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Agent: I gave cash to student athletes

By From Sun-Times Wires March 12, 1987 Publication: Chicago Sun-Times Page: 112

Word Count: 278

ATLANTA A New York-based agent says he gave cash to college athletes in an effort to sign them as clients and the NCAA has begun an investigation that could result in some athletes losing their eligibility and some teams forfeiting games or championships, according to a published report. The agent, **Norby Walters**, also has come under the scrutiny of the National Football League Players Association, which says two college seniors eligible for the April 28 draft called the union last week to report that **Walters** had threatened "to break their legs" for firing him.

Walters denies this charge, but he does not deny making cash payments to college football and basketball players before their eligibility has expired - a violation of NCAA rules.

"Part of being a businessman is making investments," he said in a copyright story in today's editions of The Atlanta Constitution. "If I were going to invest \$500,000 in a McDonald's franchise in downtown Atlanta, would anybody question my investment?"

The NCAA permits athletes to consult an agent but forbids them from entering an agreement or accepting cash or discussing monetary arrangements before their eligibility has expired.

Players found to have violated rules can be declared ineligible by the NCAA, and their teams can be penalized at the discretion of the individual conference for games in which the player

participated. In sports other than football, the NCAA can strip teams of championships and of revenue received from those tournaments.

Among the players **Walters** says he has given money during their college playing career is Auburn running back Brent Fullwood, who completed his eligibility last fall.

Auburn coach Pat Dye said he has launched his own investigation into Fullwood's dealings with **Walters.**

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