

## Chapter 2

# Intercollegiate Athletics

### History

Before I discuss specific differences and similarities between types of major and minor sports and their historical growth and significance within American schools—colleges and universities—and then disputes about commercializing them, the following is an overview that highlights how intercollegiate athletics emerged and evolved among these institutions in the United States (U.S.) during the 1800s, 1900s, and 2000s. To that end, this section of the chapter includes dates, events, and organizations that contributed in some way to individual and team sports played by male and female athletes enrolled primarily as undergraduate students in colleges and universities. These are exclusively Division I, II, and III schools who, in turn, are charter members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).<sup>1</sup>

### *1800s*

Between the 1840s and late 1890s, officials who were employees of schools in higher education including presidents, chancellors, deans, and other major administrators decided to become leaders and eventually provide limited financial support for students' physical activities other than intramural and recreational sports. For the most part, these activities involved rivalries among associations, clubs, and teams whose games, matches, and other events were athletically competitive, somewhat exciting, and fun to watch by spectators. As such, they became increasingly popular among alumni and schools' faculty, officials, and students. Furthermore, they were open to the public and that attracted the attention and support of various businesses in urban areas, newspaper editors and journalists, and people in local communities.

Throughout this era of sport, some officials in prominent schools of higher education began to approve and fund athletic budgets, and to organize conferences and leagues. Collectively, they wrote and enforced elementary policies, regulations, and rules to establish schedules of games and matches, and to control the conduct and availability of such intercollegiate events as baseball, crew, football, gymnastics, ice hockey, rugby, soccer, tennis, and track and field. As a result, during this period Williams College and Amherst College competed against each other in baseball, Harvard and Yale in crew and football, and Princeton and Rutgers in soccer.

Even so, sports on campuses experienced several problems that involved rules governing athletes, games, and conferences or leagues especially in college football. For example, numerous injuries, several deaths, and violations occurred among athletes from mass formations and gang tackling, from professional athletes who were not students but hired to play on some football teams of schools and receive money from coaches for their participation, and because of gamblers who bet on college games and frequently paid players to underperform and lose them. Although intercollegiate sports programs continued to expand across more schools during the 1850s through 1890s, there were unique and fundamental cultural, ethical, financial, and social challenges and issues to confront and resolve by decision makers who managed these institutions.

### ***1900s***

Despite problems particularly in football, intercollegiate athletics and games became more competitive, entertaining, lucrative, and otherwise popular and successful during this century. To protect athletes from dangerous life-threatening injuries, exploitation, and gambling, which frequently occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900s, representatives from a group of colleges and universities met in New York City and founded the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS) in 1906. Four years later, the IAAUS changed its name and became the NCAA.

After it formed discussion groups and rules committees in the 1910s, the NCAA then focused on, adopted, and enforced reforms to curb abuses of college athletes and to initiate new sports events. The organization, for example, established national championships in several team sports, implemented guidelines for schools when they recruited athletes and monitored their scholarships and financial aid, and approved legislation to control national television broadcast rights primarily of football and basketball games. In addition, the NCAA restructured itself into divisions and subdivisions, strengthened athletes' academic standards in schools, and encouraged, approved, and administered the growth of college women's athletics programs, services, and representation. In short, such NCAA executive directors as Walter Byers, Richard Schultz, and Cedric Dempsey led the NCAA in its mission to establish, govern, and sanction championships, finances, and rules for men and women team sports in intercollegiate athletics.

## ***2000s***

Between 2000 and 2012 inclusive, numerous athletic departments of schools experienced a variety of fiscal, management, and personnel problems that evolved from operating their sports programs. While the NCAA increased pressure on school officials to establish, promote, and maintain academic standards and the integrity of their male and female athletes, some major college and university sports programs became increasingly dependent on outside sources for assets, resources, money, and services. That is to finance and expand their facilities, programs and teams, earn revenue from exposure on television and in the media, become more competitive in games and tournaments, and perhaps compete for and win conference titles and national championships.

