

J BARROW LEGAL

ATHLETE & FAMILY COUNSEL

ISSUE NO. 03

A PREMIUM GUIDE

THE PREMIUM EDITION

THE CAREER MAP

A HOLISTIC DECISION FRAMEWORK

for athletes and the families that build careers alongside them

*"Athletics is a window.
The plan is a lifetime."*

JAZMYN BARROW, ESQ.

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Nationwide

DECISION FRAMEWORK · POSITION

01 WHERE YOU ARE, WHERE YOU ARE GOING

Position begins with honesty about the starting point.

- ☐ Current level: high school, college, professional, or transitioning.
- ☐ Athletic goal for the next 12 months.
- ☐ Athletic goal for the next 3 years.
- ☐ Life goal beyond athletics — education, business, family, mission.
- ☐ Non-negotiables: school completion, geographic constraints, family duties.
- ☐ Financial position and current dependency structure.

02 THE FOUR PHASES

Every athlete moves through the same architecture. Speed and stakes vary.

- ☐ Phase 1: FOUNDATION — recruiting, first NIL, initial name recognition.
- ☐ Phase 2: DEVELOPMENT — competitive growth, expanding NIL, first material contracts.
- ☐ Phase 3: PROFESSIONAL — negotiated contracts, brand equity, career-defining decisions.
- ☐ Phase 4: TRANSITION — brand carry-over, capital deployment, next chapter.

03 DECISIONS THAT MOVE THE TRAJECTORY

Ten percent of decisions produce ninety percent of the outcome.

- ☐ School and program selection.
- ☐ First representation (agent, manager, advisor) and its structure.
- ☐ First NIL deal — it sets a floor for later deals.
- ☐ First multi-year commitment.
- ☐ Public statement, injury, or off-field event handling.
- ☐ Transition timing — draft entry, free market, retirement.

THE ATHLETIC WINDOW IS SHORT. THE LIFE AROUND IT IS NOT.

- Most competitive athletic windows last five to ten years.
- Everything built in the window — brand, capital, relationships, reputation — carries forward.
- Decisions made now determine the platform carried into the next chapter.

DECISION FRAMEWORK · FAMILY & TEAM

04 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MODELS

This is family business. Every family engages differently, and that is by design.

- ☐ Full partnership — family walks with the athlete through every decision.
- ☐ Guided partnership — family sets values and boundaries; athlete drives.
- ☐ Advisory model — family engages counsel and specialists for discrete issues.
- ☐ Independent operator — athlete drives; family provides emotional and strategic support.
- ☐ Whichever model your family chooses, name it, write it down, and revisit annually.

05 YOUR SUPPORT TEAM

Solo works until it does not.

- ☐ Legal counsel — contracts, disputes, planning, compliance.
- ☐ Financial advisor — cash flow, taxes, investments, generational planning.
- ☐ Sports agent or manager — deals, marketing, brand development.
- ☐ Mental health counsel or therapist — performance, transitions, identity beyond sport.
- ☐ Media or PR advisor — narrative, reputation, crisis response.
- ☐ Mentor or veteran peer — perspective outside the immediate ecosystem.
- ☐ Family and personal advisors — decisions that intersect with life.

06 BRAND & REPUTATION TIMELINE

Reputation compounds in both directions.

- ☐ Define the story you are telling — three sentences, no jargon.
- ☐ Identify the audiences that matter — fans, sponsors, teams, future employers.
- ☐ Set social-media guardrails — what you will not post, endorse, or comment on.
- ☐ Plan for controversy — protocol, spokespersons, legal review process.
- ☐ Build documentary evidence — save contracts, correspondence, and press.

ATHLETES AS OPERATORS

- You are running a small business with high revenue potential and short peak duration.
- Every legal, financial, and brand decision is an operational decision for that business.
- Athletes who treat their careers this way build platforms that outlast the sport.

DECISION FRAMEWORK · FOUNDATIONS & CHANGE

07 FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS

Earned is not the same as protected. Protected is not the same as compounding.

- ☐ Establish an entity structure with tax and legal counsel.
- ☐ Build 12-month and 36-month cash flow projections.
- ☐ Reserve for taxes at each payment — do not spend gross.
- ☐ Set a savings floor before variable spending increases.
- ☐ Insurance — disability, liability, career-ending event coverage.
- ☐ Long-horizon planning — investments, real estate, generational wealth strategy.

08 MILESTONES & CHECKPOINTS

Progress is measurable when the milestones are written.

- ☐ Contract review completed for every deal at or above threshold.
- ☐ Annual review of representation and advisor agreements.
- ☐ Quarterly financial review with advisor.
- ☐ Annual brand and reputation audit.
- ☐ Compliance calendar for NCAA, conference, and state rules.
- ☐ Career phase transition planned in advance, not reactively.

09 WHEN THE MAP CHANGES

Circumstances shift. So does the plan.

- ☐ Injury or health change.
- ☐ Transfer, trade, or team change.
- ☐ Significant public event affecting brand.
- ☐ New representation or advisor change.
- ☐ Financial windfall or setback.
- ☐ Personal milestone — marriage, family, education.

WHEN YOU NEED A LAWYER IN THE ROOM

Schedule a confidential 20-minute Athlete Review with Jazmyn Barrow, Esq.

→ calendly.com/jazmyn-jbarrow-legal/30min

This is a preparation guide, not legal advice. For deal- or situation-specific counsel, schedule the Athlete Review.

THE BOTTOM LINE

*Athletes who plan across seasons make cleaner decisions inside them.
If the map has changed, redraw it before the next decision.*

OTHER WAYS TO REACH US

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