

Report on the Use of American Indian Mascots in Intercollegiate Athletics

indians braves
STOP
redskins warriors
Native People are not Mascots

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MEMORANDUM

December 18, 2002

TO: NCAA Division I Championships/Competition Cabinet NCAA Divisions II and III Championships Committee.

FROM: Eugene Marshall Jr., chair NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee.

SUBJECT: Report on the Use of American Indian Mascots in Intercollegiate Athletics.

In April 2001, the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee (MOIC) was charged by the Executive Committee to review the issue of eliminating the use of American Indian mascots, nicknames and logos by member institutions. Upon completing a comprehensive review, the MOIC presented its final report to the Executive Committee in November 2002. The report includes specific recommendations in three areas that the committee believes should reduce offensive uses of American Indian mascots, nicknames, logos and behaviors in intercollegiate athletics.

The Executive Committee accepted the MOIC's report (including the recommendations) and referred it to the governance structure for comment. The Executive Committee will review comments during its April 2003 meeting. The Executive Committee also instructed the MOIC to distribute the report to NCAA member institutions that currently use American Indian mascots, nicknames and logos and request they provide input directly to the MOIC. These comments will also be forwarded to the Executive Committee for review during its April meeting.

The purpose of this correspondence is to seek your comments regarding the recommendations included in the attached report. Specifically, the MOIC and the Executive Committee request that the championship governance bodies comment on each recommendation individually, paying particular attention to the recommendations that relate to the hosting of NCAA championships and structure of NCAA publications and announcements. In its most recent report to the Division II management council, the MOIC indicated that it would request that the Executive committee apply any of the approved recommendations to existing and future contracts. Therefore, the MOIC would appreciate

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your thoughts on applying any of the standards that are ultimately approved by the Executive Committee to pre-existing contracts.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rochelle M. Collins, national office staff liaison to the MOIC, at 317/917-6322.

EM/KAG:dsk

NCAA Minority Opportunities And Interests Committee Report on the use of American Indian Mascots in Intercollegiate Athletics to the NCAA Executive Committee Subcommittee on Gender and Diversity Issues

October 2002

Introduction

During its April 2001 meeting, the NCAA Executive Committee reviewed correspondence regarding the use of American Indian mascots, nicknames, and logos by NCAA member institutions. While the issue of American Indian mascots and images in college athletics has been the subject of discussion for the past five years, three recent events prompted the Executive Committee's discussion:

1. The Executive Committee's detailed review of issues related to the Confederate Battle Flag and its resulting criteria for evaluating NCAA predetermined championship sites. The criteria include, in part "the ability of a site to promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person". (Appendix A)
2. St. Cloud State University President Roy Saigo's request to the Executive Committee to consider a resolution stating the NCAA does not condone the use of Native American logos and nicknames. (Appendix B)
3. The United States Commission on Civil Rights' Statement on the use of Native American images and nicknames as sports symbols, stating in part, "Schools should not use their influence to perpetuate misrepresentations of any culture or people. Stereotypes of American Indians teach all students that stereotyping of minority groups is acceptable, a dangerous lesson in a diverse society." (Appendix C)

The Executive Committee referred the review of the issue of eliminating the use of American Indian mascots, nicknames and logos by members of the NCAA to the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee (MOIC) and the Executive Committee Subcommittee on Gender and Diversity Issues.

The MOIC reviewed and discussed this issue during its July 2001 meeting. In preparation for its discussion, the committee reviewed a variety of materials, including the NCAA Constitution, recent language issued by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and varied articles and publications. In addition, Dr. Cornel Pewewardy, Department of Teaching and Leadership, School of Education, University of Kansas, provided a historical overview of American Indian mascot issues, including the use of American Indian culture as sports entertainment.

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Upon completion of its initial review, the committee agreed that the use of American Indian mascots in intercollegiate athletics must be a concern to the NCAA. Specifically, the committee noted:

1. NCAA Constitution, Article 2.2.2 – Cultural Diversity and Gender Equity:

It is the responsibility of each member institution to establish and maintain an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity among its student-athletes and intercollegiate athletics department staff.

2. NCAA Constitution, Article 2.4 – The Principle of Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct:

For intercollegiate athletics to promote the character development of participants, to enhance the integrity of higher education and to promote civility in society, student-athletes, coaches, and all others associated with these athletics programs and events should adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. These values should be manifest not only in athletics participation but also in the broad spectrum of activities affecting the athletics program.

3. NCAA Constitution, Article 2.6 – The Principle of Nondiscrimination:

The Association shall promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. It is the policy of the Association to refrain from discrimination with respect to its governance policies, educational programs, activities and employment practices.

Based on its initial review, the MOIC noted that the issues related to the use of American Indian mascots are both historical and complex.

MOIC Strategic Plan

Due to the complexity of the issues surrounding the use of American Indian mascots in intercollegiate athletics, the MOIC developed a plan to further research the issues in order to provide the NCAA Executive Committee with informed recommendations. The committee identified the following areas to be addressed in its review:

Historical background of the issue

2. Scope of the study. Is this issue solely related to mascots? Or, are there other areas that should be addressed, including logos, insignias, fight songs, names, and behaviors?
3. American Indian organizations, agencies, and constituent groups that need to be involved in the discussion and resolution of the issue.
4. Issues and concerns from administrators, spectators, and alumni at institutions that currently have American Indian mascots or names.
5. Information from administrators, spectators, and alumni at institutions that formerly had American Indian mascots or names.

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6. Involvement of the NCAA committee structure. How does the MOIC engage the governance structure (e.g. the Committee on Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct, Student-Athlete Advisory Committee) in the discussion of this issue?

7. Recommendations at the national, conference, and institutional levels.

The MOIC appointed a subcommittee to oversee its work. This subcommittee divided its work into two phases: The research phase and the recommendations phase. The subcommittee also established a timetable to serve as a guide for the subcommittee to complete its work. The timetable provided adequate opportunity to gather necessary information on issues and develop specific recommendations. The subcommittee's timetable included discussion by the full committee during its September 24-26, 2001, and January 28-29, June 19-21, and September 23-25, 2002 meetings.

Research Method

In considering the research phase of the study, the MOIC determined that it would gather data, opinions, and thoughts from a variety of sources. The MOIC gathered specific data on the number of NCAA member institutions that use Native American mascots. The committee read and summarized many articles and pieces of research regarding this topic. Also, the committee solicited comments and testimonials from Indian tribal groups and members, student-athletes, the NCAA membership, the general public, and various entities within the NCAA governance structure.

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