xviii}
- University of California, Los Angeles staff generally meets with University of Southern California game management personnel before their annual rivalry game in an effort to make game management a cooperative effort between both institutions, regardless of who is hosting the contest.

The ticket offices from each institution also collaborate to ensure that complimentary admission seats for the friends and family of the visiting team are not situated near notoriously raucous areas of the stadium or arena.

- Texas A&M University researched and discovered that fan behavior is generally poorer during night games (fans tend to consume alcohol all day in preparation for the game). Game management personnel work to ensure that visibly drunken spectators are not allowed into the stadium or arena.
- Teams in the National Football League have a two-tiered process in which spectators go through security screening in advance of the ticket tear as well as at the turnstiles.
- Game management staff at the University of Miami (Florida) meet with student groups, fraternities and sororities before the football season to educate them about safe game management and remind them to stay off the field after games.
- The Southeastern Conference has offered an annual summer workshop for universities' game management staff to educate and provide advice to each other. Game management personnel can discuss how to, for example, better manage the pre-game warm-up area in football (e.g., a 10-yard buffer between teams).

During The Contest

- The University of Illinois shifted its student and band seating sections in basketball away from the visiting team bench area.
- In football at the University of Florida, students are seated in areas that do not offer easy access to the field.
- Some conferences have adopted rules mandating that each institution block a certain number of seats behind the visiting basketball team's bench for the exclusive use of the visiting team.
- Illinois does not allow signs made by spectators to be displayed in its basketball arena.
- Numerous institutions and some conferences have policies that limit the number, type and speed of replays that may be shown on video boards during games. The video boards are used to entertain fans rather than replaying questionable calls.
- The Big West Conference developed pocket-sized game management handbooks that are published and reviewed annually with athletics department staff. Because of their size, each security person working at a contest can easily access information in the handbooks needed to resolve any issues that may arise.
- Louisiana State University has placed undercover police officers dressed as visiting fans at some home games.
- The International Association of Assembly Managers prefers to have a strong, visible police presence during



sporting events that it manages. It was noted that uniformed police or National Guardsmen tend to be given more respect from fans than volunteer ushers and ticket takers.

- Cheerleaders and the band at the University of Arkansas are encouraged to help dissuade or drown out negative cheers and taunts with their own positive cheers and music.
- At Virginia Tech, spectators are not allowed to re-enter the facility after entrance and announcements are made through public address about not going onto the field or court after the contest.

After The Contest

- Washington State University developed an "H-shaped" goal post that has withstood attempts by fans to bring it down so well that fans generally avoid even attempting to do it.
- The University of Iowa has removed goal posts as objects of destruction for excited fans by erecting collapsible goal posts that can be quickly disassembled before fans can get to them after football games.
- Before its contests, the National Football League offers a lot of on-field access for marketing and promotional purposes, however, during and after the game, it stresses the philosophy: If you do not have a working purpose on the field, you should not be there.

By employing some of the aforementioned initiatives, institutional game management staff may be able to help create a positive competitive environment. But such initiatives will not, in the absolute, prevent spectator aggression. Therefore, fans must be held accountable for their transgressions. Security staff may not be able to catch every violator, but catching a few may send the message to other fans that violations of the law or institutional policies will not be tolerated.

Campus Environment/ Community Relations

Campus and community discussions regarding fan behavior associated with intercollegiate athletics events are often fragmented, taking place in administrative silos of student affairs offices, athletics departments and community organizations. Pre-event collaboration of institutional and community representatives, as well as campus and community police agencies, can help facilitate a unified response to major events.^{xx} The university and community should speak with one voice, which is clear, coherent and coordinated on issues of fan behavior. Below are examples of campus and community interactions to address spectator aggression.

