



News Release

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NCAA REQUIRES LOSS OF CONTESTS FOR SIX OHIO STATE FOOTBALL STUDENT-ATHLETES

INDIANAPOLIS--- Five football student-athletes from The Ohio State University must sit out the first five games of the 2011 season for selling awards, gifts and university apparel and receiving improper benefits in 2009, the NCAA has determined.

A sixth football student-athlete must sit out the first game in 2011 for receiving discounted services in violation of NCAA rules.

The violations fall under the NCAA's preferential treatment bylaws.

In addition to missing five games next season, student-athletes Mike Adams, Daniel Herron, Devier Posey, Terrelle Pryor and Solomon Thomas must repay money and benefits ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$2,500. The repayments must be made to a charity.

Student-athlete Jordan Whiting must sit out the first game next year and pay \$150 to a charity for the value of services that were discounted because of his status as a student-athlete.

"These are significant penalties based on findings and information provided by the university," said Kevin Lennon, NCAA vice president of academic and membership affairs.

The decision from the NCAA student-athlete reinstatement staff does not include a withholding condition for the Allstate Sugar Bowl. The withholding condition was suspended and the student-athletes will be eligible to play in the bowl game Jan. 4 based on several factors.

These include the acknowledgment the student-athletes did not receive adequate rules education during the time period the violations occurred, Lennon said.

NCAA policy allows suspending withholding penalties for a championship or bowl game if it was reasonable at the time the student-athletes were not aware they were committing violations, along with considering the specific circumstances of each situation. In addition, there must not be any competitive advantage related to the violations, and the student-athletes must have eligibility remaining.

The policy for suspending withholding conditions for bowl games or NCAA championship competition recognizes the unique opportunity these events provide at the end of a season, and they are evaluated differently from a withholding perspective. In this instance, the facts are consistent with the established policy, Lennon said.

Gene Smith, associate vice president and director of athletics at Ohio State, said the university will “further enhance” its rules education in the future based on this situation.

“We were not as explicit with our student-athlete education as we should have been in the 2007-08 and 2008-09 academic years regarding the sale of apparel, awards and gifts issued by the athletics department,” Smith said. “We began to significantly improve our education in November of 2009 to address these issues. After going through this experience, we will further enhance our education for all our student-athletes as we move forward.”

The standard withholding condition in cases like these involving the five student-athletes

is four games, or 30 percent of a season. A fifth game was added to the penalty because these student-athletes did not immediately disclose the violations when presented with the appropriate rules education, Lennon said.

“Once a student-athlete understands a violation has occurred, they must immediately come forward to report it,” he said. “That did not happen, so the additional one-game penalty was imposed.”

The university declared the student-athletes ineligible on Monday (Dec. 20) and requested reinstatement from the NCAA.

As part of their reinstatement, Adams must repay \$1,000 for selling his 2008 Big Ten championship ring and Herron must repay \$1,150 for selling his football jersey, pants and shoes for \$1,000 and receiving discounted services worth \$150.

Posey must repay \$1,250 for selling his 2008 Big Ten championship ring for \$1,200 and receiving discounted services worth \$50, while Pryor must repay \$2,500 for selling his 2008 Big Ten championship ring, a 2009 Fiesta Bowl sportsmanship award and his 2008 Gold Pants, a gift from the university.

Solomon must repay \$1,505 for selling his 2008 Big Ten championship ring for \$1,000, his 2008 Gold Pants for \$350 and receiving discounted services worth \$155.

During the reinstatement process, each case is evaluated based on the specific facts of the particular case by NCAA staff. Prior to reaching a decision, staff considers any guidelines

established by the Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement, a student-athlete's responsibility for the violation, as well as any mitigating factors presented by the institution.

The university can appeal the decision to the Division I NCAA Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement, an independent committee comprised of representatives from NCAA member colleges, universities and athletic conferences. This committee can reduce or remove the condition, but it cannot increase the staff-imposed conditions.

Reinstatement decisions are independent of the NCAA enforcement process and typically are made once the facts of the student-athlete's involvement are determined. The reinstatement process is likely to conclude prior to the close of an enforcement investigation. It is NCAA policy not to comment on current, pending or potential investigations.