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adidas, Mike White and ...
 Posted August 22nd, 2007 by [Glenn](#)

By the time we get to the 2008 spring evaluation period, there should be a whole new world awaiting the players, college coaches and, even, us here at HoopGurlz.com.

A lot of the changes have been prompted by the split of Michael T. White from his longtime sponsor, adidas. However, some changes also are being prompted by the huge growth in girl's basketball and up the ladder to women's college basketball and the WNBA.

Here's what I'm pretty sure I know about all of this:

- White is continuing his program. He's aiming to come out with his own women's basketball sneaker and will continue running his events, whose names (Top Ten All-American Camp and Showtime Nationals) he has trademarked. White supposedly has secured financial support from a major backer who I know but whose role I have not confirmed. White has sent invitations to coaches for a Grassroots Basketball Conference in Tampa, Fla. Sept. 1-2 (more on this later).
- Meanwhile, adidas has hired John Phillips as its director of girls grassroots basketball. Phillips held a similar position with Nike for 11 years. He has set up adidas' first post-White event, Battle of the Desert, to be held in Las Vegas during the fall evaluation period, Sept. 28-30. Adidas also is buttoning up spring and summer events to be held in Charlotte, N.C. Finally, Phillips sent a letter to a group similar to that White sent his, inviting coaches to an adidas meeting in Charlotte on Oct. 6-7.
- Reebok, which has been involved in the girl's game by providing uniforms at the McDonald's All-American Game, is set to expand that role under Chris Rivers, the former basketball director at adidas. Reebok's plans are said to be far more limited than the other entities - an event, perhaps, and a few teams.

If I'm counting correctly, that's four sneaker-related entities in girl's basketball, counting Nike. That's up from two - or, of course, double that which exists now.

Right now, it difficult to forecast how the lines will be drawn. The first skirmish is between White and adidas. After White sent his "invitation" (71 coaches were named whose attendance was deemed "mandatory"), Phillips followed up with a "Coaches Letter on Loyalty" that essentially said that all were invited to continue with adidas, but the offer is withdrawn from those who attended White's conference.

Phillips explained in the letter that the adidas program wanted to ensure "100 (percent)" loyalty to the brand. He also said the priority in his program will go to 1. players, 2. brand and 3. coaches.

This all is not to say that the battle for teams will be confined to the adidas-White arena. Several programs tied to Nike have told HoopGurlz.com that they have been approached by adidas or White about jumping. Some coaches say that money figures beyond the current threshold have been discussed.

It's premature to comment on all of this because nothing concrete has happened yet. Since I was involved on the boy's side through my experience at Rivals and Scout, I can see some red flags flying, however.

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[Regina Rogers](#)

Pos: P

Rating: ★★★★★

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If the money escalates, there will be questions about to whom that money will be flowing. Everyone says "it's all about the kids," then at some point it is discovered that, in some programs, it's all been about the director's wallet. I'm not saying this is going to happen, just that it has happened before.

My biggest concern is the impact on the ability of HoopGurlz.com to cover and help expose girl's basketball players, no matter the sneaker affiliation. If we nominally are the "fifth" entity in the sport because of our reach and traffic, plus our tie to ESPN, then we so far are the only one that isn't making money off it, plus the only one that tries to remain in the middle of it all.

What would impair us is if some of the entities shut us out, or made it difficult for us to cover their events. What also would hurt is if they started scheduling competitively (ie., at the same time, in different places). This, of course, is what has happened on the boy's side, but boy's basketball is big business and girl's basketball, though the participation is there, is not big business.

In other words, when I was the editor at Scout, I took six others with me as a photographer, to Las Vegas the week when there were three major tournaments happening simultaneously. Our efforts would be bolstered variously by team-website publishers, giving us a group that vacillated between 10 and 15. And this was the case all summer long. At HoopGurlz, we obviously don't have those kind of resources yet.

In closing, you'll notice that I've posted this in my blog, rather than as a news story. Our news mission is to cover the girls. These developments do effect the girls, but is more insider-ish. Our stories are set up like blog entries to receive comments underneath, but blogs are really the format that invites the give and take. I urge you to post your comments or information below and, together, maybe we can figure some of this out.

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Let's hope and pray....

On September 28th, 2007 [scarter](#) says:

Let's just hope that the girls side will not get exploited as the boys was. All of us know when money is involve people change course. Let's plainly do it for the girls and be vocal and expose unacceptable behaviour to educate everyone involve mostly the girls and their parents to make the right choices. After all it's for the girls.

Sid Carter
Basketball Top Stars
Houston Texas

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NC Tight Squeeze

On August 22nd, 2007 [Meign](#) says:

I am happy to see variety in girls basketball.. but when money is involved then it becomes the boys game.. an dthat is very ugly.. the reason i limited my part in boys basketball.. We have nike and reebok events in NC. I welcome adiddas events to Charlotte.. More colleges from all over to see NC kids and less travel..

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gear-company gibberish

On August 22nd, 2007 [intelligenthoodlum](#) says:

The key is realize that this is not as much about winning these summer tournaments as you might think. The bottom line with these gear companies is about who brings players to the brand, and to these events.

Then, because there's no real money on the girls side, it's about the club organizations that do events, which the gear companies can attach themselves to.

After that, it's about those club directors who have, or are affiliated with, scouting services. After all, it's about finding out who the top girls are,

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evaluating them, and getting as many of them as possible to roll with your club and your gear company.

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I Agree, IH

On August 22nd, 2007 [Glenn](#) says:

That's why I so fervently believe in keeping HoopGurlz "pure." My hope is that the "new order" doesn't get in the way of our helping the kids get seen.

Glenn,

www.HoopGurlz.com

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It's America

On August 22nd, 2007 [FloridaKenny](#) says:

I think this new competition will be good because teams will get better deals and get more back from shoe companies and event operators. Hopefully they take it very seriously and sponsor more teams and drive up the demand for good summer programs. With all the money shoe companies and event operators are getting its good they have more competition and have to give back now.

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Watch and See

On August 24th, 2007 [ifyousayso](#) says:

I am taking a watch and see attitude and hope that competition for the better teams and players will be a good thing. There are obvious concerns of which most Glen you have voiced, we can only watch it play out at this point.

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