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Appeal changes Prop 16

"There are so many questions out there."

AL PAPIK
 NU compliance coordinator

By ADAM KLINKER
 Senior staff writer

Proposition 16, the NCAA's rule regarding academic entrance eligibility for college athletes, was struck down March 8 by a federal judge in Philadelphia.

The rule, which states that student athletes who wish to continue their careers in college must meet a minimum score on standardized tests, was overturned based on District Court Judge Ronald L. Buckwalter's ruling that such tests are racially biased against blacks and the practice of using them to determine eligibility is also unfair.

Four black athletes were named as plaintiffs, all having been denied a chance to participate based on their test scores.

Buckwalter used the NCAA's own information to support his decision. The research showed that black student athletes scored consistently lower on standardized tests than did white athletes.

The NCAA now is considering an appeal to the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals, Nebraska Senior Associate Athletic Director Al Papik said. Papik is NU's director of compliance coordination and football operations.

However, Papik, who contends the issue has less to do with race as it does socio-economic status and education, said the appeal may just be an attempt by the NCAA to bide its time while finding another means of determining eligibility.

"There are still so many questions out there," he said. "But there's no ques-

tion that the NCAA must react quickly so we can adjust accordingly."

Papik said the NCAA is organizing a committee to develop interim rules for eligibility so colleges can continue recruiting and qualifying student athletes.

He said that with the interim plan and the possibility of a new plan altogether, he hoped to see more of an emphasis placed on grade point average and core course requirements, things that NU has stressed in its recruiting and qualifying.

Also, he said incorporating all the requirements into a sliding scale of GPA, core courses and test scores would be an acceptable alternative.

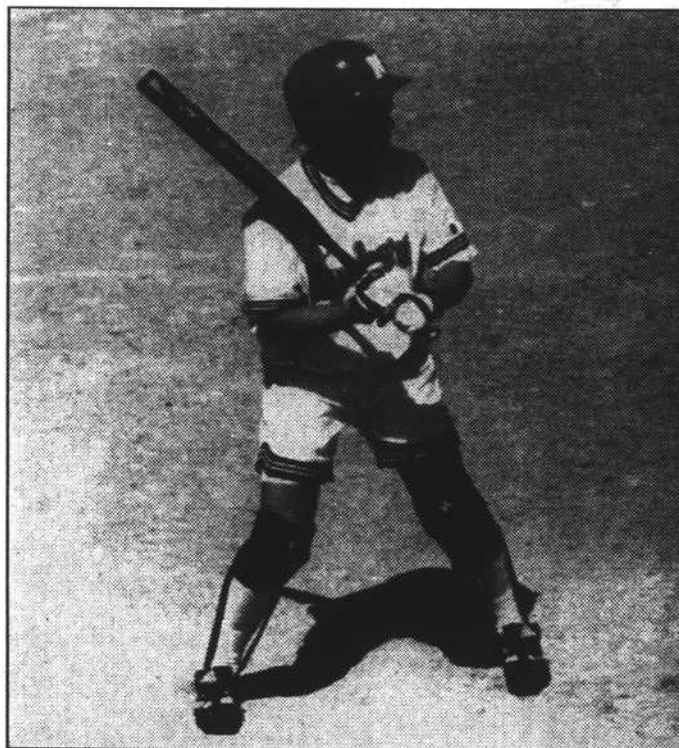
"My preference would be the sliding scale," Papik said. "With that, a low test score won't factor as much, but there must be a high GPA, say a 3.0, to meet certification."

For right now however, Papik said schools around the nation have put qualification and eligibility reviewing on hold while the NCAA formulates the interim plan.

The NCAA Clearinghouse also is unable to proceed until they have enough information regarding new rules.

The NU compliance committee is in the midst of checking the eligibility of all recruits that will enter the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the fall semester of 1999.

The court ruling will mean a stoppage of that work, but only momentarily. Papik said an initial interim plan should be announced within two to three weeks.



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NU officials say tutors warned about cheating

By SAM MCKEOWN
 Senior editor

Academic officials within the NU athletic department said they are determined not to duplicate recent allegations made at the University of Minnesota, just as they have been for years.

Dennis Leblanc, Assistant Athletic Director and director of academic programs for the Cornhuskers, said academic tutors have been strongly encouraged to never provide athletes with extra benefits beyond tutoring.

The question was recently raised

after a tutor at Minnesota alleged two weeks ago that she had been doing research papers for the men's basketball team for the better part of 15 years. Sunday, the Minneapolis Star-Tribune reported the tutor's sister also had come forward, alleging the same thing.

Leblanc said he did not know any principles involved at UM, nor did he know of any other schools around the nation that might have this problem. What he did know, he said, is that NU addresses the issue frequently with its tutors and completely prohibits assistance to athletes that might be considered "extra benefits."

In other words, tutors can not type papers, as they did at UM. They can not do research. They can not assist an athlete in any case where a regular UNL student would not be assisted by a tutor.

Kim Schellepeper, coordinator of learning development within the athletic department, recently delivered a memo to all of the tutors reminding them not only of the UM incident, but, as Leblanc put it, "reminding them of rules and guidelines like we always do."

"This isn't a memo that we sent out specifically for the Minnesota incident," Leblanc said. "We do these types of things quite a bit."

If, in fact, a tutor were to step over those bounds and assist an athlete in an unethical way and be caught doing it, Leblanc said, that tutor would be released.

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INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING SESSIONS
 Wednesday, March 31 or Thursday, April 1
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