

January 22, 2025

Judge Claudia Wilken

United States District Court

Northern District of California

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CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Re: In re College Athlete NIL Litigation, Case No. 4:20-cv-03919-CW (N.D. Cal.)

Dear Judge Wilken,

My name is Jason Thompson. I am a Junior student-athlete at Stanford University. Thus far, I have played on the Stanford football team for three seasons, from 2022 – 2024. I am submitting this objection to the “Settlement Football and Men’s Basketball Class” definition in the proposed settlement of the above-referenced litigation, which limits membership only to full Grant-in-Aid (“GIA”) scholarship athletes.

During the first two seasons of my football career, Stanford was a member of the PAC-12. During my last season, Stanford was a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference. Thus, I have played in a Power Five conference my entire career at Stanford.

I was offered and accepted a Preferred Walk-On (“PWO”) position at Stanford. As a recruited PWO, I did not have to try out for the team. I was treated the same as any GIA player, except that I did not receive the same financial benefits as a GIA player. I was a full member of the team, subject to the same regulations and expectations as GIA players. I was held to the same athletic and academic standards as all GIA players, including full 12 months-a-year participation in all football practices, lifts, trainings, meetings, and activities.

During each of my three seasons, I was an active roster participant in Fall Camp, a time of year when the roster number is limited per NCAA Bylaw 17.11.3.1.2. So far, I have played in 16 games during my career, totaling 129 snaps during games (as verified by the PFF website). As a freshman, I played in six games and returned four punts for 14 yards and 17 kicks for 335 yards. In my sophomore year, I traveled to every game, both home and away, and played in ten games. I started on all four different special teams units and returned an additional four kicks for 61 yards. I was also named to the Pac-12 Academic Honor Roll. My Junior year, I did not participate in competition due to injury but was still a full member of the team attending all football practices, lifts, trainings, meetings, activities, and home games (+ 2 away games).

As a full member of the Stanford football team, I propose that players in my position should be added to the definition of the “Settlement Football and Men’s Basketball Class.” My NIL was used on broadcast television and other media. My NIL was used in the video game “College

Football 24" produced by EA Sports featuring Stanford players. During my time at Stanford, I was not getting a free education like GIA players, but my NIL was used along with GIA players to promote the football team during broadcasts in the 16 games in which I played. I believe it is only fair and reasonable that players like myself be eligible for broadcast NIL payments and not be treated differently than GIA players, particularly when some of them have played less on the field than I have.

It is not fair that athletic scholarship status alone determines that one player's NIL on the field is worth significant broadcast compensation, whereas the teammate alongside him in the same game is worth nothing. I request that the definition of the "Settlement Football and Men's Basketball Class" include all Power 5 athletes who actively participated and contributed to their teams. An easily verifiable measure, such as participation on a roster during Fall Camp or games played/snap count, would fairly include all athletes who contributed to the broadcast revenue.

If permitted, I would like to speak at the upcoming hearing. I am willing to appear in person or via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Thompson

NCAA Eligibility Center ID: 2110345729