

# The Final Round<sup>1</sup>

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## Connecticut Debate Association

### King School

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**Resolved: College athletes should be paid competitive salaries.**

## A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the final round at King School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention "flowed" across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

## The Final Round

The final round at King was between the New Canaan team of David Luchs and Gita Abhiraman on the Affirmative and the Stamford team of Daniel Paseltiner and Samantha Sye on the Negative. The debate was won by the Affirmative team from New Canaan.

### 1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) I will define terms, present the Aff plan, then the Aff contentions
- d) Definitions
  - i) "athlete" applies to varsity sports
  - ii) "salary" is a fixed, regular payment
- e) Plan: the NCAA will make payments of \$2-5,000 per year to athletes, the amount determined by merit and media exposure
- f) A1<sup>2</sup>: Applying amateurism to athletes alone is unjust and wrong
  - i) Coaches make million outside coaching
  - ii) This is on top of 32% of athletic budgets that goes to salary and bonus

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<sup>2</sup> "A1" indicates the Affirmative first contention, "N2" the Negative second contention and so forth.

- iii) NCAA is “amateur” only for the players who work for free
  - g) A2: It is only fair to compensate players for their efforts
    - i) College sports is a \$billion industry
      - (1) Acts as a minor league for NBA and NFL
    - ii) Average scholarship is \$3000 short of need
    - iii) Schools earn on appearances, merchandise, etc.
    - iv) Pro leagues save on training
    - v) \$11 billion for rights to March Madness is a lot compared to our \$2-5,000 stipend
    - vi) Aff payment is not that much different from a scholarship
    - vii) Networks make millions, students get kicked out if they take anything
  - h) A3: Paying players for their work encourages competition
    - i) E.g. music students compete for gigs and get paid
    - ii) We apply same principle to athletes
- 2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative**
- a) You said the largest share, 32%, went for salaries. What was the second largest? Scholarships.
  - b) You’d pay based on performance and media exposure? Yes
  - c) How would you measure performance? There is no shortage of statistics.
  - d) And media exposure? Yes
  - e) Isn’t most coverage for mens basketball and football? Yes
  - f) So more would be spent on men? The formula could be adjusted to give women a boost for Title IX.
  - g) So you would have different standards for men and women? Yes, to meet Title IX.
  - h) Why not increase scholarships? Scholarships reward before the fact, salaries reward afterwards, which is more realistic.
  - i) If you are going to cover the cost of living in any case why not a scholarship? Salary is more practical.
  - j) How can it be impractical to pay a scholarship but not a salary? Impractical for the NCAA
  - k) And the cost is feasible? Yes.
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
- a) Intro
  - b) Resolution
  - c) N1: Resolution is not financially feasible
    - i) Aff has NCAA pay stipends
    - ii) Most college sports programs run a deficit of \$9.4 million on average
    - iii) Football and basketball bring in the most funds
      - (1) But less than 12% of football programs are solvent
  - d) N2: Resolution will change the dynamics of college athletics regarding amateurism
    - i) Colleges are institution of higher learning
      - (1) Players are students first, athletes second
    - ii) Pay shifts focus to games, not education
  - e) N3: Plan is unfair

- i) Unfair to other college athletes
    - (1) Merit based, so some get more
    - (2) Pits one sport against another, one player against another, football vs football, football vs soccer
    - (3) In some cases the sport will matter more than performance
  - ii) Unfair to other students
    - (1) Extra money is paid to athletes
    - (2) Nothing paid to other students like actors and musicians who bring in revenue
- 4) Cross-Ex of First Negative**
- a) Aren't rewards in capitalism based on supply and demand? Your program rewards particular sports, not ability.
  - b) So sports in higher demand get paid more? It neglects some sports entirely.
  - c) Do thousands show up to see debate finals? Debate isn't the same sort of thing.
  - d) If there is more revenue, shouldn't there be more reward? That's not based on ability
  - e) Is capitalism based on merit or on demand? It's based on results
  - f) So there should be a greater reward for a greater result? Colleges are educational institutions no business
  - g) You mean capitalism doesn't apply? Only if you are creating a new professional league.
  - h) Isn't it true athletes often don't graduate? Yes, and it's not a good thing.
  - i) Then you agree the status quo is flawed? Yes, but Aff plan shifts emphasis further to athletics and away from education.
  - j) But you do agree the status quo is flawed? Yes
- 5) Second Affirmative Constructive**
- a) Intro
  - b) Resolution
  - c) N1: Aff does not require college to pay
    - i) Funds come from NCAA, like earnings from March Madness TV deal
  - d) N2: Many college athletes are not focused on education
    - i) Aff proposes a fifth year option so they can complete their degree
    - ii) Status Quo is flawed
      - (1) Athletes don't meet academic requirements
      - (2) Neg has no solution for this
  - e) N3: capitalism is unfair
    - i) Men's basketball is more popular than girls field hockey or orchestra
  - f) A1: no counterplan has been presented
    - i) Working for free is a flawed concept
    - ii) Sports earns billions, players don't get paid and this is unjust
    - iii) "amateurism" is an excuse; players are employees
  - g) A2: paying for performance makes sense—players are performers
    - i) The Aff stipend covers the shortfall in scholarships
  - h) A3: Paying for work makes economic sense
- 6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative**
- a) Aff will compensate players? Yes