During this period, however, several American sports economists and prominent scholars and intellectuals in academia examined the decisions and roles of officials and groups affiliated with schools including their chancellors and presidents, alumni associations, boards of trustees, athletic directors, and coaches. As such, these researchers' analyzed topics related to higher education and sports, and then performed studies and wrote articles, books, and reports for publication. That literature, in part, dealt with the academic performances of student athletes, increasing commercialization of collegiate sports programs, compensation of head coaches, and effectiveness of the NCAA to govern the behavior, conduct, and strategies of its member institutions and the operations of their athletic programs.

Because of such research efforts, several major and minor reforms appeared in the media in order to expose, justify and support, or condemn, criticize, and denounce any relationships between commercialism and intercollegiate athletics. Besides reforms from current and former administrators and faculty of NCAA Division I, II, and III schools, there were various models, proposals, and recommendations to redistribute revenue from games and tournaments, and thereby improve operations of collegiate sports from three Knight Commissions and such organizations as the Collegiate Athletes Coalition. Although the types of reforms were different among these individuals and groups, each of them contributed concepts, ideas, and/or principles of how to maintain the academic integrity of male and female athletes while minimizing and regulating the influences of commercialism of sports programs in colleges and universities.

To sum, this section had briefly highlighted why and how intercollegiate athletics in America emerged and developed from the mid-to-late 1800s to early 2000s. During each period of this era, there were specific financial, ethical, and social problems that involved college and university chancellors, presidents and faculty, and also these schools' athletic directors, coaches, and their student athletes. Consequently, campaigns by public relations departments to obtain assets, gifts, and money from alumni, business organizations, communities, and sponsors were active in order for schools to finance and operate their teams especially in revenue-producing sports such as football and men's and women's basketball, and to subsidize the needs of nonrevenue sports such as cross country, field hockey, tennis, and volleyball.

In the next section of this chapter, I reveal, highlight, and compare differences and trends among NCAA sports that occurred in U.S. colleges and universities essentially from the 1970s to 2012. Then, readers will realize how certain groups view commercialism and ways they think it influences schools and the operations of their intercollegiate athletics programs.

## NCAA Sports

Since the late 1940s, the NCAA has surveyed its members (schools) and reported such information to the public as their participation in and sponsorship of various athletic programs. After contacting that organization, I collected data from its website and library staff that denote the number and type of sports sponsored and played by college and university teams in Division I, II, and III for selected academic years. Some sports have schedules that extend for different months during parts of two calendar years. These include, for example, such team sports as football, and men's and women's basketball and track and field. Other NCAA sports teams, however, play their seasons and postseasons during a single calendar year. These include men's and women's cross country in the fall, skiing in the winter, and tennis in the spring.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note that the NCAA did not establish and maintain a consistent, comparable, and uniform system of data collection and reports until the summer/fall of 1981. Indeed, that was the 1981 college/university sports season or these schools' 1981–1982 academic year. For that reason, I retrieved facts, statistics, and other information from the NCAA and prepared four tables of data specifically for academic years 1981–1982, 1990–1991, 2000–2001, and 2011–2012. The first three tables are in Appendix A while the latter table appears in this chapter.

From academic years 1949–1950 to 1969–1970, the total number of NCAA active, allied, associate, and affiliated members (i.e., school sponsorships) almost doubled to 720. In size, the largest group was active members followed by allied, affiliated, and associate members. Then in academic year 1970–1971, the NCAA combined men and women sports and ranked 24 of the total according to the total number of schools in the NCAA's University Division and College Division that had sponsored them. The three most and least common sports during that academic year were respectively basketball, baseball and golf, and rugby, squash and volleyball. Furthermore, football ranked seventh with 448 teams, soccer tenth with 346, and sailing twenty-first with 37. Financially the two divisions' total expenses exceeded total revenues by \$40 million, a deficit that required funds from sources outside schools' athletic departments such as alumni, donors, and corporations.