- Town/gown communications need to be continuous and involve all relevant segments of the institution and the community. At Miami University (Ohio), athletics department and university staff members frequently meet with city police to discuss crowd size and other expectations before athletics events.
- State laws specific to riots on or near a campus were adopted in Michigan in response to the 1999 riot at Michigan State University.
- Student codes of conduct should include regulations specifically related to highly disruptive and destructive actions during or surrounding competitive events. Given the frequent turnover rate of student populations, efforts must be made to continually educate students on these issues.
- Communication plans should be developed for the event, university and community that include risk assessments and specific protocols to be used.
- In many cases, neither the city nor the university can provide sufficient law enforcement alone. Therefore, a unified command is needed to blend teams from the police department and university public safety agencies. This would help facilitate a joint ownership of the situation and provide better management of the situation.
- Positive, alternative activities should be scheduled throughout the campus and community during the week of a potential "goal post game." Several weeks before big games,

Michigan schedules social activities (e.g., golf outings) for alumni, coaches, fans and community members from opposing institutions.

- Campus and community leaders should produce public service announcements encouraging positive fan behavior before, during and after athletics events.
- Institutions should know the areas on or around campus where students tend to congregate to celebrate (e.g., particular avenues or grassy areas). Before certain games, a visible police presence should be established in those areas before students and fans assemble.
- At the request of the Michigan State president, East Lansing, Michigan, bar owners located near campus formed the Responsible Hospitality Council. Among its practices, the group of bars endeavor to stop selling bottled alcohol after the first half of postseason basketball games, promote the sale/distribution of food, use a phone tree to alert other bar owners of potential problems with patrons, avoid promotions that encourage high-risk drinking (e.g., \$1 pitchers and shots) and actively communicate with local law enforcement.
- As a possible deterrent, institutions should communicate to students how spectator aggression tarnishes the image of the university and how that may have a direct impact on students and alumni (e.g., how the university is perceived in the job market).

Because celebratory riots are not restricted to sporting events, the aforementioned campus/community communication techniques also should be practiced for non-athletics events. Positive relations between a campus and community can ensure there is a consistent level of enforcement in the campus community, regardless of the context (e.g., athletics events, political rallies, concerts). While the aforementioned policies and practices may cost institutions and communities valuable resources, decisions about whether to employ those techniques should be weighed against the toll taken on campuses and their surrounding communities in terms of property damage, potential lawsuits and negative public perceptions.

Student and Fan Behavior/ Abuse of Alcohol

The theories and research presented by Wann and Melnick^{xx} on sports fans aid in the development of recommendations within an appropriate theoretical framework. Recognition of their and other's research will help ensure that conference, institutional and community responses are efficient and effective.

Best practices related to student/fan behavior and alcohol abuse include the following:

- Institutional policies and penalties regarding spectator

aggression must be clearly and repetitively communicated to students and fans. For example, institutions can endeavor to make all season-ticket applicants aware of institutional policies and penalties for poor sportsmanship during the application process. Also, institutions can frequently publish those policies and penalties in the sports section of the school newspaper, on fan-based Web sites and via email to season-ticket holders (also encouraging them to forward the email to other fans who may not be season-ticket holders).



- While tailgating before games, fans can consume large quantities of alcohol. Institutions can choose to strictly enforce open container laws or attempt to better manage alcohol consumption in tailgating areas. To do so, institutions can encourage alumni associations to discourage fellow fans from irresponsible tailgating, set up alcohol-free tailgating tents sponsored by local businesses throughout the tailgating area, or disperse positive tailgating messages throughout the tailgating areas (e.g., on signs, cups, napkins, etc.)
- The West Coast Conference does not allow alcohol to be sold or provided anywhere (including VIP suites) in the arena during its conference basketball tournament.
- While messages about appropriate fan behavior must come from the top down, institutions should enlist the support of student leaders to champion the message to their peers. There needs to be peer consensus that certain behaviors are unacceptable before students will change the way they act.
- The University of Maryland created a lottery for student seating in coveted areas. Student groups could place their names in the lottery if they agreed to occupy these seats

and be role models for good sportsmanship. Because they are highly prized seats, students have been eager to participate, and because they were representing their organizations, students have been determined to represent them positively.^{xxi}

