

# JUST SPORTS, SO WHY SELL SEX?

Novig x Sydney Sweeney: When Do We Draw  
the Line on Oversexualization?

## CAMPAIGN BREAKDOWN



Just  
Sports

## CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Novig is a sports prediction market that allows users to trade predictions on sporting events directly with other users. Unlike broader prediction-market platforms, Novig wanted to position itself as a platform focused on one thing: sports.

To communicate that message, the company launched its “Just Sports” campaign with actress Sydney Sweeney. She joined Novig not only as the face of the campaign but also as a strategic partner and equity holder.

The advertisement shows Sweeney wearing little to no clothing while posing with footballs, basketballs, hockey equipment, a tennis racket, and other sports props.

Throughout the commercial, she repeatedly emphasizes the word “sports.” At one point, she tells viewers: “You can’t trade this. I just look good here.”

The concept was likely intended to be provocative, humorous, and self-aware. However, the execution created a major disconnect between what Novig said it wanted audiences to remember and what it actually gave them to focus on.

# HOW THE PUBLIC RESPONDED

Sydney Sweeney faced backlash for using sexualized imagery to promote Novig's sports prediction app. Athletes like gymnast Gracie Kramer argued that the campaign reduced women in sports to their bodies rather than celebrating their abilities.

Sweeney responded by sharing nude photoshoots of professional athletes, but critics said the comparison missed the larger issue of context.

**SOURCE:**  **Buzz  
Feed**

CELEBRITY

## Sydney Sweeney Is Being Blasted For This “Gross” Sports Betting Ad, And Her Response Just Made Things Worse

Did we learn nothing from the American Eagle debacle?

Posted 5 hours ago

 132 Comments



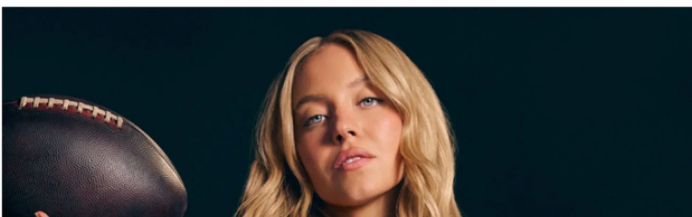
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## Sydney Sweeney Faces Backlash for Sexualized Novig Ad: “Exactly Why Women in Sports Aren’t Taken Seriously”

Many online users, including women who work in the sports industry, have shared their frustration with the actress' campaign for the sports trading app, which features multiple shots of her mostly naked body covered with different sports balls and uniforms.

BY MCKINLEY FRANKLIN  SEPTEMBER 11, 2026 6:50PM



The campaign faced backlash for featuring Sweeney mostly nude and using sports equipment to cover her body while promoting Novig. Critics called it “exactly why women in sports aren’t taken seriously,” arguing that the advertisement reinforced the idea that women’s bodies are more marketable than their skills and achievements.

The controversy ultimately shifted attention away from Novig’s platform and toward the continued sexualization of women in sports advertising.

**SOURCE:**  **THE  
Hollywood  
REPORTER**

# WHERE THE CAMPAIGN MISSED THE MARK

1

## The campaign contradicted its own message

The campaign's central promise was "Just Sports." However, the advertisement deliberately directed attention away from sports.

Sydney Sweeney's body was the primary visual, while the sports equipment functioned mainly as strategically placed props. The creative concept depended on viewers noticing her nudity, not becoming interested in sports or understanding Novig.

2

## Saying "sports" repeatedly did not communicate anything meaningful

The advertisement says "sports" numerous times, but repetition is not the same as explanation.

Audiences still learn very little about:

- How Novig works
- What users can trade
- How it differs from a sportsbook
- Why peer-to-peer trading matters
- What problem the platform solves
- Why someone should download it

3

## The joke was not as clever as the brand may have believed

The humor appears to come from the contradiction: Novig keeps insisting that the campaign is about "just sports" while presenting highly sexualized imagery.

But recognizing a contradiction does not automatically make it clever.

The joke relies on one of advertising's oldest tactics: using an attractive, partially nude woman to capture men's attention.

4

## It reduced Sydney Sweeney to the image people already place on her

Sydney Sweeney is an actress, producer, businesswoman, and Novig equity partner. Yet the campaign ignored those roles and leaned into the sexualized image that has followed her throughout her career.

This feels very complicated given her previous comments about feeling dehumanized by the public's fixation on her body.

5

## It relied on an outdated view of male consumers

Sports prediction-market usage skews toward younger men. Novig likely assumed that featuring a widely recognized sex symbol would capture this audience's attention.

However, the campaign appears to reduce young male sports fans to a stereotype: Men like sports. Men like attractive women. Therefore, use a nude woman to sell them a sports product.

6

## It reinforced damaging ideas about women in sports

Women athletes continue to fight for media coverage centered on their performance rather than their appearance.

Against that backdrop, Novig placed a non-athlete at the center of a sports campaign and used sports equipment to cover her naked body.

Women were once again presented as visual entertainment within a male-dominated sports environment.



# PR TAKEAWAYS

## ATTENTION IS NOT THE SAME AS IMPACT

The campaign generated millions of views and significant online conversation, but much of that conversation focused on Sydney Sweeney's body and the backlash, not Novig's platform.

A campaign's impact should be measured by whether audiences understood the message, trusted the brand, and felt motivated to use the product. Novig gained visibility, but its product and purpose were overshadowed by controversy.

## THE CREATIVE SHOULD HAVE SUPPORTED THE BRAND'S MESSAGE

Novig wanted to position itself as a platform focused on "just sports," yet the advertisement relied heavily on sexualized imagery.

Instead, the campaign should have positioned Sweeney as a credible equity partner and used her platform to introduce Novig's purpose, benefits, and differences. The creative could still have been bold and entertaining without making her body the main selling point.

## BRANDS MUST CONSIDER EVERY AUDIENCE AFFECTED BY A CAMPAIGN

Although Novig may have intended to attract younger male sports fans, the campaign also reached women athletes, women sports fans, sports organizations, and other stakeholders. The backlash showed that these perspectives may not have been meaningfully considered during development.

Novig should have tested the campaign with diverse audiences and evaluated how its portrayal of women could affect trust before releasing it.