SOCIAL MEDIA RECRUITING

NCAA rules have developed and changed over the past several years to keep up with evolving social media platforms. Rules regulating social media activities relating to prospects have been established through a combination of NCAA educational columns and interpretations.

Remember, social media is a form of electronic correspondence, so coaches must wait until prospects are eligible to receive such correspondence (see Recruiting 101 tipsheet here) before communicating through social media.

PERMISSIBLE USES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Friend or follow a prospect on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter
- Send a prospect a message through Facebook inbox
- Send a message to a prospect through the Facebook messenger app
- Send a prospect a direct message through Twitter or Instagram
- Tweet generic info about recruiting (e.g., visiting a school or town, attending a game)
- Send a picture to a prospect as an attachment to permissible electronic correspondence (e.g., text, email, Twitter direct message)
- Send a Snapchat video created for recruiting purposes to a prospect
- Retweet, like, or favorite posts on the prospect’s social media profile - See page 3 of the Summer 2016 Compliance newsletter here for more information
- Retweet or like a comment, story, or article about a prospect or prospect’s team

^Coaches and staff may friend or follow at any time but may not include a message in the request.

IMPERMISSIBLE USES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Post on a prospect’s Facebook wall*
- Use the Twitter @ feature with a prospect*
- Retweet, like, or favorite a comment, story, or article in reference to or posted by a recruiting or scouting service
- Create a message that endorses a prospect’s team, coach, or facility

* Once a prospect signs an NLI approved by the Compliance Office, these restrictions are lifted.
IN THE NEWS
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY AT CARBONDALE

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale was recently penalized by the Committee on Infractions for multiple violations over two years involving the women’s swimming and diving program. The diving coach was found to have conducted and arranged for discounted lessons for prospects, provided lessons to a non-prospect individual, and instructed a current student-athlete to give prospects lessons using university facilities. Further, the diving coach held organized practice sessions with the two nonqualifiers and provided expenses for the nonqualifiers to compete. The head coach was aware of the diving coach’s actions and activities and did not notify or consult with the compliance department.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. This is yet another example of violations (e.g., impermissible benefits and tryouts) that occurred because prospects moved to the institution’s locale before enrollment.

2. While student-athletes may be compensated for fee-for-lessons even with prospects, institutional facilities including non-SDA facilities cannot be used. For more information on student-athlete fee-for-lessons, please see the Compliance Office.

3. The head coach failed to monitor the diving coach’s actions, misunderstood some of the rules, and neglected to consult with the compliance office. Thus, the head coach failed to rebut the presumption that he was responsible for the violations in his program.

RARAs

A RARA is any required activity that has any relation to a student-athlete’s participation in athletics. For a non-exhaustive list of RARAs, please click here. Notable RARAs include community service events, student host duties, athletically related travel, team building activities, and media activities.

Definition of “required”

An athletically related activity is “required” when the activity is initiated, organized, or witnessed by anyone in SDA. Thus, the definition of voluntary under RARA legislation is a little different (and narrower) than under CARA legislation. Even if student-athletes want to participate in a community service event organized by SDA or attended by a staff member (e.g., Bill Kennedy and Fantasy Flight), they cannot participate in the event on an off day or if the event is not included on their sport’s RARA calendar.

When are RARAs prohibited?

Student-athletes are prohibited from participating in RARAs on all off days and during an 8-hour, overnight period between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am.

SPOT THE VIOLATION

The soccer team has defined its week as Sunday to Saturday. The team will practice Sunday and Monday. The required day off is Tuesday. The team will then travel to away-from-home competition Wednesday and compete Thursday and Friday. The team will travel back to campus Saturday. The coaching staff told the student-athletes they were invited to attend an institutionally-organized fundraising event on Tuesday evening at a donor’s home. The student-athletes voluntarily attended the event to mingle with donors and educate them about the soccer program.
NLI REMINDERS

All sports except football and basketball
NLI signing dates:
November 14, 2018 - August 1, 2019

Basketball NLI signing dates:
November 14-21

Football NLI signing dates:
December 19-21

Click the video below for instructions on how to request an NLI or scholarship offer.

LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS

Coaches in sports other than basketball (including volunteer coaches) may be involved in instructional or coaching activities in local sports clubs or organizations in the community. The local sports club paperwork is in Front Rush and must be completed each year for each club with which a coach is involved.

REQUIREMENTS

All participants in the club must reside within a 50-mile radius of ASU’s campus, unless the club is the closest opportunity for a prospect who lives outside the 50-mile radius to participate in the sport.

- The “closest opportunity” is not defined in the legislation but requires a factual determination. If you have a prospect who is seeking to use this exception, please contact the Compliance Office.
- A prospect who relocates to an area on a temporary basis (e.g., visiting relatives during the summer or winter break) is not a legal resident of that area, and thus does not meet the 50-mile rule.

SDA (including SDA booster groups) is not allowed to sponsor a local sports club that includes prospects. This means, among other things:

- SDA may not financially assist the club (e.g., provide a reduced rental rate).
- SDA coaches must use their own funds, independent of ASU, to establish and/or operate a club.
- SDA coaches recruiting on behalf of SDA may not work in their capacity with a local sports club during their recruiting trips.

NCAA legislation states that RARAs cannot occur on a required off day. Because the institutionally-organized donor event was a RARA listed on the team’s calendar for that week and because no other day that week could be used as a required off day, the soccer student-athletes’ attendance at the event was a violation.
Please note this table has dates that run until November 30. Many of the periods run past November 30.
Visit the NCAA Recruiting Calendars website for full recruiting calendars and NCAA sport-specific recruiting guides.