- At the beginning of the fourth quarter of football and basketball contests held at the Georgia Dome, fans are videoed and have their pictures taken by event staff. The practice has a three-fold purpose: it helps fans develop a positive relationship with event staff (fans are given Polaroid pictures of themselves), it reminds fans who have been videoed that their identities have been collected, and it provides the game management staff with visual evidence if a celebratory riot erupts. It was noted, also, that the warning effect of videotaping fans could be accomplished without even putting film in the cameras.
- At Ohio State, egregious acts of poor fan behavior can lead to the loss of season-ticket privileges for students and fans. Other deterrents that may be particularly effective in preventing fan violence within and outside the arena are academic suspension or expulsion and financial penalties that prevent registering for classes the following term unless paid.
- Rather than seating athletics department staff as a part of their complimentary admissions privileges to home contests in one section, some staff members at North Texas are seated in various areas throughout the student sections. While staff members are not technically on duty, their presence can help curb poor fan behavior. Similarly, institutions can use their student-affairs staff members to more formally monitor and address fan behavior during contests.

Few student-athletes, fans, coaches or administrators want their contests to be conducted in calm and quiet environments. A loud, supportive and boisterous crowd is desired by many and envied by others. Attentive and energized crowds can act as a 12th or sixth player in football or basketball, respectively. However, crowds can maintain those qualities while still being responsible. This can be achieved by communicating clear and unmixed messages about appropriate fan behavior, the development of consistently applied consequences for spectator aggression and better institutional and community management of alcohol abuse.

Some institutions need funds from alcohol sales and sponsorships to support their athletics programs. For other institutions, responsible alcohol consumption before athletics events in tailgating areas dates back several decades and has been woven into the institution's fabric of athletics tradition. Institutions must decide locally about whether to regulate or eliminate alcohol consumption. While alcohol is clearly recognized as a factor in spectator aggression, institution/community-specific decisions must be made about how to address alcohol consumption in a manner that respects an institution's fiscal needs and traditions, but also recognizes its impact on fan behavior.

Coach and Player Behavior



As noted by Professors Wann and Melnick, the poor sportsmanship of coaches and student-athletes can translate into the poor behavior of fans. Fans learn and mimic specific aggressive actions by observing the unpunished aggressive actions and the lack of sportsmanship among coaches and players.^{xxii} Therefore, coaches and student-athletes must acknowledge their responsibility in maintaining a positive game environment.

It should be noted, however, that poor behavior, particularly that of coaches, is often the result of disagreements with officiating decisions, which are inherently imperfect. Given the subjective nature of officiating, it is reasonable for two equally skilled officials to interpret the same situation differently. Although coaches and fans recognize this inherent imperfection, the visible outbursts by coaches can produce an uproar and inappropriate responses from spectators.

- As influential figures in intercollegiate athletics, head coaches can define the bounds of appropriate fan behavior with their own actions. Head coaches must work vigorously to ensure that they and their assistant coaches behave in a positive manner on the sidelines and refrain from verbally attacking officials and opposing players.
- Rules of sportsmanship (e.g., verbal abuse of officials, coaches entering field/court during play) have already been established. However, those rules are not always appropriately enforced. Conferences must support officials in their efforts to enforce those rules and must ensure that coaches and officials have a similar understanding of the rules and their accompanying penalties.
- National coaches associations should put issues related to coach and player behavior on the agenda for their annual

meetings or conventions.

- The NCAA, conferences and institutions can enlist the support of their corporate sponsors to produce public service announcements that celebrate examples of good sportsmanship among coaches and players.
- For incidents of misconduct, student-athletes and coaches participating in NCAA championships may be subject to various penalties, which may include public reprimand, disqualification from further championships participation or withholding of revenue distribution. While assessing penalties for misconduct is largely subjective, conferences and institutions should strive for consistent responses to misconduct throughout the season.
- Institutions must provide adequate security for officials and opposing student-athletes to safely exit the playing field or court. The postgame handshakes among players are an important aspect of the game that student-athletes should be allowed to engage in safely. If institutions decide to allow fans onto the field or court after games, the safety of student-athletes and coaches must be a major priority.
- The NCAA Football Rules Committee recently agreed that the sideline team area would be limited to squad members in full uniform and a maximum of 60 other individuals directly involved in the game. The individuals not in full uniform shall wear a credential marked specifically for the team area. Coaches, officials and institutional staff have a shared responsibility to ensure that this rule is adhered to during every football game.
- Student-athletes (individually or collectively through campus student-athlete advisory committees) should engage in discussions with their non-athlete peers on campus (e.g., fraternities, sororities, other student groups) throughout the academic year about sportsmanship and positive fan behavior.
- NCAA championship policies in basketball require student-athletes from opposing teams to greet each other during formal introductions before games. This policy should also be adopted by institutions and conferences for regular-season games.

