

## PROTECTING YOUR POSSIBILITIES PODCAST WITH LUKE FEDLAM

### Episode 32: So What Exactly Is Anomaly Sports Group? | March 17, 2021

*The following is a transcription of the audio podcast recording. It is largely accurate but in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors.*

Luke: I'm sports attorney Luke Fedlam, and welcome to the Protecting Your Possibilities podcast. Each conversation we focus on sharing information and having conversations around how athletes can best educate and protect themselves or their life outside of their sports.

Thank you so much for tuning in to the Protecting Your Possibilities podcast. I'm your host, Luke Fedlam. And just happy to be here with you another day. Another opportunity to talk about ways in which we can protect athletes and all the opportunities and all the possibilities that they have.

So one of the questions that I've been getting from listeners quite a bit is questions around Anomaly Sports Group. So if you were to go to my law firm bio page, it says that I lead the educational advisory firm, Anomaly Sports Group. And I've gotten a lot of questions as to what exactly is Anomaly. So this episode is going to be dedicated to sharing a little bit more of what Anomaly is, how Anomaly works to ultimately protect athletes through education.

So as it says, in my bio Anomaly Sports Group is an educational advisory firm. And I think it's important to understand the genesis of Anomaly to truly understand its mission and its focus. So I've worked with professional athletes in different capacities for about 15-16 years now. And in doing that, you start to see trends. And you start to see ways in which athletes are commonly sought after to be taken advantage of, or you see ways in which there are some personal or professional development opportunities that athletes might have to further grow themselves and their ability for success outside of their sport. And when you start to see this over and over, it just kind of really galvanized in me this desire to want to educate athletes in ways beyond just the one-on-one legal protection that we provide at the law firm.

So, few years back, I started an organization called Anomaly Sports Group. And really, the whole focus of Anomaly is on protecting athletes through education. So how do we deliver workshops, presentations, discussions, for college and professional athletes, that is really grounded in the work that we do every day, on the legal side of working with athletes. It's an opportunity to be able to really take what is going on right now in the world with athletes and translate that into, you know, like I said, workshops or, or discussions that capture an athlete's attention, because it's based on things that are truly happening kind of real time to athletes.

So to give you some examples of what that even looks like, at the professional level, and at the college level, one of the presentations that kind of transcends kind of the level of sports that you're at whether you're an elite athlete, or not necessarily an elite athlete, it's decision making. And so you've heard me in past episodes, discuss decision making and kind of talking through that. And it's something that we share with athletes, again, at all levels, because athletes are constantly faced with decisions that they have to make. If they're an elite athlete at the college level, they're looking at decisions in terms of, do I potentially hire an agent? And do I leave

school early to enter the professional draft for my sport? There's a lot of big decisions that have to be made around that aspect. I mean, even looking at certain sports and transferring, do I transfer schools for a better opportunity? All of these things come back to this decision. And if you're at the college level, and not necessarily an elite athlete, there are still significant decisions that you have to make and decisions that can go around the topic of - Do I go on to grad school? Or do I take a job and start in my career right after I graduate, right. So decisions that are made at all levels.

Now at the college level, when you think about this, a major area that is going to be an area of a lot of decisions to be made is name image and likeness. And you've heard me talk in past episodes about name, image and likeness and where things stand and the bottom line is without spending the rest of this episode getting into potentially the quagmire that is legislation around name, image and likeness, I'll just say that we know that college student athletes are going to be able to be compensated for the use of their name, image and likeness. And they're going to be able to launch endeavors and be involved in money making opportunities like they have not been able to be a part of in the past. And in doing that, there will be a number of decisions that the student athletes are going to have to make. And it's going to be a challenge sometimes in understanding where to even begin.

