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Ex-Quarterback Sues NCAA and Video-Game Company Over Alleged Misuse of Likenesses

A former Division I quarterback has [sued](#) the NCAA and a prominent entertainment company over the alleged misuse of college athletes' likenesses in videogames.

Sam Keller, a former starting quarterback at the University of Nebraska and Arizona State University, says the NCAA unlawfully has allowed the likenesses of Division I football and basketball players to be used, without their permission, in videogames produced by Electronic Arts, an interactive entertainment-software company. NCAA rules governing amateurism prohibit the use of athletes' names and likenesses in commercial ventures, and the NCAA has [banned at least one player](#) for earning money from endorsement contracts.

The lawsuit, which seeks class-action status, was filed this week in the U.S. District Court in San Francisco.

In its simulated football and basketball games between member colleges of the NCAA, Mr. Keller alleges, Electronic Arts replicates team logos, uniforms, mascots, and university stadiums "with almost photographic realism."

"With rare exception, virtually every real-life Division I football or basketball player in the NCAA has a corresponding player in Electronic Arts' games with the same jersey number, and virtually identical height, weight, build, and home state," the lawsuit states. The games also match players' skin tone, hair color, and even hair style, the suit asserts.

The NCAA [told USA Today](#) in a written statement: "We are confident that no such use has occurred and that we will ultimately be dismissed from this lawsuit." —*Libby Sander*

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