MUE

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And, since spring, the program has faced what might be its greatest challenge to date: nameless, faceless allegations that booster Ed Martin of Detroit has paid players on the men's basketball team large sums of money, and given them expensive gifts.

"There's no question that when (such cases) are written about over a long period of time, it does tarnish a school's reputation," Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delaney said.

"The question is, at the end of the day, what will the findings be? Will it be reports of alleged violations or will it be findings of real violations? It's hard to tell what part is (press) coverage and what part is the action of the student-athlete or coach."

The university has paid a top-gun national law firm almost \$1,000 a day for the past five months to get to the bottom of the Martin allegations, but it has met with an almost complete lack of success. None of the charges has been proven, but neither have they been disproved. Simply because they have been written about and reported so frequently, however, many people might simply assume them to be fac-

Tarnished reputation

In many people's minds, apparently guilty until proven innocent, the university's reputation has suffered as never before.

A recent column in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch featured Michigan in a spoof of sports camps — the last school in the country that would have earned such a dubious mention even a few short years ago. At the "University of Michigan Basketball Payola Camp," called "no better place to work on your \$100 handshake," according to the article's broad humor, recruits will learn "the proper etiquette for dealing with murky middlemen, off-campus party officers and school inquiries into

your aunt's Land Cruiser lease." "Like a lot of things in life, this is a case of perceptions being viewed as reality," said an admittedly frustrated Tim McCormick, a basketball star for the Wolverines from 1981-84 who went on to a 10-year career in the pros and now is an official with the NBA Players Association.

"I don't believe there's been any fundamental change in Michigan athletics," he said. "I grew up loving the Then I did, and all my dreams were met and surpassed. I loved Michigan then, and I love it now — and I don't

see that things are any different today. "But the perception is very, very different. There are people who now regard Michigan as a renegade school."

If players did receive improper benefits, McCormick said, "it's all behind the scenes; nobody knows about it. But the perception is, Michigan pays players — and I don't think that's fair. I'm not going to say whether any players received money because I don't



James Borchuck / The Detroit News

Throughout all the inquiries about Michigan's alleged violations, supporters close to the men's basketball program have maintained that coach Steve Fisher's actions have remained above reproach.

know, although it appears it may have happened. But the people who do this (give players money and gifts) are fans or shoe companies or agents - people completely independent of the university.

"I can tell you this: Of all the people I've known in my life, I'd probably pick (men's basketball coach) Steve Fisher in the top 10 for honesty and integrity. If these things happened, I know in my heart he had absolutely no knowledge

McCormick's primary job is the education of pro basketball players from the Pistons and other Central Division teams — in HIV and AIDS awareness, financial and career planning and substance abuse, among other areas. He also gives talks to dozens of college teams and to the most sought-after high school players in the nation, giving him a unique insight into this one area of U-M's reputation. It isn't good.

Recruiting suffers

"This has definitely hurt Michigan's recruiting," McCormick said. "I spent a University of Michigan. All I ever week with the top 80 (prep) players in wanted to do was have a career there. the country, and nobody even mentioned Michigan — and that hurts. Just three years ago, a majority of those kids thought it would be great to play for Michigan — a great school, with a great program, the opportunity to play right away, which is huge for these

> "Michigan is a great school, first and foremost, and it really bothers me when the athletic department is responsible for things that tarnish that

> There are those who would argue that no such effect has occurred, out

side the insular world of the sports

"I don't think the university's reputation has been diminished at all," said U-M Regent Andrea Fischer Newman, a Northwest Airlines vice-president for government, law and civic affairs.

"People will make snide jokes -'Ha, ha, it's Michigan's turn' - but I don't perceive it having tarnished the university at all," she said. "I'm in California as regularly as in Florida and Washington, D.C., and the issues that have come up in the papers in Detroit I've not seen in those papers or on the TV news. Based on what I can see, it's a local story."

