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Every Monday, we will be running a weekly series titled "State of the Big Ten," which will be made available to all members of HawkeyeDrive.com. This series of columns will focus on one major headline regarding the conference and go in-depth on the subject at hand.

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The biggest headline last week not only in the world college football, but all of college sports, came from Northwestern. A group of players led by former quarterback Kain Colter went through the formal procedures last week to get student-athletes recognized as employees and allow them to form labor unions.

For now, nothing is going to happen. The NCAA has already come out and made clear that its student-athletes aren't being recognized as university employees. But in a day and age where there is constant conversation about paying players, particularly those playing sports like football and basketball, the story doesn't stop here. This is only an issue that will continue to be discussed in the future.

Now that Colter and some of his former teammates at Northwestern have taken such steps, one has to wonder what happens if their efforts prove successful. Not now obviously, but over the long haul. It's the sort of thing that could shape the future of college sports.

Whether or not student-athletes should get paid is such a hot button issue that there are plenty of arguments on both sides of it. Here's the reality regardless of one's viewpoint. Those

who attend school on athletic scholarships get everything taken care of for them – tuition, room and board, meals, etc.

Conversely, the amount of time these same student-athletes spend studying film and working on their athletic craft is much greater than any regular individual attending college might realize. That's not to make excuses for them. It's a reality.

Colter and his posse are well intended in the sense that they're not pursuing this to get back at Northwestern, but rather the NCAA. They want a voice.

If they get that voice though, it opens up a Pandora's box that no one is ready for or has established a resolution for. The reason nothing has happened yet is because there's so much gray area and so much uncertainty that exists by going down a foreign path like this.

The reason why amateurism continues to exist, no matter how much of a farce it appears to be, is because it's all the NCAA has ever known. Until people associated with the NCAA are willing to roll the dice on something like this, nothing will change. Just look at the College Football Playoff starting next year. If it didn't already exist at the FCS level, it probably would've never materialized at the FBS level.

Two big questions need to be answered though before student-athletes ever get paid like being proposed. One is obviously how that money gets distributed between revenue and non-revenue sports because this doesn't work if every student-athlete doesn't get a piece of the pie. The other question is what happens when the IRS gets involved since the whole goal of what Colter and other Northwestern players are seeking right now is unionization? What happens when the IRS wants a bit of that money that would supposedly be handed to players like Colter?

There are so many layers that need thorough discussion. Colter

should be respected for continuing to push dialogue about this issue because it's something that weighs on the minds of everyone in college sports. But until the time is taken to address everything one-by-one, nothing will happen and this is why no one should foresee anything happening anytime soon.