



Sports

College Sports

Can high school athletes hop on this bandwagon?

While eager to get in on profiting, they must stay amateurs

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When the clock struck midnight on Thursday morning, there was a titanic shift in how college athletes are allowed to profit off their success on the field.

The NCAA approved new rules Wednesday allowing college athletes to profit from their names, images and likenesses. College athletes can now sign endorsement deals, sign autographs for money and be paid for personal appearances, among other ways. Miami quarterback D'Eriq King and Florida State quarterback McKenzie Milton jumped on the bandwagon quickly, signing a midnight deal to found a NIL-based platform.

Local high school athletes appeared eager to get in on the burgeoning business, as well. However, players participating in Florida High School Athletic Association sports cannot profit from their athletic prowess and still be eligible.

“Student-athletes must maintain amateur status,” FHSAA spokeswoman Ashton Moseley said Thursday.

Current FHSAA rules require participating athletes main

tain their amateur status. FHSAA bylaw 9.9.2 lists several offenses that would lead to forfeiting amateur status for one year:

Competing for money or other monetary compensations.

Receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the FHSAA.

Capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of a monetary nature.

Signing a professional playing contract in any sport or hiring an agent to manage his/her athletic career.

Competing under an assumed name.

FHSAA Policy 37.2 also lists impermissible benefits for athletes, including money, clothing, equipment, loans and more.

However, the NCAA will not strip college eligibility from high school athletes who want to engage in enterprises profiting from their names, images or likenesses.

“Prospective student-athletes may engage in the same types of NIL opportunities available to current student-athletes under the interim NIL policy without impacting their NCAA eligibility,” the NCAA said in a Q&A about the new policies. “NIL opportunities may not be used as a recruiting inducement or as a substitute for pay-for-play. Individuals are encouraged to consider state laws, if applicable, and the rules of any relevant amateur governing bodies.


“Given that rules vary by state, prospective student-athletes should consult their state high school athletics association regarding questions pertaining to high school

eligibility.”


Several local athletes posted messages on their social media accounts, indicating their openness to branding or contracts.

“According to the NCAA, starting July 1st all student-athletes have been granted permission to capitalize on our name, image, and likeness,” one message reads.

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