In Table A2.1 of the Appendix are the number of NCAA school sponsorships by division and sport for the 1981 sports season (academic year 1981–1982) and 1990 sports season (academic year 1990–1991), in Table A2.2 for the 2000 sports season (academic year 2000–2001), and in Table 2.1 of this chapter for the 2011 sports season (academic year 2011–2012). Based on information contained in

**Table 2.1** Number of NCAA school sponsorships, by division and sport, 2011 season

Sport	Division			Total
	I	II	III	
<i>Fall</i>				
Football	242	169	239	650
Men's cross country	310	262	389	961
Men's soccer	202	200	402	804
Men's water polo	22	7	14	43
Women's cross country	337	291	411	1039
Women's equestrian	18	5	13	36
Women's field hockey	79	27	160	266
Women's rugby	52	1	2	5
Women's soccer	317	254	427	998
Women's volleyball	323	300	424	1047
Subtotal	1852	1516	2481	5849
<i>Winter</i>				
Men's basketball	340	310	410	1060
Men's fencing	20	2	12	34
Men's gymnastics	16	0	1	17
Men's ice hockey	58	6	71	135
Men's indoor track/field	259	137	239	635
Men's rifle	3	0	1	4
Men's skiing	11	6	14	31
Men's swimming/diving	134	70	206	410
Rifle mixed	14	4	6	24
Women's basketball	338	312	434	1084
Women's bowling	37	18	10	65
Women's fencing	23	3	15	41
Women's gymnastics	62	6	15	83
Women's ice hockey	34	3	49	86
Women's indoor track	309	155	244	708
Women's rifle	8	1	2	11
Women's skiing	12	7	14	33
Women's swimming/diving	193	89	243	525
Wrestling	77	56	88	221
Subtotal	1948	1185	2074	5207
<i>Spring</i>				
Baseball	294	263	370	927
Men's golf	293	231	284	808
Men's lacrosse	61	45	189	295
Men's outdoor track/field	275	183	272	730
Men's tennis	259	177	329	765
Men's volleyball	23	16	57	96
Women's golf	253	169	177	599
Women's lacrosse	91	66	216	373
Women's outdoor track/field	316	200	282	798

(continued)

**Table 2.1** (continued)

Sport	Division			Total
	I	II	III	
Women's rowing	87	18	40	145
Women's sand volleyball	14	0	0	14
Women's softball	285	285	407	977
Women's tennis	317	239	376	932
Women's water polo	34	12	18	64
Subtotal	2602	1904	3017	7523
<i>No Specified Season</i>				
Men's bowling	1	1	0	2
Men's rowing	28	3	29	60
Subtotal	29	4	29	62
Total	6431	4609	7601	18641

*Note:* Football, wrestling, and baseball are men sports. Mixed sports consist of male and female student athletes. A slash (/) means the word, "and."

*Source:* "Composition and Sport Sponsorship of the NCAA in 2011–2012" at <http://www.ncaa.org> cited 15 February 2012

these three tables, what is important to know about intercollegiate athletics and relationships between NCAA divisions, team sports, and sponsoring schools?

First, the total number of NCAA team sports sponsored by schools across divisions and academic years increased from 11,615 in 1981–1982 to 18,641 in 2011–2012. In other words, there was a net increase of 7,026 sponsorships or by 60 %. For various reasons, the number of such fall sports as men's water polo and women's field hockey declined during this period as did men's and women's fencing and rifle in the winter. In addition, schools in Division I, II, and III eliminated a number of unpopular team sports between the 1981 and 2011 seasons. These included men's squash and women's badminton in the winter and men and women's crew and sailing in the spring. Alternatively, Title IX provided an opportunity for some schools to expand their athletic departments during the 1980s to 2000s by adding new sports such as women's equestrian and rugby in the fall, rifle mixed in the winter, and women's rowing and sand volleyball in the spring.