Now, I've been fortunate enough to be able to talk with student athletes around the topics of name, image and likeness, and potential, you know, earning compensation. And that's one of the most common kind of questions is, where do I start? Where do I begin? And when you think about the types of decisions that they'll be faced with, it's even the fundamental question of do I want to get involved with name, image and likeness. We know that they have a kind of a full time job being a student and a full time job being an athlete, and so finding time then to get involved in name, image and likeness is going to be a decision that they'll have to make. And then thinking about people who will want to work with them, and advisors who want to engage with them and potential brands who might want to have the athletes represent them and be involved and engaged or do appearances or camps and clinics or get involved in nonprofits or other causes. I mean, there's going to be a lot of decisions that have to be made and so comprehensively at the at the college level decision making is an absolute critical component, when it comes to preparing themselves for success. Right.

But also at the professional level decision making is has become very, very important as well, in terms of thinking about the people who want to work with you as an athlete. Thinking about how do I make decisions around my own financial management? How do I make decisions around financial advisors or marketing agents who might want to work with me? How do I, you know, make decisions around the types of brands that I might want to be engaged with, and partner with? Right, these are all decisions that come on a regular basis to athletes. And so what we came up with in Anomaly is a decision making process for athletes. And, again, you can tune in to previous episodes, to hear more about that decision making process. But it's the idea of putting together a repeatable process, so that you can have the ability to make an informed decision, right? It doesn't always lead you to necessarily the quote unquote, right answer. But it does lead you through a process that can help make sure that you make an informed decision.

So that's just one of the topics with Anomaly that we engage with. We've had NFL teams that have brought us in to talk about networking, and how do you network at the highest levels. And when you think about it as a professional athlete, and really, when you think about it, from the perspective of college student athletes in a name, image and likeness environment, doing marketing deals, or endorsement deals with various brands, will set you up to be able to build relationships. And if you can build relationships with those brands who want to have you as a

spokesperson or a brand ambassador, that can then lead to a potential type of corporate job or some type of career opportunity when you're done with your sport. If you realize that every opportunity you have when promoting a brand is an opportunity to network and better understand that business or that company. So you know, NFL teams have brought us in for the networking piece, they brought us in to talk about managing the advisors around you. And so often athletes will be referred to as the CEO of their business. And so we've gotten into conversations with players around what does it mean to be a CEO? What does it mean to be that athlete CEO? And even though they may be told that they're a CEO, there has to come some learning and some education around what does that mean? And how one part of that is how do you hold the advisors who work for you accountable? And so we get into things like understanding fees and understanding the scope of services that they're providing you; understanding how to hold them accountable when, you know, you need to hold them accountable, because again, they work for you as the athlete, and that's just one step of being that athlete, CEO.

So this idea of having conversations around managing the advisors around you, understanding, networking, even understanding interviewing is a conversation that we get into with groups at all levels. Because for athletes at the professional level, they've typically been through the process of interviewing or meeting with coaches or interviewing with teams in preparation for being drafted or being picked up in free agency. In those instances, athletes are comfortable talking about their abilities on the field and what they could bring to a team, right? What we want to do is also be able to share with them, how do you translate that to other organizations outside of your sport, so that when you make that transition, you have the opportunity to be able to work with an organization right off the bat when you want to. And so being able to understand how do interviews work, and what are traditional questions, and what are interviewers looking for, and looking to achieve out of that interview, those things are helpful for pro athletes and at the college level. Now, even more so right? Because we know that it's less than 2%, right of college athletes will go on to play professionally, but over 50% believe that they're going to play professionally. And so being able to have these conversations around interviewing and understanding how to effectively interview and effectively translate their skills, talents and abilities as an athlete to the working world that can absolutely help athletes as they transition beyond college and beyond their sport.

So really, Anomaly is focused on from a sports perspective, it's really focused on these areas of personal and professional development, understanding contracts. So if you could think about it, and you put yourself in my shoes, what I care most about is the protection and education of athletes. It's really why I do what I do. If you were to go to my bio, or if you were to look or listen to someone kind of share my bio, what I hope you would take from it is that I want to see athletes be protected, and to be educated. And so Anomaly was just a natural growth out of the work that I'm doing to protect athletes every day. Because how can I now take these individual one on one kind of learnings with athletes that we're protecting through the law firm, but then translate that in a way that can be a workshop that is truly learning for an entire team, or for an entire athletic department, or for you know, rookies on a particular team or second year players or veterans or what have you.

