

← Back

Colleges charge on in battle vs. agents

By Chicago Sun-Times Wires August 28, 1988 Publication: Chicago Sun-Times Page: 84 Word Count: 200

Pitt athletic director Ed Bozik had a visual aid this week when he gave his football squad its start-of-the-season lecture on resisting the enticements of sports agents. The newspaper headline he held up read: "Agent Indicted, Local Pitt Player Involved."

"I told them, 'Some have heard about it before. Now let me show you what can happen to you,' " he said.

The headline referred to last week's indictment in Chicago of New York-based agents **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom** on federal charges of **racketeering**, **mail fraud**, **wire fraud** and **extortion** in connection with their dealings with college players.

Forty-three college athletes who signed with **Walters** and **Bloom** avoided prosecution by signing pretrial agreements to perform community service and to reimburse portions of their scholarships.

The indictments, say the directors and coaches, are important lessons for college athletes who face the temptations of agents with few fears of being punished.

"For years I've heard the agents would offer cash and tell the players, 'Nobody's going to find out. This has been going on for years and nobody's been caught,' " said Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz. "These indictments send a message to the athletes that they face prosecution and embarrassment."

Chicago Sun-Times

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Page: 84

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