Second, from academic year 1981–1982 to 2011–2012, there were major and minor changes among the total number of school sponsorships between the three NCAA divisions. Due to differences in budgets of athletic departments and such factors as Title IX, popularity of various team sports, revenue from commercial sources, and student populations and their athletic fees, the total number of Division II and III school sponsorships each increased approximately 80 % while surprisingly, those in Division I expanded by 1,591 or only 33 %. From the early 1980s–2000s, perhaps the latter group of schools allocated proportionately more assets and resources from budgets and outside sources to financially support their highest revenue sports of football and men's basketball while schools competing in Division II and III simply subsidized their new and existing team sports more equitably.

Third, across NCAA divisions, the number of school sponsorships in periods increased from academic year 1981–1982 to 2011–2012. Specifically, these changes were 2,764 or 90 % in the fall, and 1,193 or 30 % in the winter, and 3,007 or 66 % in the spring. Thus, the number of sponsorships and their percentage increases varied greatly between fall, winter, and spring of academic years. This occurred, in part, because the NCAA approved such new athletic programs as women's equestrian, rugby and rowing, and because small- and mid-sized liberal arts schools—especially in Division III—decided to adopt and finance additional but nonrevenue men's and women's sports teams. Moreover, athletic directors received authority from college and university administrators to inflate their annual budgets, increase expenditures and perhaps debt balances, seek funds from such outside sources as businesses and other local organizations, and invest these amounts in existing and new team sports and athletic facilities.

Fourth, there were variations in the number of sponsors in sports seasons of NCAA Division I, II and III. From 1981 to 2011, for example, Division III added more sponsors in the fall than Divisions I and II. In contrast, during winter and spring, the largest increases in sponsorships of athletic programs were in Division I. Apparently, such fall sports as men's and women's cross country and football, and women's volleyball were particularly appealing activities to expand in Division III schools. Meanwhile, during winter's of 1981 and 2011, the most popular sports in Division I schools were men and women's basketball. But in the spring, they were men's tennis and golf in 1981 and women's tennis and outdoor track and field in 2011. Despite the increasing costs of operating college sports programs during the 1980s to early 2000s, a majority of NCAA Division I schools gradually shifted a portion of their athletics department resources from men to women sports in order to diversify their types of programs for students and spectators, and because of equity standards or goals contained in Title IX.

Fifth, across these three NCAA divisions in the fall, winter, and spring of academic year 1981–1982, the team sports with most college and university sponsors were men's and women's basketball and then men's tennis, cross country, and baseball. Then in academic year 2011–2012, four NCAA team sports each had more than 1,000 sponsors. Ranked numerically, these were women's and men's basketball and then women's volleyball and cross country. Except for men's basketball in the majority of Division I and a few Division II schools, the other sports do not earn enough revenue to operate at a surplus. The financing of intercollegiate athletics and their sports programs is the primary topic in [Chap. 3](#).

Sixth, for divisions and seasons stated in the previous paragraph, the eight NCAA sports with fewer than 20 sponsors each in academic year 1981–1982 were men's bowling and sailing, and women's badminton, bowling, rifle, ice hockey, squash, and sailing. However, 30 years later, team sports with the least number of sponsors were men's bowling, rifle and gymnastics, and women's rugby, rifle, and sand volleyball. Since they were not popular sports among college students or exciting activities to participate in by student athletes, interest in and number of men's and women's sailing and women's badminton each declined at schools and thus the NCAA eliminated them. The others, meanwhile, currently exist as sports

because they receive subsidies to operate from football and men's basketball programs, money from alumni, donors, student fees, and perhaps from companies in the private sector. In addition, they satisfy Title IX requirements.

Seventh, from academic year 1981–1982 to 2011–2012, the number of sponsorships across NCAA divisions in football increased by 153 or 30 % and in men's basketball by 319 or 43 %. Although these two sports generate much more revenue for schools than others do, they are expensive to operate because of expenses to locate, recruit, and sign high school athletes and to pay for their equipment, scholarships, services, travel, and tutors, and to afford the salaries and benefits of coaches and their staffs. Consequently, relatively few schools in each NCAA division assumed the responsibility and risk to launch new football and men's basketball programs during the three most recent decades.

