

# Book says college sports do little for higher education

## 'It's not supposed to be commercial entertainment' says writer

(CPS) Big-time college sports do little to educate students and actually siphon money away from academics, says a damning new book by an Indiana University professor.

In "Sports Inc., The Athletic Department vs. the University," author Murray Sperber issues a long litany of charges against college sports. Among them are:

- The big revenue-producing sports -- football and men's basketball -- do not earn enough to support the other athletic programs.

- Most athletic programs operate in the red, and steal money from classroom and other student activities.

- It's almost impossible for athletes, sometimes practicing and playing 40 hours a week, to find time to be students.

- The powerful National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), in name a group that represents its member schools, in practice protects and serves the coaches and athletic directors who serve on its committees.

Sperber's book, which generally has gotten favorable critical notice while drawing angry reaction from campus sports officials, goes on to document how athletic department employees often are among the highest paid people on a campus.

They are also overpaid, Sperber demonstrates, in relation to the amount of revenue they produce.

The average income for at least 150 NCAA Division

I men's basketball coaches and 100 Division I-A football coaches tops \$100,000.

At the same time, Sperber wrote, only 10-to-20 athletic programs make a profit, and another 20 to 30 break even.

But schools, either unwilling or unable to recognize that their sports programs lose money for them, regularly spend millions to expand their stadiums' seating capacities and build lavish training facilities, all in hopes of generating still more revenue, Sperber writes.

Filling those seats requires a winning team, which also costs money and inspires colleges to admit people who otherwise might never qualify.

### Same Service As For Cellists

Athletes recruited to play at NCAA Division I-A schools in 1988 were four times more likely to be admitted as "exceptions" to normal campus admissions standards than other students, a NCAA study released Sept. 26 found.

"Money that could go to better-qualified students ends up going to jocks," Sperber told College Press Service.

Such statements, needless to say, have infuriated campus sports officials.

"There isn't much on a college campus that operates in the black, and I don't think it should," retorted Donna Lopiano, assistant athletic director at the University of Texas-Austin.

A sports program is

successful, she says, "as long as it's serving the student-athlete in the same way the university serves the cellist, the dance major, the drama major or anyone else with a special talent."

Added Brad Rothermel, who in August finished a 10-year stint as athletic director at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, "the mission of intercollegiate athletics is to educate students who happen to be student-athletes."

**"They're not making a contribution to higher education. It's payment for a product (to fill tv time), for college sports to be played at the highest possible level."**

**- Murray Sperber  
Indiana professor**

At UNLV, whose powerhouse basketball team members in the past have been accused of being academically disinterested, athletes are as successful in the classroom as their less athletically gifted classmates, Rothermel maintained.

"There's no doubt a lot of these kids aren't getting anything that you and I would call 'higher education,'" charged Clifford Adelman of the U.S. Department

of Education in releasing a September study of what happens to college athletes later in life.

"I do think there's educational exploitation, and a lot of broken promises," he added.

Sperber maintains the cost of supporting big-time college sports also hurts other students.

### Good Dorms, Good Food

"Where it really affects students is in debt servicing," the lanky former semi-professional basketball player said in an interview.

Students often end up paying for sports programs under the guise of "activity fees," and in athletic scholarships taken from general scholarship funds.

And instead of encouraging school spirit, Sperber says college sports foster little more than cynicism.

"It's the jock dorms. You're paying lots of money for this shitty place, and their dorms are really palatial.

Every school has special dining rooms for athletes, and the food is fantastic, and you're eating this lousy food ..."

Sperber blames the tremendous injection of money from TV advertisers for the current state of college sports.

"They're not making a contribution to higher education. It's payment for a product (to fill tv time), for college sports to be

played at the highest possible level."

Sperber has few hopes the current reform movement,

spurred by scandals of fans paying players, drug and rape arrests, low graduation rates and charges of grade fixing, will return college sports to respectability.

Although the NCAA has adopted new reform rules in 1989 and 1990, reform-minded college presidents stand little chance of wresting control from the athletic directors who, Sperber claims, really run athletic departments.

The NCAA itself, which represents 800-plus schools, disagrees.

"The president of each institution can run it the way he or she wants," contended NCAA spokesman Jim Marchiony.

In lieu of successful reforms, Sperber instead sees the 40 or 50 biggest campus sports programs, engaged with fat TV contracts and sustained by boosters, evolving into "jock factories."

The rest of the nation's schools, unable to compete, will have to let their programs be "returned to the students," Sperber predicted.

He would welcome it. "The point of higher education is higher education. It's not supposed to be commercial entertainment."

# Booters' tough times continue

## Six game losing streak drops team to 1-6-1

by Brad Kane  
The Collegian

The tough times continued last week for the soccer team of Coach Herb Lauffer.

A pair of losses, both at home, extended the Lions current losing streak to six games.

Still playing minus starting goaltender Tom Bajus who is out with a broken foot, the Lions surrendered eight goals last week.

Mercyhurst exploded to a 5-1 win on Saturday, while Allegheny went home with a 3-1 decision on Sept. 26.

The booters found themselves in a deep hole Saturday, as the Laker's John Melody scored a hat trick enroute to the victory. Two of Melody's goals came in the first half.

Coupled with a score by the 'Hurst's Richard Shelton, the Lakers sent Lion netminder Phil Double to the bench at the half.

Freshman Les Spear started the second half in goal to replace Double, but struggled early as he surrendered a pair of scores six minutes into the half.

In between Laker goals, the Lion's Yasser Daoudi found the range to avoid the shut out loss.



Going for it: Sophomore Roy Peterman vies for possession of the ball against a Mercyhurst Laker.

In addition to dominating the final score, Mercyhurst also had a decisive advantage in shots. The Lakers outshot the Lions 15-5. Spear made five saves in just one half in goal for Behrend.

In the Allegheny match, the Gators took an early lead on a goal by Scott Falso nine minutes into the game and never looked back.

Ziv Arie and Rick Ofsanko also netted scores for the Gators.

The Lion's goal came with 14 minutes remaining in the game. Vince Pedrazza was the scorer, with Erik Filoon assisting.

NOTES: Double made his first collegiate start in the Allegheny game. The freshman made five saves....Behrend is now 1-6-1 at the halfway point of the season....The Lions were to have played Pitt-Bradford at home last night and will battle Buffalo State on the road Monday.

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