Michigan's athletic department, she points out, is one small area, with a budget of \$35 million, at a university with an operating budget of \$2.7 billion, an enrollment of 51,293 on three campuses and more employees than anyone in Michigan outside the Big Three auto companies.

"I am very troubled by the (athletic department) incidents," Newman said. "Unfortunately, in athletics, an incident tends to get blown up."

A half-dozen U-M graduates chosen at random expressed similar views.

"I always figured this was just normal, college-kid stuff, but it got in the paper because they were athletes," said Krista Wicklund, who graduated last year. She said she has heard nothing of the current investigation, although she is far from an unaware person — she interned at the CIA last summer and now is legislative correspondent for U.S. Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J.

Michigan is "much more, much greater than the athletic department there's so much more to learn there than just how to play basketball, or

football," said Dan Fife, basketball coach at Clarkston High.

Fife is a U-M graduate; his son, Dugan, was an important Wolverines basketball player for four years before graduating recently with a business degree in organizational studies. And Fife's younger son, Dane, a rising senior at Clarkston High and a star guard on the basketball team, is being pursued by Michigan, Duke, North Carolina, Indiana and Michigan State.

All the negative newspaper stories in the world won't change Dan Fife's mind, he said. The decision will be his son's, but he devoutly hopes Dane's new uniform will be maize and blue.

New leadership

Former U-M Athletic Director Don Canham said the repeated embarrassments suffered by Michigan athletics in the '90s were caused by two fundamental changes: in the way the athletic department is supervised, and in the nature of athletes themselves.

"We never had any problems, in 70 years," Canham said last week. "Then they had the election of a new president, James Duderstadt, who took control over intercollegiate athletics. And for the first time, nonprofessionals began to run the athletic department."

Duderstadt, who was traveling last week and unavailable for an interview, stripped power from the board of control of intercollegiate athletics and began making policy decisions personally.

Bo Schembechler, Michigan's legendary strongman football coach, who became athletic director when Canham reached mandatory retirement age in 1988, might have left Michigan two years later as a direct result of Duderstadt's policies, Canham said.

"Bo told me this story, in front of other people," Canham recounted. "He was on a conference phone call the day before Penn State was brought into the Big Ten. The commissioner, who was chairman of this meeting, all the Big Ten directors were on it, said, 'Tomorrow, we are bringing Penn State into the Big Ten.'

"Schembechler said, 'Wait a minute - have any of you other directors consulted with your presidents or have any inkling whatsoever that Penn State was about to come into the confer-

"Not a single director had had any input whatsoever — in other words, it was done totally in secret by the presidents. And Schembechler said at that time he made up his mind that he could not work with James Duderstadt. That, if he wouldn't consult with him on something that affected intercollegiate athletics that much, he wouldn't consult with him on any-

Schembechler was out of town last week and did not respond to a request for an interview left on his office voice-

When Schembechler left, Canham said, Duderstadt unilaterally appointed Jack Wiedenbach, whose background was in business operations, to succeed

"When you have somebody without a background in athletics, you really don't know what to look for," Canham said. "Jack is a friend of mine, a nice guy, and it may be coincidental, but that's when the problems began. I don't blame Wiedenbach, I blame the president who did away with faculty con-

Wiedenbach did not respond to a request for an interview left on his home answering machine.

And, Canham said, a former NCAA chairman who once was voted the most influential athletic director in the country, the pots of gold showered on pro athletes have radically changed college recruits and recruiting.

Players used to beg for a chance to compete at great schools such as Michigan, he said. "Now, we see a Joe Paterno (Penn State football coach), a John Thompson (Georgetown basketball coach), sitting in some kid's living room begging him to go to their school. I never have understood why athletes are idolized the way they are anyway, but these kids have no concept of who they are or what life is all about."

That makes athletes harder to discipline, Canham said.

"In the past, there were some great disciplinarians at Michigan in football, and I'm not sure Lloyd Carr isn't one of them," he said. "You didn't have any problems at Michigan in football because Fritz Crisler was a dominant figure, Schembechler was a dominant figure. They didn't tolerate any nonsense. I saw Schembechler leave one of our great players home in a crucial game because he missed classes that week. And I saw him send a guy home from the Rose Bowl because he missed curfew by 20 minutes — an 11 o'clock

"And that's why he never had any trouble."

