
GOOD SPORT: Fantasy sites raise gambling questions

Royce Snethen, Sports Editor • December 4, 2015 • 25 views • [Leave a Comment](#)

If you are an avid sports fan like me, there is no way you haven't noticed the constant advertisement of new fantasy sports leagues like Fan Duel and Draft Kings.

You can't have ESPN, Fox Sports, or MLB Network on your TV for five minutes without hearing or seeing an ad for one of these two new fantasy sports leagues.

What's the big issue with these seemingly harmless ads? Well, they have been accused of advertising illegal gambling. In recent news, New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has called out both Draft Kings and Fan Duel by filing papers against them in the New York State Supreme Court. He is accusing them of running illegal bookmaking operations that prey upon compulsive gamblers.



Columnist Royce Snethen

How did Draft Kings and Fan Duel respond? Fan Duel almost immediately stopped all its operations in New York. Draft Kings on the other hand continued and said it wouldn't stop until they were ordered to by a judge.

What's the big deal with these two fantasy draft agencies? After all, fantasy sports have been around for years, so why cause a big stink about it now? Well, these two fantasy draft leagues operate a lot differently. Instead of lasting a whole season with a pay out to the winner at the end, they accrue weekly, sometimes even daily depending on the sport. Someone playing a daily draft could win more in one day than someone who was a part of a season long draft.

The way these daily/weekly fantasy drafts work is: you are given a salary cap and the option to choose from any player in the sport you want. Let's use baseball for example. First, you have to pick your team. As I said earlier, you can choose any player you want, as long as they are playing that on that date, and you can afford them.

You are given a base salary of \$50,000 to choose your team. The amount you have to pay a certain player depends on the current rating of that player. The highest rated third basemen might cost you up to \$5,000, while an average one will only cost \$1,500.

You choose a full team of two starting pitchers who are starting that day, three outfielders, and one of each other position (catcher, first baseman, second baseman, short-stop, and third baseman).

Once you have created your team, you can then enter it into a one-day fantasy draft contest. These contests range from \$1 to over \$1,000 to enter, and a single user could win up to \$1 million in just one day.

The main argument supporting these one-day drafts is that it takes skill and analytics when choosing a team so it technically isn't gambling. I personally agree with this and think that Schneiderman is wasting his time targeting these draft agencies.