Eighth, across three NCAA divisions in academic year 1981–1982, there were four each different men's and women's sports in the fall and eleven each in the winter, and eight men's and seven women's sports in the spring. In academic year 2011–2012, four different men's and six women's sports existed in the fall, and nine each men's, women's, and one mixed (men and women) in the winter. In comparison to them, during the spring, six men's and eight women's sports teams performed for their schools. In addition to those sports, men's bowling and rowing teams competed that academic year but did so in no specific months or seasons. Although various colleges and universities dropped some sports and added others from the 1981 to 2011 season, overall results at the end denote that the number of NCAA sports expanded by 2 or 25 % in the fall, but then decreased by 3 or 14 % in the winter and by 1 or 7 % in the spring. In short, the number of sports in these divisions only marginally changed during these 30 academic years.

To determine how attendances were different among college/university sports programs, I prepared Table's A2.3 and A2.4 in the Appendix. Although there were (and are) no specific requirements for sponsoring schools to count the number of spectators at each game or match and report these attendances by sport in academic years to the NCAA, some data were available from the NCAA for recent seasons.

According to information in Table A2.3, the average (arithmetic mean) attendances at football and men's basketball games were the highest among five sports in each division and nationally during the 2010 and/or 2011 season. Following these two sports were attendances at games played in women's basketball, volleyball, and field hockey. Based on median (midpoint) attendance data in Table A2.4, six school sports that attracted spectators included baseball, men's ice hockey and soccer, and women's ice hockey, soccer, and softball. Grouped, the data reflect how popular these few sports were among fans and between schools in NCAA divisions. Furthermore, the data in Table A2.4 indicate that attendances from season 2009–2010 changed marginally except in Division I baseball, Division II men and women's soccer, and Division III baseball, men's soccer, and women's ice hockey. Besides those activities, other team sports attracted audiences and were moderately popular at schools in different regions of the U.S. According to reports and my knowledge of them, these sports were gymnastics, swimming, track and field, and wrestling.

To conclude this section, I used data in three tables to discuss several changes in sponsorships among schools whose sports teams were charter members of NCAA Division I, II, and III during academic years 1981–1982, 1990–1991, 2000–2001, and 2011–2012. More specifically, Table 2.1 in this chapter and Table’s A2.1 and A2.2 in the Appendix provide facts and trends about seasons and the number and diversity of intercollegiate athletics programs. Furthermore, Table’s A2.3 and A2.4 reveal how the home attendances of several college team sports compared on average among divisions in recent seasons. In sum, these five tables depict the types of sports, number of sponsorships, and limited attendance data for a small sample of academic years among colleges and universities in NCAA Division I, II and III, and their growth since the early 1980s.

## Sports Commercialism

As defined in a revised edition of *The Random House College Dictionary*, commercialism is *the principles, practices, and spirit of commerce*. With respect to its relationship with intercollegiate athletics programs of schools in the U.S., commercialism originated in the early 1900s when a few colleges and universities charged spectators admission prices to attend their home games and at these events, these schools produced and sold programs that contained advertisements paid by local organizations such as businesses. Furthermore, Harvard College built a new \$300,000 football stadium in 1903 with a \$100,000 donation from the school’s 1879 class and gate receipts from future games.<sup>3</sup>

During the 1920s–1950s, commercialism continued to affect intercollegiate athletes financially when schools charged radio stations and television companies rights fees to broadcast their regular season games and any postseason playoffs and championships. Due to admission prices and these fees, the revenues of schools and their athletic departments increased and this money allowed them to allocate more assets and resources to finance their sports programs, renovate existing and/or build new sports facilities, and expand the number and educational opportunities of their student athletes.

After the 1950s, the private sector of the American economy gradually became more aware of and thus involved with intercollegiate athletics. When the publicly funded Montreal Olympics failed in 1976 and then 8 years later the Los Angeles Olympic Games succeeded partly because of financial support from U.S. corporations, many college and university officials decided to further expand and invest in their athletic programs. As such, these leaders sought and established different commercial relationships including alliances and partnerships with businesses and with some private but nonprofit organizations. Consequently, advances in technology, increasing financial needs, and cooperation from private and public groups primarily caused commercialism and elements of professionalism to influence collegiate athletics.

