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Legalized Sports Betting on College Games: Concerns and Harm Mitigation Measures

Problem Gambling Solutions Inc. – Jeff Marotta, Ph. D., ICGC-II & Paige Reohr, M.S., March, 2022

- Dr. Marotta is recipient of the 2023 National Council on Problem Gambling Don Hulen Award for Advocacy
- Longstanding service as an officer to Oregon Council on Problem Gambling board, leading researcher and consultant to state agencies, operators, non-profits
- Founder of lived experience advocacy non-profit, Voices of Problem Gambling Recovery

White Paper Summary:

Impacts of Oregon Legalizing NCAA Gambling -

- Increased risk of developing a gambling problem among young people
 - particularly males
 - particularly individuals who hold marginalized identities
- Student athletes:
 - increased risk for stress, NCAA rule violations, and related problems
- Increased risk of harm to college sport integrity

“College athletes are disproportionately the perpetrators of American match-fixing schemes and using Hill’s qualitative indicator for predicting Match-Corruption this is expected to continue.

(Hill et al., 2020)

Trends that may indicate why college athletes appear more susceptible:

1. College athletes are unpaid, frequently in need of money, and therefore susceptible to economic inducements to alter their performance.
2. College athletes are like other students and must attend classes and interact with non-athletes frequently. This may make athletes more vulnerable to match fixers' advances. In contrast to many professional athletes, who are often isolated from the general public.

Trends that may indicate why college athletes appear more susceptible (con't):

3. As most students who play college sports will never play professionally, a match-fixer may be able to induce a college athlete to fix a game as the gains may be viewed as greater than the risk.
4. A number of athletes who historically engaged in point-shaving schemes were indebted to bookmakers themselves, and were incentivized to not come forward for fear that they may lose the ability to ever play their sport again and risk losing their scholarships.

“I’ll give you something that I’ll put 100% odds on. If gambling on colleges is in 20 or 30 states, there is probably a 100% chance of a point shaving scandal at some school.”

*Tom McMillen
President and CEO
NCAA Division I Athletic Directors Association*

*“Revenues from state sponsored gambling are disproportionately borne by marginalized and disadvantaged population sectors, furthering social and health disparities within our communities. **Any legislation that allows legalized sports betting on college games should include measures to mitigate unwanted consequences.**”*

(Marotta/Reohr, 2022)