

COLLEGES

COLLEGES; Agreement Reached On Agents' Forfeiture



By Steve Fiffer, Special To the New York Times
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Attorneys for **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom** agreed with prosecutors today on profits that would be forfeited to the Government by the New York-based agents, who were convicted on **racketeering** charges Thursday.

Walters, 58 years old, and **Bloom**, 29, were convicted of **defrauding** two universities, Michigan and Purdue, by using cash to persuade college athletes to sign improper representation contracts. They were also found guilty of threatening to harm clients at other schools if they tried to renege.

The amounts of the settlement were not disclosed, but were reportedly \$250,000 for **Walters** and \$170,000 for **Bloom**. Under Federal **racketeering** law, the Government can recover any profits of an illegal scheme. Jurors Hope to Send Message

After nearly five weeks of testimony in United States District Court, an eight-woman, four-man jury deliberated for nearly 40 hours over six days before returning the verdict. Today, after the settlement, jurors said they hoped their verdict would send a message to other agents, universities and student-athletes.

Pointing to evidence of universities that kept athletes eligible despite poor academic records and even felony convictions, and student-athletes who signed contracts with the agents while still eligible, the jury forewoman, Marjorie Benson, said, "We felt there were no innocent bystanders here."

Walters and **Bloom** were found guilty of one count of **racketeering**, one count of conspiracy to commit **racketeering**, one count of conspiracy to commit mail **fraud**, wire **fraud** and **extortionate** acts,

and two counts of mail fraud. Their lawyers said they would appeal.

The mail fraud involved defrauding Michigan and Purdue of scholarship money paid to athletes who had been rendered ineligible by signing contracts with the agents. The agents were acquitted of two other mail-fraud counts, involving the University of Iowa and Michigan State University.

During the trial, defense attorneys attempted to demonstrate that the universities had not been defrauded. Dan Webb, Bloom's attorney, argued that the supposed amateur status of college athletics was "a sham," and that athletes were, in effect, paid by schools to play football first and take courses only as an afterthought. The jurors indicated today that with respect to the charges related to Iowa and Michigan State they agreed with Webb. 'Look at the Classes'

Referring to the former Iowa football stars Ronnie Harmon and Devon Mitchell, who testified at the trial, another juror, Wooly Woodson, said: "Look at the classes these players were taking. Watercolors, soccer, bowling. None of them were even close to making progress towards a degree. One of them even mentioned he was in school to play football and didn't think of getting an education."

Neither Woodson nor other jurors put the blame entirely on the athletes. Woodson said he found Fred Mims, an assistant Iowa athletic director who testified, particularly unbelievable. Mims tried to explain how Harmon and Mitchell were making satisfactory progress toward their degrees as required by National Collegiate Athletic Association regulations.

The jurors said they had no illusion that Walters and Bloom were the first or only agents to engage in such illegal conduct. Linda Dishroon, another juror, said: "It's just like if there are 30 people speeding and only 2 get pulled over. You have to start somewhere." She added that she hoped agents would get the message that "it is bad business" to sign students before their eligibility expires.

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