Particularly, since the mid-to-late 1980s, the chancellors, presidents, athletic directors, and other officials of schools in higher education have become more

interconnected with and dependent upon external sources to support their sports programs. The NCAA, meanwhile, negotiated with and signed lucrative contracts with U.S. cable and media companies and with other businesses to advertise, broadcast, market, and/or sell to the public its most popular events such as a baseball world series, football bowl games, and men's and women's basketball tournaments. This exposure, in fact, increased the popularity of collegiate sports programs among households in cities and towns across America. In addition, it created financial opportunities for some football and basketball conferences and their teams and for the coaches and athletes of elite colleges and universities to become celebrities and rich in the future.

For more than two decades, professors and sports experts have written articles in journals and other publications, and authored books, reports, and studies to identify reasons for the growth and impact of commercialization in amateur, college sports. In fact, these researchers analyzed and wrote about the economic and social benefits and any negative effects of commercialism that relate to the mission of schools and their officials, athletes, sports coaches, and regular students.<sup>4</sup>

From their research efforts, they recommended both broad and specific guidelines and even new NCAA policies and rules to balance and sustain the educational and recreational activities of schools. That is to provide excellence in teaching and research yet also to support athletics programs of schools with assets, resources, and money from outside sources, which in turn, give opportunities to succeed in life for athletic directors, coaches, and especially minority student athletes. The following sections discuss versions of commercialism and then reforms of them from different viewpoints based on readings in the literature.

### *Oppose Commercialism*

According to groups of former and current administrators and faculty of colleges and universities and to others associated with higher education—who have experiences with and/or studied commercialism—intercollegiate athletics have become part of the powerful business-entertainment-media-complex, which unfortunately, will try to control and manipulate markets of the sports industry. In their view, the consequences of more commercialism in amateur sports will, in part, undermine the privileges, rights, traditions, and values of schools, exploit student athletes regarding sports they play and their education and careers, and cause an over allocation of resources to athletic departments while underfunding budgets of other departments such as humanities, liberal arts, and social sciences.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, these opponents believe that commercialism gives incentives for head football and basketball coaches and their assistants at elite schools to ignore or violate NCAA rules. Thus, coaches cheat when they recruit and sign superstar high school players and award them scholarships, and earn excessive salaries and benefits, and spend too much time and effort coaching their athletes and neglecting to educate them.

Student athletes, meanwhile, are unaware or misinformed of what they contribute to the business of schools and their sports programs. Furthermore, they frequently have difficult dilemmas and stressful experiences that involve such things as struggling to score average or higher grades in basic or simple college courses, deciding whether to accept illegal payments of money and gifts from groups such as sports agents, alumni, boosters and coaches, and graduating without the necessary skills to qualify for well-paying jobs.

To make the educational environment better for student athletes, those who oppose commercialism and corporate involvement argue that the sports culture of colleges and universities must change and therefore adopt, implement, and enforce reforms to reflect these schools' charter and mission. That is to educate all students including athletes in order to prepare them for life's challenges as members of society.

College presidents enthusiastically but sometimes greedily made commercial deals with Adidas, Nike, and other companies to increase their schools' revenue streams. Although some of them rejected or simply ignored solutions proposed by the Knight Commission, Drake Group, and Coalition for Athletic Reform, they should commit to initiate and lead a reform movement, and furthermore, held accountable for its success or failure. As Tulane University President Scott Cowen stated in an article: "It is not too late for those of us in leadership positions to recapture the original philosophy of intercollegiate athletics and return it to its appropriate place as a supporter and participant in the educational goals, mission, and values of the university".<sup>6</sup>

While some college and university professors seem to be generally apathetic or uninvolved as a group, others are very skeptical about the sports business. In fact, several of them propose to remove its negative influence by minimizing commercialism in collegiate athletic programs. If they act as intellectual elitists, for example, professors should demand that schools expose, publish, and explain the academic progress of all their student athletes, replace one-year-renewable athletic scholarships with need-based financial aid, require athletes to fulfill the same academic requirements as other students, and restore freshman ineligibility on teams.