Because another conversation, that is something that we've been asked to get into is just understanding deals, right? So when you think about it, a lot of times, athletes struggle to find independent and objective information on a topic, right? Oftentimes, education comes from a source who is trying to get the athlete to make a decision, right, and the outcome is dependent upon the athlete's decision to involve themselves in a particular opportunity. So if it's a private investment deal, let's say, and it's typically someone who wants the athlete to invest in that deal.

And they'll share with the athlete, all of the benefits of investing in the deal, they'll share with them very specifically about that particular, let's say technology or that company, and all that the company is going to be able to do and how that's going to translate to all this money that will be made, even though we know especially in the startup space that that a majority of startups fail within their first five years of existence, but they'll sell them on the idea. And while the idea is a great place to start, if you're a sophisticated investor, or if you want to be that sophisticated investor, you have to also understand how deals work. How am I protected as a potential investor in a business? What is it that I need to look out for, you know, thinking about even securities laws, do the paperwork that the that this person is asking me to sign off on? Is this even the right kind of paperwork? What should I be looking for? And so we'll be able to share conversations around the anatomy of a deal, what is the structure of a deal? What should it look like based on what is trying to be achieved? And what protections should you have as an investor based on the level of your investment?

So again, whether it's talking to veteran players or rookie players, whether it's talking to college student athletes, Anomaly is all focused on education. And I thought it was important to have this conversation today because sometimes people will see Anomaly Sports Group I can see that I'm involved in will think, Oh, is that is that an agency? And I had a question from someone earlier this week that they said, you know, it seems like you take pride in saying that you're a non-agent, sports attorney. And I do take pride in that one, because I absolutely love what I do. But I also make it very clear, because, you know, a lot of times people have never heard of just a sports attorney. And so in their minds, they equate that to being an agent. And an agent's role is very different than my role. And so I shared that in a previous episode about what does it mean to be a non-agent, sports attorney. And I take pride in that. And so when I see, when people see Anomaly Sports Group, I want them to be able to have an understanding of all the great work that we're doing. In fact, you know, kind of, you can check out more information at [anomalysportsgroup.com](http://anomalysportsgroup.com). But there's going to be more to come as well, because we've been asked in both the sports space, as well as the non-sports space to start getting involved in conversations around DNI diversity, equity and inclusion. So you may see some more of that information coming.

But that's what and who Anomaly sports group is me excited that I've got my colleague, Bruce Wimbish, involved in Anomaly sports. And so you may see Anomaly sports as it relates to Bruce. And we also have Cassie Dickerson, who you'll hear more from in the future, who consults with us to be able to deliver this student athlete development, education as well. So we've got a great team doing some great work that really just focuses on education, and the importance of educating athletes. We obviously spend a lot of time in the name image and likeness space. In fact, we have partnered with TeamAltemus, and Courtney Altemus, who was actually a guest in the past to deliver kind of a comprehensive curriculum around name, image and likeness, to college athletic departments. And so you know, you'll see more and more of that. We've done a series of webinars together and been panelists together and hosted our own webinars together, because education around name, image and likeness.

And I know, I've had past episodes about this, but let me just be very clear, there is a lot that will be coming with name, image and likeness. And student athletes will need to be educated. It is an ethical imperative of the educators in schools and athletic administrators, to ensure that student athletes are prepared for name, image and likeness. And so we want to always be out there helping to support in that education by being able to bring our real world practical education.

So that is who Anomaly is. And I just wanted to share that conversation, again, as a response to questions that I'm getting about who Anomaly is and what does Anomaly do so hopefully, you have a better understanding of that. But as you can see, a lot of times the topics that we get into are based on conversations and comments that come from our listeners. So please do keep them coming. If there's anything that you want us to continue to dig into, on the Protecting Your Possibilities podcast, I'm excited to do that. Please do continue to share our podcast with other listeners. Feel free to provide ratings and absolutely feel free to reach out to me either on social media, by email or by leaving comments wherever you listen to your podcasts. But again, thanks for listening, and have a great day.

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