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Playoff Game Postponed as Schools Await Court Ruling (/high-school/playoff-game-postponed-as-schools-await-court-ruling.html)

by Jason Scott (/featured-writer-blogs/jason-scott.html)  November 2016 

The Alabama High School Athletic Association announced last week that a scheduled playoff game would be postponed, pending a decision from the Alabama Supreme Court about which team should take the field.

Elba and Samson high schools were set to play one another after Washington County high school was removed from the playoffs for using an ineligible player, according to the *Dothan Eagle* (http://www.dothanagle.com/sports/high_school/elba-samson-football-playoff-game-postponed-pending-court-ruling/article_f9f59a90-a854-11e6-9f4a-fff6017a80a6.html).

Washington County beat Samson in the prior week, but after the disqualification, Samson was re-inserted into the playoff picture and slated to move on to the next round.

Washington County appealed the AHSAA ruling, but it was upheld by the organization. That's when the court system got involved.

Circuit courts representing Samson and Washington County filed conflicting temporary restraining orders.

A Circuit Court of Geneva County document orders that the "AHSAA enforce and abide by the decision of the Alabama High School Athletic Association... declaring Washington County High School ineligible for participation in the high school football playoffs." Geneva County is home to both Elba and Samson.

An order from the Circuit Court of Washington County enjoined the AHSAA from removing Washington County from the playoffs.

Legal counsel for the AHSAA then filed a petition to the state Supreme Court, and the game was postponed. The Alabama Supreme Court did not rule on the issue on Friday after hearing arguments.



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Jason Scott (/featured-writer-blogs/jason-scott.html) is Online Managing Editor of *Athletic Business*.

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Attorney Defends Ooltewah District in Rape Case (/high-school/attorney-defends-ooltewah-district-in-rape-case.html)

An East Tennessee school board has responded to the lawsuit filed against them in September by the main victim in a rape case involving a high school basketball team.

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Baylor: Briles Failed to Report Gang Rape Allegation (/college/baylor-briles-failed-to-report-gang-rape-allegation.html)

Baylor University has explained for the first time how former football coach Art Briles and others responded to a woman's claims that she was gang-raped by five of his players.

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Coach Gets Five-Day Suspension in Transcript Probe (/high-school/coach-gets-five-day-suspension-in-transcript-probe.html)

Shelby County Schools suspended Trezevant High School head football coach Teli White for five days as part of the investigation into altered student transcripts, according to documents the district released Monday. White was one of two people disciplined, although four people were investigated after the district announced last month that the school's principal discovered some students' grades differed from their report cards to their transcripts. White is accused of misleading investigators about his role in tracking students' academic progress and possessing altered student transcripts on his computer. The investigation found he violated the district's staff ethics policy as well as the state interscholastic athletics policy, according to the documents. Keith Williams, executive director of the Memphis Shelby County Education Association representing White, said the union and White were not notified of his suspension without pay, only that he'd served 26 days of paid time pending the outcome of the investigation. A district spokesperson confirmed White was suspended five days without pay. If the district withholds or has already withheld pay, Williams said, the union will file an appeal.

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National Program Promotes Use of Athletic Trainers (/high-school/national-program-seeks-to-promote-use-of-athletic-trainers.html)

A new initiative is encouraging high schools across the country to expand the use of athletic trainers.

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Brand-Conscious Universities Force HS Logo Redesign (/civil-actions/brand-conscious-universities-force-hs-logo-redesign.html)

American high schools are facing a new challenge as universities become more possessive of their brand. Nationwide, high schools are scrambling to redesign team logos under threat of trademark-infringement suits as big-name universities such as Penn State, Notre Dame, University of Iowa, University of Texas and Texas Tech University issue warnings to high school teams informing them of trademark violations.

Bert Borgmann, assistant commissioner of the Colorado High School Athletics Association, told The Denver Post (<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/11/07/colorado-high-schools-targeted-by-universities-similar-logos/>)

, "Some people are very protective of their brand, and in this day and age, money seems to be ruling a lot of sports beyond the high school realm. It's really part of the business of sports that nobody really thinks about."

Occasionally, a university will grant a high school a license at low cost that allows for restricted use of a similar logo, but if they are unwilling to compromise, the high school might be facing a cost of thousands of dollars to replace the emblem on uniforms, scoreboards, signage and equipment for the team, as well as on stationery and websites for the schools. A college team trademark case has never gone as far as the courts, as high schools usually do not have the means to stand up to them.

According to Lee Green, professor of sports and business law at Baker University in Kansas, hundreds of high schools have received cease-and-desist letters from universities in the last five years over logos, mascots or nicknames that are too similar to those used by college or university brands. In some cases, a single university might issue as many as 50 letters to various high schools.



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Green attributes the mass of suits to the fact that high school teams are more in the public eye due to the rise in social media use, which poses a threat to the potential of colleges and universities to generate income from trademark merchandise and to compete with other programs.

Mobilized by the recent hype and the reasonable fear of a lawsuit, Old Thornton High School of Colorado recently contacted Texas Tech to bring their own copycat logo to the attention of university officials. Thornton was too late to be included in any kind of trademark agreement, but the university refrained from issuing a deadline for the school to update its logo. Thornton will be able to phase out the trademark logo organically as worn out uniforms are replaced. "There will be virtually no cost to us," said Thornton High principal Jennifer Skrobela.

Thornton is using this as an opportunity to tap into their fan base and foster school pride, with 1,7000 members of the school and community contributing ideas for the redesigned logo. "It really was a bonding event for the school," said Skrobela.

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Apparel Company Busted for Co-Opting University Hues (</contract-law/apparel-company-busted-for-co-opting-university-colors.html>)

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[HS Football Player Dies After Hard Fall in Game \(/high-school/hs-football-player-dies-after-hard-fall-in-game.html\)](/high-school/hs-football-player-dies-after-hard-fall-in-game.html)

A Texas high school football player died after he reportedly hit his facemask hard on the ground during a junior varsity game Thursday.

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[HS Team Sanctioned for Academically Ineligible Player \(/rules-regulations/hs-basketball-team-sanctioned-for-academically-ineligible-player.html\)](/rules-regulations/hs-basketball-team-sanctioned-for-academically-ineligible-player.html)

Grady High School's championship boys basketball program is on "severe warning status" this season after allowing an academically ineligible student to play for the team last year.

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