When they advocate for athletes rights, professors should recommend that college student-athletes collectively organize and form alliances with private or public sector labor unions, challenge the NCAA on antitrust issues, and negotiate worker's compensation rights for themselves. Thus far, professors have had little success in controlling, reducing, or minimizing the negative consequences of commercialism.

Besides reports from the American Association of University Professors in 1991 and 2002, the Knight Commission during the 1990s and in 2001 and 2004, and the Drake Group in 2003 and 2004, other major and minor groups connected with higher education have occasionally criticized commercializing college sports. As such, they proposed to limit any interference by businesses on the operations of intercollegiate athletics.

Between 1900 and 1990, such proposals included statements, reports, and/or resolutions from organizations such as the NCAA in 1922, 1946 and 1983, Carnegie Foundation in 1929, and American College Athletics in 1974. Although these groups did not succeed in solving historical problems caused by commercialism and implementing reforms of them, they agreed college athletics should not be in the entertainment business and that the sports media should emphasize and support the true mission of schools.

### ***Reform Commercialism***

Rather than simply condemn, deny, ignore, obstruct, reject, or otherwise oppose commercialism as a movement in schools of higher education, there are valid reasons for administrators, faculty, and other officials in U.S. colleges and universities to consider or even accept it as a way to reform intercollegiate athletics. Some proponents, for example, argue that commercial interests are too powerful and booster fanaticism too overwhelming for the majority of schools to overcome, especially those whose football and basketball teams perform in NCAA Division I and perhaps in a few sports programs of Division II. For sure, “commercialists” are optimistic, pragmatic, and rational in their views since they believe a combination of sports agents, alumni, athletic directors, boosters, donors, and high profile coaches but not presidents, chancellors, or trustees actually control the operations of collegiate sports programs.<sup>7</sup>

Former president of Indiana University and the NCAA Myles Brand felt it was shortsighted and unrealistic to radically downsize or eliminate college sports programs, or to separate an athletics department from a university by professionalizing it. Instead, he said that presidents, chancellors, and trustees should and could ethically maintain their school’s mission and academic standards while dealing with the problems and negative effects of commercialism. He said school officials have an obligation and opportunity to participate in the sports industry by pursuing and approving revenue-generating activities. That is, they may sell and earn profits from advertising, broadcast rights, and stadium luxury suites in an efficient, productive, and sound business-like manner especially at football and men’s basketball games.<sup>8</sup>

By emphasizing business practices, productivity, and revenue, Brand realized that athletic programs complement other departments in colleges and universities and thus commercialism can add value to these institutions. Furthermore, he believed sports increases the confidence and pride of administrators, faculty, and students in their school, subsidizes nonrevenue men and women athletic teams, provides opportunities for low-income minority student athletes to be admitted into schools and then graduate, and benefits the economy of local communities. Interestingly, Brand named his reform movement the “Academics First”.

As an approach but radical way to govern colleges and universities so that they accept and truly adjust to different types of commercialism, “academic capitalism”

is a model that regards departments of schools as revenue centers, students as customers, and relationships with alumni, donors, and corporations as necessary and crucial to nurture. In this model of intercollegiate sports, athletes have special talents and are different individuals because they contribute more than other students do to the image, prestige, success, and wealth of their schools. Consequently, they may receive an edge in the admission's process, offered plenty of academic support services, and provided with similar opportunities as other students to learn, graduate, and secure a job. In short, this version of not opposing commercialism maintains that college athletes, especially those who play football, men's basketball, and other revenue-producing sports are an integral and unique part of the student body.<sup>9</sup>

Because of tight budgets, scarce resources, and increasing academic costs, college and university officials must search for and discover nontraditional sources of revenue to finance, operate, and expand their athletic departments besides relying on funds from student's payments for tuition, room and board, and fees. To recruit and educate their student athletes, hire competitive coaches and compensate them, build new and/or renovate existing facilities, and employ top-notch faculty to teach and research, there are entrepreneurs and business organizations in the private sector that will supply assets, money, and services for schools' athletic programs. Despite commercialism's potential to abuse, corrupt, and/or fail, contributions from outside sources may result in college teams being more competitive to win their regular season games, conference titles, and national championships.

