

Guidelines for Media and Public Image Management for CU Sport Clubs

- 1) ALL Sport Club athletes who wear a CU Sport Club uniform in *any sport*, by definition, represent the University of Colorado Boulder. If their photos appear on a team Web site and information about them is listed, they could also fit the definition of a public figure in media law
- 2) ANY bad behavior on the part of your coaches and athletes that results in a police report is by definition *a public issue, not a "team issue."* It will, sooner or later, end up in the media. Count on it.
- 3) COACHES of Sport Clubs should be advised to insert the word "club" into their official team name, onto Web sites, media guides, etc, to differentiate them from CU's NCAA Division I Intercollegiate athletic teams sponsored by the CU Athletic Department.
- 4) IF you want "positive" media coverage of your competitions and games, you have to accept the possibility of "negative" coverage when your teams lose, when your athletes don't perform, or when they become embroiled in "off the field" issues.
- 5) ALL coaches should review alcohol and drug-use policies with their teams at the start of the season and again at the beginning of any post-season or tournament play. They should also take a hard-line against team parties, particularly in host cities, and deal with temper/ego issues of individual athletes before they become problems.
- 6) IF called by a reporter, **NEVER:**
 - a) Hang up;
 - b) Just start talking and answering questions (find out what the reporter wants – you're entitled to take time and prepare for an interview);
 - c) Engage in hostile comment or debate
1. **ALWAYS:**
 - d) Stay Calm: ask when the reporter's deadline is;
 - e) Ask what subjects they would like to discuss, then defer the interview to obtain for yourself the time needed to prepare for the interview;
 - f) CALL Bryan Hostetler or Danielle Mutz immediately;
- 7) MANAGE off-the field issues. Set CLEAR and UNAMBIGUOUS rules for personal conduct as a condition of playing and coaching. READ your handbooks, know the rules as well as you know the rules of the games you play.
- 8) CREATE a team accountability environment in which players are accountable to one another for their actions. Proceed as if you were an officially sanctioned NCAA team, nationally ranked, with the media watching you collectively and individually all the time.
- 9) CONTROL your team image at ALL TIMES. Cell phone cameras, video/DVD cameras, digital cameras and team websites, as well as all forms of social media (such as Facebook and Twitter), are great communication tools. They also create huge vulnerabilities if they capture images of your team or individuals on it that do not represent the images you want to portray about your team. Watch out for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter particularly. NEVER let your team website be the repository of individual blogs, photos or postings that are critical of other players, other teams, fans or private individuals, and control how your athletes and coaches post to other sites: no "party pictures" of any kind. Inappropriate content that portray your team or individuals on your team poorly could result in disciplinary consequences.
- 10) DEVELOP a team ethic: Do not allow your team to develop "stars" and certainly not to act like them.