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Football player fined \$15,000 in agents case

By Adrienne Drell April 25, 1989 Publication: Chicago Sun-Times Page: 14 Word Count: 388

Professional football player Cris Carter, the only athlete prosecuted in the recent sports agents scandal, was fined \$15,000 and directed to spend 600 hours in community service Monday. Carter, a wide receiver with the Philadelphia Eagles, pleaded guilty last fall to mail fraud and obstruction of justice charges for lying about signing improper professional contracts and taking \$10,000 from agents Norby Walters, Lloyd Bloom and David Lueddeke while still playing college football.

A tearful Carter was sentenced to three years probation by U.S. District Judge Brian Duff, who told the athlete: "I'm aware you were 19 years old when these pimps attempted to seduce you. People are always trying to influence you. . . . You have to rise above it."

Looking dapper in a designer suit, yellow handkerchief and blue alligator shoes, but his voice cracking with emotion, Carter, 23, had asked Duff for mercy in meting out what could have been a maximum 10-year prison term and \$500,000 in fines.

The only one of 44 athletes to be prosecuted for his involvement with the agents, Carter has already paid back \$4,519 to his alma mater, Ohio State University.

Agents Walters and Bloom were recently convicted of defrauding colleges out of scholarship money by signing up athletes to improper contracts. Lueddeke pleaded guilty to perjury and

obstruction of justice. All three await sentencing.

Carter, voted Ohio State's most valuable player in the Rose, Citrus and Cotton bowls, was lured into signing the contracts by his older brother, George, according to defense attorney David Bohan.

Carter "went from campus hero to campus pariah," said Bohan in recalling Carter's senior year when he was thrown off the team after losing his eligibility.

Bohan said Carter's brother had been secretly hired by Walters and Bloom to recruit star college players.

U.S. Attorney Anton Valukas said Carter, like the 43 other athletes entangled with the agents, was to have received a special no-prosecution deal until he lied to prosecutors and a federal grand jury.

Valukas said he had originally intended to argue for a prison sentence, but Carter's extensive public service "without prompting from others" showed his initiative "to do something for others."

Carter has worked with young cancer patients, set up a fund for the families of two slain police officers and raised money for the United Negro College Fund. Outside the courtroom, he vowed to continue his efforts.

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