University still a leader in research, academics

There is plenty to be proud of in Michigan athletics: It was the first university in the Big Ten to achieve gender equity - the same percentage of women in athletics as in the student population; it leads the conference with 276 championships or cochampionships; it pays its \$35million budget itself and returns money to the school's general

But far more important is the university's status among the world's centers of higher educa-

Educating generations of families since 20 years before Michigan was a state, the university can point to these accomplishments:

- The National Research Council ranks Michigan second only to University of California-Berkeley among publicly supported universities in the scholarly quality and effectiveness of its doctoral programs. More than 500 doctorate degrees are awarded every year to doctors, lawyers, dentists, pharmacists, social workers and other professionals.
- Teaching and research staff is rated one of top five in country. Faculty includes Pulitzer Prize winners, an astronaut, acclaimed artists, composers, novelists and film makers.
- U-M Hospitals provide the latest in technologically advanced medical care; its facilities receive more than 800,000 outpatient visits a
- It has the largest pre-law and premed enrollments in the country; more Michigan undergrads are accepted into medical school than from any other university.
- With an endowment of \$1.8 billion, Michigan is the first public university ever to receive Wall Street's Aar credit ranking; and the first to raise \$1 billion in a single fund-raising effort — the Campaign for Michigan, begun in May 1996 and already beyond its goal although not scheduled to end until this fall.
- U-M is the nation's leading research university, with expenditures last fiscal year of \$441.3 million, the largest among U.S. public universities and second-largest among all universities.
- Its students undergraduates and graduates — come from every state in the nation and 100 foreign countries. More than 60 percent were in the top 10 percent of their high-school graduating

- Fred Girard

The troubles - A brief history

A review of local and national news stories since 1990 found more than two dozen instances in which the University of Michigan's athletics program brought unfavorable attention:

March 1991: In the first major-violations case in school history, Michigan is placed on two years' probation by the NCAA for lack of institutional control over its baseball program. Coach Bud Middaugh is found to have given some of his players about \$82,000 from 1983-88.

April 1992: Four people are arrested as Ann Arbor police use tear gas to break up an unruly crowd of about 4,000 after Michigan loses NCAA basketball championship to Duke, 71-51.

August 1992: University receives public-relations black eye when Fab Fivers Jalen Rose and Chris Webber and teammate Eric Riley agree to attend a benefit for a 4-year-old child who needed an operation to save his hearing, in exchange for \$300 each and limousine transportation.

October 1992: Rose and four other men are caught in a west side drug house during a raid by Detroit police. Police find small bags and packets of marijuana in the house, and four packets of crack cocaine in the pockets of one of the men. No drugs are found on Rose. Rose's reason for being in the house, he tells police, was to try to turn a friend away from drugs. Police still ticket him for loitering in a place where drugs are kept, a misdemeanor bunishable by up to 90 days in jail and a \$500 fine. The minor incident had major consequences when police, Michigan basketball team officials and Rose try to cover it up. Police never forward Rose's ticket to 36th District Court, in effect killing the case, documents reveal months later. Giving Rose a ticket, a police official then said, "probably would have been harmful to a promising and budding career." Before the actual circumstances are revealed, Rose and coach

Steve Fisher deny the incident had

December 1992: Campus police arrest redshirt freshman tight end Damon Jones on a charge of setting off an illegal explosive in his dorm room. He is not allowed to make Rose Bowl trip and is sentenced to a lenient probation that would allow the conviction later to be erased from books.