The culture of contemporary college sports, it seems, has become one that tolerates poor behavior and abusive language from coaches and student-athletes. However, coaches and players cannot allow the intensity of competition to beget poor sportsmanship.

After games, many coaches make it a point to congratulate student-athletes from opposing teams. Such practices should become commonplace. A friendly smile between opposing coaches, student-athletes and officials shows cooperation and mutual respect of each other's task and sends a positive message to spectators.

Role and Responsibility of the Media

The media's contribution to poor fan behavior is arguable. The media does not create situations of spectator aggression; it reports them. Institutions, conferences and the NCAA have the primary responsibility to ensure that undesirable things do not occur, so that the media is not able to report them. However, the media has a secondary duty to recognize that the information it reports gets consumed by the general public, and then may be replicated by fans that interpret the events as appropriate because they were on television or in the newspaper. It has been theorized that the media has a tendency to amplify or exaggerate issues or events. However, by doing so, the issue or event is often misrepresented and then duplicated by viewers.^{xxiii} For example, fans who are inundated with visual references of college students who storm the field or court after exciting wins may, as a result, feel as though such spectator behavior represents how they should behave in victory. Fans notice that cameras gravitate toward outrageous behavior and may consciously or unconsciously engage in such behavior to get on television.^{xxiv}

The results of one study on the impact of commentary on audience perception showed that viewers' perceptions of the game play were dramatically influenced by the nature of the sportscasters' commentary. Based on the commentating, viewers were influenced to "see" fierce competition and roughness where it really did not exist.

Because the media's responsibility is to objectively report information, it is difficult for institutions to control how the media portrays them. Further, the media encompasses a multitude of different agencies, entities and individuals. It is ever-growing and becoming increasingly diverse in terms of its forms and outlets. Spectator aggression is being galvanized on independently operated chat rooms and Web sites. However, there are some things institutions and the media can do to positively affect fan behavior without compromising the integrity of the media.

- The media has an affirmative duty to report issues that affect the game. However, television producers should be asked to not show poor fan behavior that does not have an impact on the contest (e.g., tearing down the goal posts). This may be difficult to do during live coverage; however, highlights and news clips can be edited for appropriateness before being aired. Some television networks refrain from showing fans that run onto the field in during a contest. A similar philosophy should be adopted for postgame events.
- Commentators covering a particular event should have a detailed knowledge of the rules. While it is their responsibility to comment on an official's controversial decision, they should make sure they fully understand the rules and do not undermine the decisions made by officials or their authority. They must recognize that officiating is inherently imperfect and that commentators have a significant benefit in viewing a play multiple times from different angles and at various

speeds before drawing a conclusion. Commentators that are affiliated with a particular team (e.g., home team) must pay particular attention to these issues and should be so advised by their institutions.

- Some conferences invite officials to football and basketball media days before the season to discuss rules changes/issues. The supervisor of officials for the conference uses it as an opportunity to educate the media and commentators on the rules.
- Conferences may want to produce public service announcements featuring officials to humanize them and talk about their roles and responsibilities. If televised during contests, the media can help change fans' perceptions about officials.
- Institutions and conferences should work with those television networks that air their contests to (while giving due deference to economic realities) avoid showing commercials during their games that promote excessive alcohol consumption and partying associated with sports.

As noted earlier, the mainstream media has a responsibility to report all relevant aspects of intercollegiate athletics. Postgame enthusiasm (which gets out of control at times) is part of the story, and not to cover it would not do justice to the story. Further, editing highlights for appropriateness can be a subjective task leading to inconsistent practices among television producers. That being said, colleges and conferences must better communicate their ethics to the media. Additionally, the media must be made aware of what is being done by the NCAA, conferences and institutions to address issues of spectator aggression. A clear expression of our goals and policies is critical.