- b) Are athletic departments losing money? Yes
  - c) So athletics cost more than they bring in? No. Not all of the money earned is spent on sports
  - d) But the money brought in is less than the costs? Aff money will come from NCAA
  - e) But the athletes go to schools losing money? Not on performance
  - f) Do players expect to be paid? No
  - g) So they knowingly agree to work for free? Yes
  - h) For sports without media coverage, will their extra effort be compensated? We will consider media coverage and performance across all sports. This is consistent with capitalism.
  - i) So the sports with the most media coverage and best performance get the most reward? Yes
  - j) Women's sports with no media coverage? No stipend
  - k) What about Title IX? Our payments are from the NCAA, who aren't covered
- 7) Second Negative Constructive**
- a) Intro
  - b) A1 vs N2
    - i) Compensation changes the focus towards athletics
    - ii) Coaches are paid for the services
    - iii) Athletes receive scholarships and exposure
      - (1) College is a time to learn new skills
    - iv) Aff would create another pro league
  - c) A2 vs N3
    - i) Athletes knew they wouldn't be paid, as Aff admitted in cross-ex
      - (1) NCAA regs forbid payment
    - ii) Athletes did know they would get scholarship
    - iii) Knew they would get media exposure
    - iv) Knew they would get exposed to pro leagues
  - d) A3: Pay is based on media coverage and performance
    - i) Media coverage is unfair to women
    - ii) Results will violate Title IX
  - e) N1: Aff says money comes from NCAA
    - i) 70-75% of college programs run a deficit
      - (1) That means they bring in less than they cost
      - (2) Packet: revenue 17% from ticket sales, 27% from alumni, 14% from NCAA
    - ii) Median expenditure is \$76,000 per student
      - (1) Costs exceeds revenue
      - (2) The Aff would pay to lose money
    - iii) Colleges are cutting athletic budgets
  - f) N2 was compared with A1 above
  - g) N3: Aff plan inherently ignores other students
- 8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative**
- a) Does Title IX apply to schools or the NCAA? It is titled an "Education Act"
  - b) So why is it relevant to NCAA? (no answer)

- c) Did we say anything about using Federal assistance? It's still unfair
- d) Does capitalism imply equal opportunity? The US is based on equal opportunity. Your plan is unequal.
- e) \$76,000/year is an average? Median, yes.
- f) Isn't that low compared to other expenses, like professionals? \$76,000 per student is significant, especially since they aren't professionals. College is a learning opportunity.
- g) How does the Neg plan to help? Expand scholarships
- h) Where will the scholarship money come from? Page 9 of the packet suggests cuts in other expenses are possible

**9) First Negative Rebuttal**

- a) A1: schools should work towards ideals
  - i) Flaws in status quo made worse by Aff plan
  - ii) Neg need not solve the flaws
  - iii) Plan emphasizes athletics over education
  - iv) This shouldn't be the goal of colleges
- b) A2: students agreed to play for scholarship
  - i) It may be a poor business decision, but it is capitalism
- c) A3: athletes live for competition. Why do we need to encourage them.
- d) N1: it isn't fiscally responsible
  - i) Athletic departments already lose money
  - ii) Shouldn't they focus on solvency first?
- e) N2: shift in focus is a critical issue
  - i) Effectively creates a new pro league

**10) First Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) Intro
- b) Resolution
- c) There is a disagreement between fairness and equality
  - i) Unequal does not mean unfair
- d) N1: Aff has shown NCAA has an adequate source of funds
  - i) \$11Bn for basketball versus a \$2-5,000 stipend
- e) N2: College athletes are already focused fully on athletics
  - i) The play to be noticed by the pros
  - ii) Ideal of "pure amateur" long gone
  - iii) Coaches and networks make money. Time to change so athletes make money
- f) N3 vs A2 and A3: Fair vs equal
  - i) Students who bring in money and prestige should be encouraged and compensated
  - ii) Aff simply redistributes small part of profits
  - iii) Shift in focus for the schools has already happened
  - iv) We should do what benefits the athletes

**11) Second Negative Rebuttal**

- a) Analogy: college sports is like a sieve
  - i) Water pours through a sieve
  - ii) NCAA money would pour through college athletic departments
- b) Putting money in a faulty system is a bad idea

- i) Better to fix the system first
- ii) Increase revenue by conference marketing, media rights handled by NCAA
- iii) Use revenue for better scholarships
- c) What about \$11bn?
  - i) Is this really available? What are NCAA expenses, costs to operate?
- d) Aff acknowledges plan is unequal, biased against women
  - i) Scholarships would be applied equally
- e) Plan ignores other talented students
  - i) Artists, musicians
  - ii) Plan focuses solely on athletes
- f) Restate N1, N2, N3
- g) Aff doesn't fix status quo; Neg does a better job

**12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) Aff plan is feasible and effective compared to the status quo
  - i) SQ—athletes don't complete school. Aff gives 5<sup>th</sup> year option
  - ii) Financing from NCAA covers money gap
  - iii) More scholarship money from taxes not feasible
- b) Title IX only applies to Federal assistance
  - i) Aff funds from the NCAA
- c) Sieve? Aff not putting funds through athletic departments
  - i) We agree that would be a bad idea
- d) A1: Amateurism is outdated
  - i) It's a disguise for exploitation
  - ii) Profits go elsewhere
- e) A2: students have no option but to agree to scholarship terms in the current system
- f) A3: Status quo already flawed with respect to treatment of men and women
- g) Neg ignores weight of college athletics
  - i) They conceded problems with status quo
  - ii) Aff recognizes amateurism is flawed and provides compensation