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Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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Another Lawsuit Filed Against the NCAA for Head Injuries Suffered By Former Football Players

By Admin - CO on December 1st, 2011



Did the NCAA fail to protect student-athletes from concussions and their repercussions? According to a lawsuit filed in September 2011 in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois by two former college football athletes, it did. The [class action lawsuit](#) claims that the NCAA turned a blind eye to coaches who instructed their players to use their heads for tackling, failed to establish a system for screening [head injuries](#), and failed to fulfill its financial obligations to injured student-athletes who require ongoing medical treatment.

The lawsuit points to a growing body of evidence linking concussions to depression, dementia and early-onset Alzheimer's, among other medical problems, and accuses the NCAA of failing to enforce safety measures that it enacted in the 1970s to protect its student-athletes.

The plaintiffs seek to force the NCAA to institute a medical monitoring program to track the long-term effects of head injuries in former college football players and to pay for any medical care required as a result of the head injury.

According to a [2003 study](#), college football players require a full seven days to return to pre-concussion health, and that athletes with a history of concussions are more likely to sustain future concussions. Despite this information, the current NCAA system allows athletes to return to the field the day after sustaining a concussion.

The name plaintiffs in the class action litigation are former University of Central Arkansas wide receiver Derek K. Owens and former Northwestern University offensive lineman Alex Rucks, both of whom claim that have suffered irreparable brain trauma as a result of concussions sustained during their college football careers.

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This is not the first lawsuit of its kind that has been filed against the NCAA. Earlier in September, former Eastern Illinois player Adrian Arrington filed a lawsuit alleging that the NCAA “failed its student-athletes — choosing instead to sacrifice them on an altar of money and profits” by neglecting to adopt stricter standards for promoting safe play and tackling techniques. The NCAA calls the most recent lawsuit “merely a copycat” of the Arrington lawsuit and says that it “contains gross misstatements.”

According to the [Brain Injury Association of America](#), an estimated 3.8 million sports- and recreation-related concussions occur in the United States each year. Amidst growing concerns about [head injuries](#) to young athletes, the NCAA now requires member schools to enact concussion-management plans whereby schools must inform students about the signs and symptoms of concussions, incorporate a process for removing students who show signs of a concussion from play, and prohibit students with concussions from returning to play the same day they are injured. Some question whether such practices are enough to prevent head trauma, however.

As we [previously reported](#), earlier this year 75 ex-football players filed suit against the National Football League (NFL) alleging that the NFL knew of the harmful effects of multiple concussions as early as the 1920s but kept that information from players until 2010.

Concussions and other [traumatic brain injuries](#) that can cause serious injuries if they go ignored for too long. The **Chicago personal injury lawsuits** at Ankin Law Offices, LLC are committed to raising public awareness of the dangers and long-term effects associated with multiple concussions and other brain injuries.

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