Conclusions and Next Steps



Sports pervade the American culture. For many Americans, sports constitute much of their conversation, reading material, leisure activities and discretionary spending.^{xxxv} Sporting events are one of the prime reasons for groups to gather in the United States.^{xxxvi} According to NCAA statistics, over 24 million fans attended Division I basketball games during the 2001-02 season, and nearly 40 million fans attended Division I college football games during the 2002 season. However, no human institution, regardless of its perceived successes and benefits, is immune from critical investigation.^{xxxvii} Therefore, it is essential that those involved in intercollegiate athletics understand the outbursts of violence that appear to have become increasingly associated with athletics events.

National policies^{xxxviii} can help ensure that institutions are operating under at least a minimal level of safety and can provide support to athletics departments attempting to institute policies that are not well received by fans and alumni. For example, the NCAA Football Rules Committee may want to mandate a specific type or design for goal posts that may ultimately dissuade students from trying to bring them down.

However, for many of the issues referenced in this report, national policy is inappropriate. Spectator aggression is a complex and multidimensional topic. Decisions must be specific to historical, social and economic contexts, so they should be made at the conference or local level. The issues, circumstances and sports (e.g., hockey or soccer rather than football or basketball) critical to one campus may be different than others. Accordingly, those policies and practices employed by one institution and its community may be different than another. **Within each conference, this report should be used to spark further discussion and investigation of fan misconduct. At the local level, before the**

academic year, key administrators (e.g., chief executive officer, coaches, game management staff, risk management staff, student-athletes, student leaders, local police and government representatives) should convene to review and discuss issues and policies related to sportsmanship and fan behavior in intercollegiate athletics.

Institutions must make careful decisions about whether to try to limit all access to the field or court after games, or to permit fans on the field/court after games but try to limit inappropriate and destructive behavior once fans get there. For some institutions, storming the field or court after a big game is something to be strictly prohibited, while for other institutions it is a positive celebratory tradition that should be preserved. On many campuses, students and student-athletes are closely linked. They live, eat, attend class and socialize with each other. Thus, on-field or on-court celebrations between students and student-athletes may only be a natural extension of their campus relationship. **The NCAA national office will attempt to assist institutions and conferences in making those decisions by acting as a type of clearinghouse of information on sportsmanship and fan behavior. A page on the NCAA Web site will be devoted to this effort by including a printable copy of this report and other resources and reference materials.**

Intercollegiate athletics does not function in a vacuum. Its qualities, redeeming and harmful, have been developed and shaped over time by the culture of greater society.^{xxxix} While those within intercollegiate athletics have only marginal control over social culture, individuals within intercollegiate athletics, higher education and other constituent groups have an affirmative duty to remain diligent in their efforts to ensure that athletics events are conducted in contexts that are safe and positive.



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David Braine - Athletics Director - Georgia Tech
Terry Don Phillips - Athletics Director - Clemson
Donn Ward - Faculty Athletics Representative - North Carolina State
Annabelle Vaughan - Assistant AD/Media Relations - North Carolina State
Chief Derek Poarch - Director of Public Safety - North Carolina

America East

Chris Monasch - Commissioner

Atlantic Sun

Steve Sturek - Associate Commissioner

Atlantic 10

Steve Hurlbut - Associate Commissioner

Big East

Nick Carparelli - Associate Commissioner
Jim Weaver - Athletics Director - Virginia Tech
David Scott - Assistant AD/Operations - Miami
Charles Merrihew - Associate VP/Student Affairs - Syracuse
Rex Hough - Assistant AD/Corporate Marketing - Pittsburgh
Robert Levelle - Supervisor of Campus Police - West Virginia

