

Foreword to the Fourth Edition

Since the publication of the First Edition of *An Athlete's Guide to Agents* in 1982, the need for professional and especially preprofessional athletes to inform and educate themselves about selecting and working with agents and other professional advisers has become more and more pressing.

"Unscrupulous agent" has become practically one word. Just recently, a head coach at a major sports university related how agents have hired students on his campus to solicit their fellow students.

Even as the Heisman Trophy winner, I did not need an agent to tell me that I would do better to play touch football at Harvard Business School than to accept George Halas's offer to join the Chicago Bears. A number one pick in 1952 signed for less than \$10,000, not \$10 million. Top athletes received support and guidance from family, coaches, and older friends who helped make the transition relatively smooth.

Today, family guidance is still valuable, but the circumstances are much more complex and the stakes are much higher, so colleges must provide better mechanisms and reference points for the preprofessional athlete. The Heisman Trophy winner and many other college athletes need all the competent, professional guidance and assistance they can get.

Agents also enhance the earning potential of individual-sport athletes. As a director of the LPGA, I have seen the benefits that a skilled agent can obtain for an athlete—and the difficulties facing a golfer who may not be sufficiently talented or marketable to attract the services of a capable agent. I have also witnessed the tension between an agent pursuing the short-term interests of his clients and the longer-term benefits to the tour and, at least potentially, to his clients.

I have long been interested in the treatment afforded athletes on a college campus and feel that *An Athlete's Guide to Agents* should be required reading for all aspiring pro athletes as soon as possible after they enter college.

—Dick Kazmaier