

Will D.J. Fluker, Luther Davis Controversy Have Wider Implications for Sports Agent Laws in Certain States?

by Anthony Caruso on September 18, 2013

In the aftermath of an exclusive Yahoo! Sports report, which implicates five Southeastern Conference football stars in NCAA rule violations, the details of the case may have a broader impact on sports agent laws.

The Yahoo investigation suggests that five players violated NCAA rules by receiving extra benefits prior to completing their collegiate careers. These players accused of receiving the illegal benefits are Alabama offensive tackle D.J. Fluker, Tennessee quarterback Tyler Bray, Tennessee defensive end Maurice Couch, Mississippi State defensive tackle Fletcher Cox and Mississippi State receiver Chad Bumphis. According to information retrieved by texts and emails, former Alabama football player Luther Davis is accused of providing these benefits to the players as a middleman for sports agents. The report was able to authenticate Western Union fund transfers, banking statements, flight receipts, and other financial materials.

In certain states the transactions may carry wide implications on state sports agents laws. For instance, the Yahoo report confirmed multiple transactions that connect Alabama football player D.J. Fluker to Davis, agents, and financial advisers. If these transactions are verified, all of the aforementioned parties are guilty of the Alabama's sports agent laws, which require that all agents be licensed by the Alabama Athlete Agents Commission.

Those who operate in an unlicensed capacity are committing a Class C felony, which is punishable by one to 10 years in prison and a fine up to \$5,000, All Alabama notes. In addition, initiating contact with a college athlete without being registered is a class A misdemeanor, meaning the perpetrators may face up to one year in prison and a fine up to \$2,000.

In addition to the legal complications the report - if verified - could cause in Alabama, it could also raise additional problems for Tennessee and Mississippi State, which are on probation until the summer of 2015 for previous rules violations relating to their respective football programs.