

NCAA Study: College Athletes Suffering Abuse From 'Angry Bettors'

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According to a new study from the NCAA, abuse by "angry bettors" is one of the most common types of harassment that college athletes receive, making up at least 12 percent of publicly posted social media abuse.

The study, which was conducted by data science company Signify Group, analyzed the social media accounts for more than 3,000 college athletes, approximately 500 coaches, 200 event officials and 165

teams during the 2024 College Football Playoff, men's and women's basketball tournaments, men's and women's college World Series and gymnastics championships.

The NCAA is expected to release the full results of the survey on Thursday, but the association released an excerpt to [ESPN](#) on Tuesday.

Per ESPN:

The study defined "angry sports bettors" as individuals who "engage in problematic and intrusive communications due to match events and results contradicting bettors' predictions." Athletes received abusive messages before, after and during events. The survey listed sexual abuse, racism and homophobia as among other common harassment categories. Signify analysts found some abusive posts that did not overtly mention gambling still had ties to betting.

The analysis flagged 743 abusive or threatening messages referencing betting or match-fixing allegations, with 73% of them occurring during March Madness, the most popular event with American bettors. Women athletes received approximately 59% more abusive messages than men, the analysis found.

The issue occurred even in sports that are less popular with gamblers, including softball, where 24% of abusive messages flagged were from angry bettors.

The NCAA emphasized that the analysis covered only public-facing threats, not private messages, where, according to Signify executives, harassment is likely worse.

"It's clear to us too ... as the prevalence of sports betting went up, so

did the prevalence of sports betting-related abuse," Clint Hangebrauck, the NCAA's managing director of enterprise risk, told ESPN.

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