

Uthoff says Bo Ryan has added ACC to banned list

Written by Jim Ecker
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Wisconsin Coach Bo Ryan has added the entire Atlantic Coast Conference to the list of schools that are not allowed to contact Jarrod Uthoff about joining their program.

"I just got an e-mail about it today from Wisconsin's compliance office," Uthoff told the Metro Sports Report Monday night. "I didn't see it coming."

Uthoff informed Ryan last week that he planned to leave the Badgers after one year and transfer to another college. Since then, Ryan has put the entire Big Ten, the entire ACC, Iowa State and Marquette on the "restricted" list of schools that are not allowed to contact the 6-foot-8 forward.

Uthoff starred at Cedar Rapids Jefferson and was Iowa's "Mr. Basketball" in 2011. He was redshirted at Wisconsin this season as a freshman and appeared to figure prominently in the team's future, but said he didn't feel comfortable in Wisconsin's offense and is looking for a better fit.

According to NCAA rules, colleges that want to speak to transfer students must get permission from the athlete's current school. If permission is not granted, colleges are not supposed to contact the athlete directly. It also makes the athlete ineligible for a scholarship if he transfers to that school.

Uthoff said the University of Virginia (an ACC school coached by former Wisconsin assistant Tony Bennett) sought permission from Wisconsin to contact him. As a result, Ryan added Virginia and all the other ACC schools to the no-contact list.

Uthoff said he doesn't know why Ryan has placed so many schools on the restricted list. "You have a better guess than I do," he said. "I'm not really sure."

The Metro Sports Report requested an interview with Ryan Monday afternoon, but there was no response from Wisconsin's sports information department as of 10 p.m. Monday.

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The Big Ten has a policy that makes it difficult for athletes to transfer within the conference, mostly to limit the mayhem that might result, so that part of Ryan's ban is not surprising. Similarly, Marquette is located in the state of Wisconsin and competes with Ryan's Badgers for players and prestige, so that ban is not hard to fathom.

It's not clear, however, why Ryan has banned Iowa State and all the ACC schools from contacting Uthoff. "I have no idea," he said.

The ban now includes 25 different colleges with 12 schools in the ACC, 11 in the Big Ten, Iowa State and Marquette on the restricted list. Apparently, Wisconsin could place every Division I school on that list. "Theoretically they could," said Uthoff.

Uthoff has appealed the restrictions to the University of Wisconsin's compliance office, which is the office that informed him of the bans in the first place.

"I have not heard back from them," he said. "The next step would be the NCAA."

Uthoff said he would consider appealing to the NCAA if Wisconsin rejects his appeal. "We'll see. I might," he said.

Meanwhile, Uthoff's search for a new school continues. He spoke to University of Northern Iowa Coach Ben Jacobson, but the Panthers do not have any scholarships available. "He informed me of that," said Uthoff.

By coincidence, former Cedar Rapids Washington star Wes Washpun got UNI's final scholarship when he decided this spring to transfer from Tennessee to Northern Iowa.

Uthoff plans to visit Creighton early next week and meet with Coach Greg McDermott, who

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previously was the head coach at Northern Iowa and Iowa State. McDermott and Uthoff have spoken about the possibility of joining the Bluejays.

"I still have some pretty good options," he said.