

National Coalition of College Athletes Calls on NCAA & Power 5 Conferences to Put Player Health First

NCAA Drops the Ball On Player Safety & Excludes Player Voices

Ann Arbor, Aug 5, 2020 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - [College Athlete Unity \(CAU\)](https://collegeathleteunity.org), a national coalition of student-athletes, announced today that while it appreciates the Big Ten's attempt to lay out a plan for a return to fall competition, it finds that the proposal falls short, in part, due to the lack of leadership from the NCAA. CAU membership represents 23 different varsity sports, attending schools in every major conference, across every NCAA division, the NAIA, and U Sport (Canada).

With fall intercollegiate sports set to begin in less than 30 days, the NCAA, known for its regulatory and enforcement zeal, has had ample time to prepare for the safe return to competition, yet it has not. CAU has compiled a list of player concerns that prioritizes health and safety before and during the start of the competition. University of Michigan Wolverine and CAU Co-Founder Hunter Reynolds says, "We are key stakeholders in the business of college sports, however, we do not currently have a voice regarding our safety and well being. Student-athletes, many of whom are uncomfortable speaking up about these issues for fear of endangering their scholarships or their place on the depth chart, should have direct input into the plans and procedures as they are being developed by their schools, conferences, and the NCAA."

Over 1,000 Big Ten football players provided input to the [B1G TEN Unity Proposal](https://collegeathleteunity.org/big10) to address concerns related to testing, team compliance, and eligibility. The full list of concerns is available at [www.collegeathleteunity.org/big10](https://collegeathleteunity.org/big10).

Collegiate sports generate massive amounts of annual revenue, with the NCAA and Power 5 conferences generating over \$4 billion in 2019. The economic incentive to move forward with the revenue-generating sports is understandable given that the loss of revenue will likely result in deep cuts to non-revenue generating sports and even to academic resources. Local and other businesses dependent on fall football competition will also suffer losses.

"Most of us have trained our whole lives for this moment, so we want to compete more than anyone," says Benjamin St-Juste, CAU Co-Founder and a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. "Our safety however must be taken seriously. Most athletes will not feel comfortable playing without proper safety measures in place and it is the job of NCAA and conference leadership to ensure this happens."

CAU looks forward to the beginning of a long-overdue dialogue about important issues between the NCAA, conference leadership, and college athletes.

About College Athlete Unity

College Athlete Unity is a member organization of intercollegiate student-athletes seeking to collectively address injustice and affect positive change using our privilege and considerable platforms. Our members represent 23 different varsity sports, attending schools in every major conference, across every NCAA division, the NAIA, and U Sport (Canada). [www.collegeathleteunity.org](https://collegeathleteunity.org)

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