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Sports agent gets 26 months for lying

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A Los Angeles sports agent was sentenced Friday to 26 months in prison for lying to a grand jury about his dealings with college athletes. David Lueddeke, 37, also was fined \$10,000 and barred from acting as a sports agent for three years after prison.

Lueddeke pleaded guilty to lying before a grand jury and to obstruction of justice.

Last summer, he appeared before a grand jury and lied about his representation of three athletes. He has also pleaded guilty to falsifying contracts submitted to the grand jury.

Although Lueddeke claimed he was "in an irrational state and panic-stricken" when he lied, U.S. District Judge Ann C. Williams rejected his pleas for leniency. "Perjury is a very serious offense which strikes at the very heart of our system of justice," she said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Howard Pearl said Lueddeke impeded the government's investigation of other agents, including **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom**.

Because Lueddeke lied about \$5,000 he gave former Ohio State University wide receiver Cris Carter, Pearl said, prosecutors had to delay indictments last summer of **Walters** and **Bloom**.

The two men were recently convicted on **fraud** charges and await sentencing June 19. Carter has pleaded guilty to mail **fraud** and obstruction charges and earlier this week was placed on probation.

The grand jury investigation that led to the indictments was the first of its kind in history, federal authorities said.

"I am very sorry for what I've done and for interfering with Mr. Pearl's investigation," Lueddeke told Williams. "I have suffered incredibly. . . . Please have compassion."

A psychiatrist testified Friday that Lueddeke was so distraught and guilt-ridden when summoned before the grand jury he entered "a disassociative state" and couldn't be held accountable for his actions.

However, "He knew what he was doing and the effect of what he was doing," Williams declared.

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