Big Sky

Ron Loghry - Chief of Staff

Big South

Kyle Kallander - Commissioner

Big Ten

Jim Delany - Commissioner
Karen Holbrook - President - Ohio State
Robert Noto - (CEO appointed) - General Counsel, Michigan State
Virginia (Ginny) Haas - (CEO appointed) - Director of Community Relations - Michigan State
Andy Geiger - Athletics Director - Ohio State
Bob Bowsby - Athletics Director - Iowa (National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics)
Ron Guenther - Athletics Director - Illinois
Kelly Landry - Senior Woman Administrator - Illinois
Dr. Thomas Robinson - VP/Student Services - Purdue
Vince Sweeny - Sr. Associate AD/External Relations - Wisconsin
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Big 12

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Joe Castiglione - Athletics Director - Oklahoma (National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics)
DeLoss Dodds - Athletics Director - Texas (Division I Football Issues Committee)
Chad Moller - Director of Media Relations - Missouri

Jim Vick - VP/Student Affairs - Texas
Patricia Ohlendorf - VP/Institutional Relations & Legal Affairs - Texas
Mike Rogers - Faculty Athletics Representative - Baylor
Renaldo Works - Football Student-Athlete - Oklahoma
Donnie Duncan - Associate Commissioner (Division I Football Rules Committee)

Big West

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Horizon League

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Chuck Yrigoyen - Associate Commissioner

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Rich Ensor - Commissioner
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Bob Burda - Assistant Commissioner, Communications
Walt Miller - Director/Student Union - New Mexico

Pac-10

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Marcia Saneholtz - Senior Woman Administrator - Washington State
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 Mary Wilfert - Education Outreach Program Coordinator
 Damani Leech - Associate Director of Baseball/Football

Affiliated Association Representatives

John Saunders - ABC/ESPN Representative
 Bob Eaton - Senior Vice-President, Managing Editor, ESPN
 Jeff Becker - The Beer Institute (Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management coalition)
 Ed Paquette - President, Council of Alumni Association Executives (Nebraska)

Larry Preo - Member, Council of Alumni Association Executives (Purdue)

Dick McKaig - National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) liaison to the NCAA

Bob Kanaby - Executive Director, National Federation of State High School Associations

George Killian - Executive Director, National Junior College Athletic Association

Karen Donoghue - Student Body President, Fairfield University

Mitchell Spearman - Student Body President, Presbyterian

John Leavens - Citizenship Through Sports Alliance

Grant Teaff - Executive Director, American Football Coaches Association

Dan Wann - Associate Professor, Psychology, Murray State University (Co-author of *Sports Fans: The psychological and social impact of spectators*)

Merrill Melnick - Professor, Physical education and Sport, State University of New York - Brockport (Co-author of *Sports Fans: The psychological and social impact of spectators*)

Steve Murray - Commissioner, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (Division II Football Issues Project Team)

Tom Brown - Commissioner, Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (Division II Management Council)

Robert Malekoff - Athletics Director, Wooster College (Division III Management Council)

Dutch Baughman - Division I-A Athletics Directors Association

Terry Driscoll - Athletics Director, William & Mary (Division I-AA Athletics Director Association)

Mike Cleary - National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics

Floyd Keith - Black Coaches Association

Khalil Johnson - Georgia World Congress Center and Georgia Dome

Dave Cawood - NCAA Football

Jim Host - NCAA Football

Marc Kidd - NCAA Football

Jeff Webb - Varsity Spirit Corporation

Dexter King - Executive Director, International Association of Assembly Managers

Frank Poe - Safety and Security Task Force, International Association of Assembly Managers

Milt Ahlerich - Vice President of Security, National Football League

Ben Nix - Consultant, National Football League

Sheldon Steinbach - American Council on Education

John Zacker - Association of Student Judicial Affairs

Dave Parry - National Coordinator of Football Officials

Hank Nichols - National Coordinator of Basketball Officials

Rochel Rittgers - Director of Athletic Training Services,
Augustana College (NCAA Committee on Competitive
Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports)

Michael Coleman - Mayor of Columbus, Ohio

Jim Haney - National Association of Basketball Coaches

Reggie Minton - National Association of Basketball
Coaches

Beth Bass - Women's Basketball Coaches Association

Steve Baker - National Association of Intercollegiate
Athletics

Rob Miller - National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

Dick Miranda - Chief, Tucson Police Department

Sydney Dunn - Executive Vice President, Alpha Epsilon Pi
Fraternity

Dave Westol - Fraternity Executives Association

Dave Smith - Dallas Morning News

Wendell Barnhouse - Fort-Worth Star Telegram

Welch Suggs - Chronicle of Higher Education

Tony Barnhart - Atlanta Journal Constitution



NCAA Policies on Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct

The NCAA Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct Committee has developed and adopted the following definitions for sportsmanship and ethical conduct:

