

Ohio State Suspends Coach Tressel Two Games for NCAA Violation - The Sports Bank (News Release)

Ohio State University has fined longtime football coach Jim Tressel \$250,000 dollars, in addition to a two-game suspension after uncovering that Tressel had prior knowledge of his players' NCAA violations.

Vice president and director of athletics, Gene Smith; head football coach, Jim Tressel, and president of Ohio State University, E. Gordon Gee addressed the media Tuesday at 7 PM, regarding the issue and ongoing NCAA investigation.

Athletic Director Gene Smith began the conference by clearly reiterating the University's support of Coach Tressel and dismissing any rumors of Tressel's resignation.

"He is a coach of young men and we trust him 100%," Smith said, "...he is our coach and we trust him implicitly."

Smith went on to underscore the separation of the players' infractions and the NCAA investigation of Tressel's negligence. The appeal process, he stated, is still ongoing and was not discussed.

In fact, it was discovered that his players' infractions were within Tressel's knowledge, as long back as April—not December, as he and the university had originally stated.

This case, which was under federal investigation, involved six of his players. This star-studded list includes starting quarterback Terrelle Pryor and leading rusher Dan Herron, both accused of selling memorabilia and accepting 'gifts' in serious breach of NCAA rules.

Investigation on Tressel began in January, and was ongoing when Yahoo! leaked a story, citing an anonymous source, reporting Tressel as having prior knowledge of the players' involvement in the federal investigation.

Allegedly, Tressel had received emails from a source, that has chosen to remain confidential, informing him of the involvement of two of his players, last spring. Confidentiality, Gene Smith reiterated to the packed conference room, is "seriously critical in a federal investigation".

"Quite honestly, I was scared," Coach Jim Tressel addressed the media, "...As we sit at home, we talk about how we are going to take care of these young people and we're going to treat them like they're our own."

He spoke quietly but with a stern demeanor, "Admittedly, I did not give quite as much thought to the potential NCAA part of things...I was primarily concerned about the well-being of the young people."

Tressel went on to establish that he was not looking for anyone's pity and was taking full responsibility for his actions.

"The most pathetic thing is a leader who's looking for self-pity," Tressel said, quoting ex-president George W. Bush.

The president of the University, E. Gordon Gee, spoke as well, reiterating Smith's statements on the school's support of Coach Tressel.

"As president, it is unusual for me to be here but he is an unusual coach..." President Gee said, "Jim Tressel has dedicated the last decade of his life to this university. Indeed, he's had great success on the football field and we applaud that... and I think equally importantly, he's had great success in the building of the character and reputation of this university, for which I'm entirely grateful."

Before concluding, Smith again took the podium to clarify that the school recognizes Tressel's negligence to report the information as a violation of NCAA rules, and are fully in cooperation with any and all investigation. As a result, Tressel will pay a fine, accept a two-day suspension and attend a conference-approved compliance seminar.

"At the end of the day, Jim Tressel is our football coach," Smith said, "All the speculation about him being terminated is pure speculation, which in this case is not warranted."