## Notes

1. For historical information about intercollegiate athletics and college/university sports programs, see such sources on the Internet as "College Athletics: History of Athletics in U.S. Colleges and Universities" at <http://www.answers.com> cited 14 March 2012; "College Athletics" at <http://www.encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com> cited 14 March 2012; "National Collegiate Athletic Association" at <http://www.encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com> cited 14 March 2012.
2. Besides articles, reports and studies, four books that discuss intercollegiate sports and the NCAA and its role as an organization are Charles T. Clotfelter, *Big-Time Sports in American Universities* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011); James J. Dunderstadt, *Intercollegiate Athletics and the American University: A University President's Perspective* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003); Brian L. Porto, *The Supreme Court and the NCAA: The Case For Less Commercialism and More Due Process in College Sports* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2012); Allen L. Sack and Ellen Staurowsky, *College Athletes For Hire: The Evolution and Legacy of the NCAA's Myth* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998).
3. See *The Random House College Dictionary: Revised Edition* (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 1975). A few readings specifically about commercialism or commercialization and college sports or intercollegiate athletics include James Delaney, "Commercialism in Intercollegiate Athletics," *Educational Record*, Vol. 78 (Winter 1997), 39–44; Edward Kormondy, "The Commercialization of College Sports," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vol. 55 (10 October 2008), A42; D. Lederman, "Is College Football Commercial?" *Journal of Sport Management*, Vol. 6 (September 1992), 241; Jack Roberts, "A Sane Island Surrounded," *Education Digest*,

- Vol. 73 (April 2008), 61–66; Libby Sander, “NCAA Takes Heat Over Commercialization of Athletes,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vol. 55 (7 November 2008): A18.
4. One group of researchers is sports economists. Some of their publications, for example, are John L. Fizel and Rodney Fort, eds., *Economics of College Sports: Studies in Sports Economics* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004); Randy R. Grant, John Leadley, and Zenon Zygmunt, *The Economics of Intercollegiate Sports* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, 2008); Michael Leeds and Peter Von Allmen, *The Economics of Sports, 4e* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2010); Andrew Zimbalist, *Unpaid Professionals: Commercialism and Conflict in Big-Time College Sports* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).
  5. A sample of these readings include E. Gordon Gee, “Greed and Avarice: The Crisis in Collegiate Athletics,” *USA Today* (November 1990), 24–25; Angela Lumpkin, “A Call to Action For Faculty Regarding Intercollegiate Athletics,” *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, Vol. 88 (Winter/Spring 2008), 21–24; Brad Wolverton, “College Presidents Call For Increased Disclosure of Athletics Spending,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vol. 53 (10 November 2006), 37–38.
  6. Scott Cowen, “Reading, Writing and Reform,” *Sporting News* (11 August 2003), 8–9. Cowen’s three A’s of reform are academics, access, and accountability.
  7. Read, for example, Robert Atwell’s “The Only Way to Reform College Sports is to Embrace Commercialism,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vol. 47 (13 July 2001), B20; William Kirwan’s “College Sports Add Value to Entire Institution,” *USA Today* (13 November 2009), 11; Gilbert Gaul’s “The Department of Lucrative Athletics,” *New York Times* (28 November 2009), 19.
  8. Myles Brand, “Academics First: Reforming Intercollegiate Athletics,” *Vital Speeches of the Day*, Vol. 67 (April 2001), 367–371.
  9. For his approach and model, see Allen Sack, “Clashing Models of Commercial Sport in Higher Education: Implications For Reform and Scholarly Research,” *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, Vol. 2 (2009), 76–92.