- "Sportsmanship" is a set of behaviors to be exhibited by student-athletes, coaches, game officials, administrators and fans in athletics competition. These behaviors are based on values, including respect, civility, fairness, honesty and responsibility.
- "Ethical conduct" is a set of guiding principles with which each person follows the letter and spirit of the rules. Such conduct reflects a higher standard than law because it includes, among other principles, fundamental values that define sportsmanship.

NCAA Bylaw 22.2.4.4 – Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct. It is a principle of the Association that student-athletes, coaches and all others associated with intercollegiate athletics adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. Consistent with this principle, the institution shall:

- (a) Demonstrate that in the area of intercollegiate athletics, it is committed to these fundamental values of sportsmanship and ethical conduct;
- (b) Have established a set of written policies and procedures in this area;
- (c) Demonstrate that educational activities related to sportsmanship and ethical conduct exist for individuals and

groups associated with the intercollegiate athletics experience; and

- (d) Provide evidence that the effectiveness of activities in this area are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.

Measurable Standards for Bylaw 22.2.4.4 – Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct.

- The institution must have written policies and procedures related to sporting conduct and ethical conduct.
- The institution may use the conference sporting conduct policy.
- The policies and procedures must be communicated to the institution's student-athletes, coaches, support groups (e.g., alumni, cheerleaders, band) and all others associated with the intercollegiate athletics program (e.g., printed in the student-athlete handbook).
- The institution must provide sporting and ethical conduct education to its boosters, institutional staff members and student-athletes, coaches, support groups (e.g., alumni, cheerleaders, band) and all others associated with the intercollegiate athletics program.
- The institution must have a specific mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its sporting and ethical conduct education efforts. There must be evidence that the mechanism is engaged and functioning.

- i Coakley, J.J. (1994) *Sports in society: Issues and controversies* (6th ed.). St. Louis: Times Mirror/Mosby.
- ii Empirical research to support this assertion was not found, however, given the information presented in Figure 1, such was the general consensus among Summit participants.
- iii The best practices are not intended to serve as a standard of care and should not serve as a basis for civil liability.
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- v Steele, J.W., "Police, Michigan State U. recall riot; look ahead to peaceful celebration", The State News, March 28, 2001.
- vi "Purdue gets tough on rioters, crowd; Web site shows photos of melee, offers reward", South Bend Tribune, April 6, 2001, p. A1.
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- ix Brown, Gary, "Leaders seek behavior shift after sportsmanship summit", The NCAA News March 3, 2003, p. 1.
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- xiii Song, J. "Police break up postgame fight between players", The Associated Press, November 24, 2002.
- xiv Korte, Tim, "Washington 29, No. 3 Washington St. 26, 3OT", The Associated Press November 24, 2002.
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- xxii Eitzen, D.S. and Sage, G.H. (2003). *Sociology of North American Sport*, Seventh Edition. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- xxiii Cashmore, E. (2000). *Making sense of sports*, Third Edition. London, England: Routledge.
- xxiv Bryant, Zillmann, and Raney, "Violence and the enjoyment of media sports" *MediaSport*, 252-65.
- xxv Eitzen, D.S. and Sage, G.H. (2003). *Sociology of North American Sport*, Seventh Edition. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- xxvi Lewis, J.M. (1982). Fan violence: An American social problem. In M.Lewis (Ed.), *Research in social problems and public policy* (p 175-206). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, Inc.
- xxvii Cashmore, E. (2000). *Making sense of sports*, Third Edition. London, England: Routledge.
- xxviii NCAA principles on sportsmanship and ethical conduct can be viewed in the appendix of this report.
- xxix Coakley, J. and Dunning, E. (Eds.) (2000). *Handbook of Sports Studies*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

