



James E. Delany
Commissioner
Big Ten Conference
1500 West Higgins Road
Park Ridge, IL 60068-6300

Dear Mr. Delany,

We represent six national organizations operating across all media with membership ranging from student reporters to sports editors to television news directors. In the past week, we have received numerous and regular complaints from members fearing that these Big Ten 2009 press credentials will unduly impede reporting about Big Ten sports.

Our members have deemed the credentials, in their current form, to be so restrictive that they will prevent media from imparting the necessary news and sports coverage their readers and viewers have come to expect.

This coverage benefits the Big Ten conference and its member institutions. While we acknowledge that both the media landscape and the manner of presenting and covering sporting events change through time, there is no reason to drastically alter a relationship that has proven so mutually beneficial since 1896.

These credentials would do just that. Among the more troubling provisions are:

- An apparently absolute ban on the secondary use of content in any format for any purpose -- including editorial purposes. This goes beyond usual restrictions we have seen (but also not agreed to) in the past which purport to prevent reprint or commemorative editions of a newspaper or magazine.
- The very strict ban against any use of game footage video by non-broadcast media while putting strict controls on broadcast media by limiting them to use of only 2 minutes of game footage video as part of bona fide news programming in only the week after the event and without accompanying audio.
- Pertaining to the general prohibition on violations of “trademarks, copyright and other proprietary rights of the [Member Institution] or the Big Ten Conference”, while we agree that conference or school intellectual property may only be used in conjunction with editorial or other First Amendment protected activities, we do not concede any rights in works created by our members' photographers, videographers or reporters.

We propose an open and frank discussion of the entire credentialing document. Our goals are the same as yours to ensure that fans of the Big Ten Member Institutions have access to our high quality news coverage of your high quality college sports. The 2009-2010 Press Credential language thwarts both aims. Most importantly it disserves our common audience. We will wait to hear from you on when we might discuss this.

Sincerely,

Marty Kaiser
President
American Society of News Editors

David Bailey
First Amendment Committee
AP Managing Editors

Garry D. Howard
President
AP Sports Editors

James Brady
Treasurer
Online News Association

Stacey Woelfel
Chairman
Radio-Television News Directors Association

Frank LoMonte
Executive Director
Student Press Law Center

cc: Brad Taviola, Deputy Commissioner
Scott Chipman, Associate Commissioner - Communications
LaTonya S. Sadler, Associate Director of Communications