



When Betting Goes Out of Bounds: The Big Game

Before Valentine's Day rolls around, we're celebrating another American holiday—football's biggest day of the year. However, it's important to remember it's not only the players on the field battling challenges on February 12th. **With a rise in sports gambling and advertising from online betting companies, The Big Game is not quite as family-friendly as years past, especially for those struggling with a gambling problem.**

How Gambling Has Changed the Game

Today, viewers are being drawn into gambling's largest single day event given the bombardment of advertisements and the ability to wager continuously throughout a game. **Another growing concern is that players and coaches may be tempted by the prospect of winning more than just a title^[1].** More specifically, with gambling serving as a focal point of current football culture, when a bad call is made, it begs the question whether it was simply an error in judgment or if something else was at play.

Betting Platforms are Big Players in Advertising

While gambling on football was once frowned upon by the National Football League, sports betting companies are now spending \$7 million for 30 seconds of airtime during The Big Game to encourage viewers to place their wagers.

Between November 2020 and November 2021 alone, the gambling industry, including regulated sports wagering, accounted for \$488 million of advertising, with a majority derived from fantasy sports platforms^[2]. These companies have further enlisted household names like Jamie Foxx and retired NFL punter Pat McAfee to raise brand awareness to draw more bettors in^[3].



continued on next page

Although sports gambling has spread like wildfire through both legal and illegal online betting opportunities, this cultural tradition has been overshadowed by the risk it poses to those who struggle with gambling addiction. This is certainly true within Florida where although sports wagering and online gambling remain illegal, many residents are gaining access, placing wagers, and experiencing difficulties. Proof of this are contacts to the **888-ADMIT-IT** 24/7 Problem Gambling HelpLine. **According to the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling’s 2021-2022 Annual HelpLine Report, online gambling (of all types), reported as the gambler’s primary gambling problem, has experienced steady increases over the past three fiscal years**—a 42% increase from 2019/2020 to 2020/2021 and an additional 23% rise between 2020/2021 to 2021/2022^[4]. The most common type of online gambling reported was online sports betting (55%)^[5].

Further, while there is no way to determine the actual amount of money wagered, in November 2022, the American Gaming Association estimated that 49% of sports bettors will place bets with illegal bookies and offshore sites totaling \$63.8 billion versus \$100 billion wagered through legal avenues^[6].

Recovery is the Winning Play

The good news is recovery from compulsive gambling doesn’t have to be done alone. **Put Your One Sure Thing, 888-ADMIT-IT, in your playbook for the big game’s onslaught of sports betting ads and temptations.** Learn how to cut off options



for gaining access to online betting sites, to eliminating the receipt of online gambling ads, to speaking with someone in recovery, to identifying self-help programs and online treatment by calling or texting 888-ADMIT-IT, starting a live chat at gamblinghelp.org, or reaching out on social media platforms.

References:

1. Camenker, Jacob. "List of NFL Players Suspended for Gambling: Calvin Ridley Joins Josh Shaw, Others Busted for Betting." *Sporting News*, 9 March 2022, <https://www.sportingnews.com/us/nfl/news/nfl-players-list-suspended-gambling-calvin-ridley-josh-shaw-betting/w9ctph43n2qhkunrdqlsa9lm>.
2. Shriber, Todd. "Sportsbook Advertising Is Growing and More Is on the Way." *Casino.org*, 29 December 2021, <https://www.casino.org/news/sportsbook-advertising-is-growing-and-more-is-on-the-way>.
3. "Why Sports Betting Platforms Are Turning to Celebrity and Influencer Endorsements" *The Digital Renegades*, 30 March 2022, <https://www.thedigitalrenegades.com/why-sports-betting-platforms-are-turning-to-celebrity-and-influencer-endorsements>.
4. 2021-2022 24-Hour Problem Gambling Annual HelpLine Report. Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, February 2023.
5. *Ibid.*
6. "Sizing the Illegal and Unregulated Gaming Markets in the U.S." *American Gaming Association*, 30 November 2022, <https://www.americangaming.org/resources/sizing-the-illegal-and-unregulated-gaming-markets-in-the-u-s>.

Contact FCCG’s confidential and multilingual 24/7 Problem Gambling HelpLine:

Call or Text: 888-ADMIT-IT

Email: fccg@gamblinghelp.org

Live Chat: gamblinghelp.org

Tap into the 888-ADMIT-IT App or reach out on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.