



August 30, 2011

Mitch Barnhart
Director of Athletics
University of Kentucky
mbarn@uky.edu

Dear Mr. Barnhart:

Associated Press Managing Editors, a nationwide organization of newspaper editors and broadcast news directors, objects to your department's reprehensible conduct in response to news coverage by *The Kentucky Kernel* of the basketball team's addition of two walk-on players. Your department's revocation of reporter Aaron Smith's media access to team interviews amounts to no less than an attempt to bully the newspaper into submission and to censor news concerning operations of the University of Kentucky athletic department.

This is a level of abuse of free speech not tolerated at universities in other states and is particularly abhorrent at a taxpayer-owned institution. We urge you to restore the access of *The Kentucky Kernel* and Mr. Smith and to ensure that your department henceforth honors its accountability to the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hollis Towns", with a long, sweeping underline.

Hollis Towns
President, APME

Copy: Attorney General Jack Conway
<attorney.general@ag.ky.gov>

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