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## Sports

# Lottery surrounded by confusion

By Ashley Conklin  
Emerald Sports Reporter

Oregon Lottery Commissioner Jim Davey and Oregon Athletic Director Bill Byrne said Friday that there is still a lot of confusion throughout the state on why money from the Sports Action lottery game went back into the lottery economic development fund.

Although the Sports Action lottery game had generated nearly \$1.6 million for the state's colleges and universities through early February, most of the money was transferred back into the general lottery fund under state law because of lagging lottery sales.

Many people who had played the Sports Action game to support college athletics felt disillusioned over the schools not receiving the money, but it was something that most people overlooked when the game was adopted, Davey said.

"I'm still convinced that the game wouldn't have been approved without that provision," Davey said. "For whatever reason, that didn't attract people's attention then."

While overall lottery sales are still generally low, Davey believes that all of the money generated by Sports Action will eventually go to the schools.

"I'm optimistic that the schools will get that money," he said. "It might not be this

quarter or next quarter, but I think over the biennium (it will happen)."

Most people who have played the game have realized why the money has been transferred to the economic fund, but there are still some misconceptions people have had that could hurt the game, Davey and Byrne said.

"I'm sure a lot of people thought it was our (the lottery commission's) decision," Davey said.

"The one thing I want to stress," Byrne said, "is that those people who were playing the game to support college athletics and have become angry or disappointed that they're money isn't going to college athletics, could take money away and put it in the coffers by taking out their frustrations and saying they won't play the game."

"That's really a guarantee that it (Sports Action) will fail," he added.

About 25 percent of the \$1.6 million generated from Sports Action — \$447,000 — has been earmarked for the state schools, but Byrne said the University hasn't received any money as of yet.

"We don't have any of the money yet, because it's tied up by the state board," Byrne said.

Byrne said the University would receive about 40 percent of the \$447,000 earmarked for the state schools which would go for "just normal operations," such as grant-in-aid, travel and salaries. Possibly the biggest threat to Sports Action right now besides people refusing to play the game out of personal anger, is a pending bill before the U.S. Senate that would keep states from having any type of sports lottery game and a pending lawsuit filed by the National Basketball Association.

Byrne said that the Oregon congressional delegation is supportive of Sports Action and is definitely against the bill. Byrne has spent time in Washington, D.C., lobbying against the bill.

Davey said the biggest problem he had with the pending Senate legislation is not that it would mean an end to Sports Action, but that will take away the power of states to initiate their own economic relief programs and would violate the issue of states' rights.

"This would have a negative impact if it passed," Davey said. "Any state with a lottery — which is 33 states now — would be affected and I would think the state of Nevada would be concerned because it could ruin their industry."

Meanwhile, the state's attorney will argue on March 13 against the pending lawsuit filed by the NBA. Davey said that the purpose of the March 13 court date is to argue whether or not "we go to court against the NBA."

But the bottom line, Byrne said, was that people continue to support Sports Action and play the game to keep Oregon and Oregon State alive in the Pacific-10 Conference, describing no outside funding as a "disaster" for the University.

"We need some kind of funding to stay competitive," Byrne said.



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