

The NCAA Investigation

— an editorial —

By the time you read this, the results of the NCAA investigation undoubtedly will be known. As I write in late October, I haven't the foggiest notion of what those results will be. I worry that once again the University's athletic program will find itself in a defensive position, as was the case after the dismissal of football Coach Al Onofrio and the implementation of a fund-raising related ticket policy in the late 1970s. The phrase that keeps running through my mind is from Stephen Vincent Benet's epic poem about the Civil War, "It is over now, but they will not let it be over."

Nearly 22 months have passed since assistant coach Bob Sundvold admitted giving P.J. Mays, a basketball recruit enrolled at MU but academically ineligible for the team, \$135 to fly home to check on his high-school transcript. That's a major violation by NCAA standards. The University hired lawyers Mike Glazier and Mike Slive to ferret out the truth, to determine whether or not this was an isolated instance, by investigating all the allegations pertaining to MU's basketball program published by the state's two metropolitan newspapers. The two lawyers also were to prepare the University's defense before the NCAA infractions committee.

Working with NCAA investigators, Glazier and Slive conducted well over 100 interviews. The investigation resulted in 15 allegations, some with several parts. Later, two other charges were added. To many Tiger fans, the specific charges didn't seem that serious. No big bucks were involved; no significant recruiting advantage was gained. The NCAA, however, regarded several of the charges as major.

After the University's appearance before the NCAA committee on infractions, it was revealed that Glazier and Slive — and attorneys for Sundvold, assistant Rich Daley and head Coach Norm Stewart — were successful in eliminating or modifying several of the allegations. Remaining, however, were

charges of unethical conduct against the three coaches and a lack of institutional control over the basketball program, with Stewart specifically mentioned. The bill from Glazier and Slive is approaching \$450,000.

This was the first time MU ever had appeared before the infractions committee. It was the first time Stewart ever had appeared, and he has been in college coaching 33 years, 29 as a head coach. Missouri fans, therefore, had no experience in tracking an NCAA investigation, but this one seemed to take several strange turns.

There was the perception by some that Stewart was not really being supported by the MU administration. There was the perception by others that the coaches were not being all that cooperative. In July, Stewart called a press conference in Kansas City to give his side of the investigation. Columnists at the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* obviously had a high-ranking University official at their disposal. The question came down to whether some or all of the coaches would be fired. Apparently, that answer depended on what the NCAA decided as to the charges of unethical conduct and institutional control. Specific allegations assumed less importance.

Is the University in a no-win situation? If Stewart is not fired, will that verdict be accepted, especially by the media, including the three of four Stewart-phobics on the *Post-Dispatch* sports staff? If one or both of the assistant coaches are dismissed, will they be perceived as scapegoats? If Stewart is fired, will some believe that the University gave a raw deal to Stewart, the MU alumnus who has headed the Tiger basketball program for more than 23 years and built it into a national power, the alumnus who on Nov. 3 was inducted into the charter class of the new MU Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame? Ultimately, it will be up to Mizzou alumni to answer those questions.

It is over now, if we will but let it be over. — Steve Shinn



Basketball schedule

- Nov. 16 Lithuanian-USSR National Team (exhibition)
- Nov. 21 Spirit Express (national)
- Nov. 27 at Rutgers (ESPN)
- Nov. 29 Florida A&M
- Dec. 1 Oregon (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Dec. 4 at Creighton (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Dec. 8 Arkansas (ESPN)
- Dec. 12 at Bradley (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Dec. 19 Illinois (in St. Louis) (ESPN)
- Dec. 22 Gambling
- Dec. 30 Texas-Pan American
- Jan. 2 Memphis State (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Jan. 5 Oklahoma State (Raycom)
- Jan. 9 Prairie View A&M
- Jan. 12 Kansas State (Raycom)
- Jan. 15 Oklahoma (ESPN)
- Jan. 19 at Kansas (Raycom)
- Jan. 22 Alaska-Fairbanks
- Jan. 26 Iowa State (Raycom)
- Jan. 30 at Nebraska (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Feb. 2 at Oklahoma (Raycom)
- Feb. 6 at Colorado (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Feb. 12 Kansas (ESPN)
- Feb. 16 at Oklahoma State (Raycom)
- Feb. 20 Nebraska (Mizzou Sports Network)
- Feb. 23 at Iowa State (Raycom)
- Feb. 27 at Kansas State (Mizzou Sports Network)
- March 2 Colorado (Raycom)
- March 4 Notre Dame (Mizzou Sports Network)
- March 8-10 Big Eight Tournament (in Kansas City)