

NCAA Racks Up More Circumstantial Evidence Against Johnny Manziel

by Anthony Caruso on August 16, 2013

Texas A&M quarterback Johnny Manziel may be facing more heat from the NCAA for potentially profiting from autograph signings, as more circumstantial evidence is uncovered.

The NCAA prohibits college players from receiving compensation for autographs or in any other way profiting during eligibility periods. Last week, ESPN reported that Manziel participated in two additional autograph sessions in January, culminating in an estimated 4,400 more autographs he may have signed in exchange for cash. The allegations, coupled with reported five-figure paydays in recent months, may give the NCAA more circumstantial evidence with which to prove Manziel violated their policies and is worthy of suspension.

Not all are on board with the NCAA's stance on prohibiting compensation, and this ongoing issue continues to draw a great deal of discourse from sports analysts and athletes alike. In what one Boston Globe columnist called "indentured servitude," many industry professionals argue that college athletes are given housing, food, and higher education in exchange for lining the NCAA's pockets with billions of dollars in revenue. All the while, they are prohibited from advancing financially the way that both minor league and professional athletes can by losing authority over their likenesses and ability to profit from penning their names.

The NCAA still has several supporters, however, who agree that college athletic scholarships afford players not only a free higher educational experience, but elite training that may result in lucrative talent agreements with professional leagues in the future. Therefore, the terms "amateur" and "student athletes" are still largely applied to NCAA sports as a basis for not compensating players.

Several pieces of litigation related to whether college athletes should receive money for their efforts, grueling training schedules and participation in highly-televised and revenue-producing games are currently ongoing. The outcomes of these cases may one day set precedents that overhaul current NCAA rules and regulations, and give players more authority over the financial and legal ramifications of using their names and likenesses.