December 1992: After a victory against Iowa, Rose and Webber travel to Detroit for a rap concert at the Club International on Fort featuring 2 Live Crew and Run DMC. At 3:30 a.m., the players accompany the rap groups to the Pontchartrain Hotel, where they had rented the entire 16th floor. Soon, a plainclothes security guard sees the party turn ugly — two women reportedly sexually assaulted, crack cocaine and marijuana used openly, room-service carts and furniture destroyed, a man brandishing a pistol. Detroit police are called and respond in force; scores of people are evicted from hotel, some led off in handcuffs. Pontchartrain chief of security spirits Rose and Webber down a back elevator, telling them, "Guys, this isn't the place for you to be."

The incident never makes the papers, but the security chief reports it to U-M assistant Perry Watson. Soon after, the team leaves for a tournament in Hawaii. Rose and Webber spend much of their time confined to their rooms.

August 1993: Jones violates probation, for never having served the 30day jail sentence that accompanied it, and is suspended from football team. He eventually transfers. Rod Payne, a redshirt freshman center, also is suspended: He was arrested in May by the campus police on charges of larceny from an automobile. His sentence of 30 days of community service is postponed until after the season.

August 1993: Former sports agent Lloyd Bloom, who had conditionally pleaded guilty to offering college ath-

letes cash and gifts for signing professional contracts, is found shot to death in his Malibu, Calif., home. Bloom and co-defendant Norby Walters were convicted of racketeering in 1989 in an alleged scheme that involved offering inducements to college athletes for signing professional contracts. Federal prosecutors had alleged Walters and Bloom secretly signed football players at Michigan and Purdue to exclusive representation contracts.

January 1994: Basketball starters Jimmy King and Ray Jackson, and reserve Chris Fields, along with Damon Jones and his teammate, placekicker Remy Hamilton, are arrested, caught on a security camera stealing beer from a party store. Jones is acquitted. The three basketball players plead no contest to retail fraud; Fisher suspends them for one game. Rose had accompanied them to the party store, the surveillance camera showed, but police suppressed that fact from their report and did not charge Rose after his teammates told investigators Rose had not stolen anything.

March 1994: Football player Shonte Peoples fires a pistol at police he mistakes for car thieves trying to steal his expensive new Jeep, which he had just modified with a \$7,000 stereo package. Four months later, a jury finds Peoples guilty on two felony charges of assault with a dangerous weapon.

March 1994: Rose undergoes "routine" questioning by federal agents who picked up his voice on wiretaps during an investigation into a Detroit drug ring. Three agents of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration meet with Rose and Fisher at Crisler Arena to ask Rose about a friend, Tracey Stallworth of Detroit, who was under federal indictment on charges of cocaine and heroin distribution. Rose at first refuses to answer questions; a few weeks later, however, he changes his mind. Agents say he was never a target of the investigation.

March 1994: Hockey coach Red Berenson pleads guilty to impaired driving. Charges of urinating in public and drunken driving are dropped. Berenson remains as coach.

June 1994: Administrators learn wrestling coach Dale Bahr is giving high schools \$150 for each of its youngsters who attend Bahr's wrestling camp, and then billing that amount back to the camper. School is charged with a secondary NCAA violation, and Bahr is given letter of admonishment and made to return \$150 to each of the students who had attended.

November 1994: Former running back **Tony Boles**, the Big Ten's leading rusher in 1989 and a potential Heisman Trophy candidate until a knee injury ended his career, is arrested in Naples, Fla., and charged with trying to rip off an undercover narcotics officer in a small-time crack cocaine deal.

April 1995: Campus police investigate basketball player Willie Mitchell in the theft of a staff parking permit. Ann Arbor police also announce three football players will be arraigned on credit card fraud charges.

April 1995: Football coach Gary Moeller is suspended and later fired after a drunken incident at a Southfield restaurant. On tapes obtained by the media, Moeller was heard abusing police, who arrested him and took him to jail for fear he would suffer toxic alcohol shock.

May 1995: Several members of women's basketball team, backed by their parents, rebel against coach Trish Roberts. Recruited by Roberts' predecessor, players say she was trying to "physically and mentally break" them, forcing some to play while injured, attempting to make them leave so she could bring in new recruits of her own choosing. Roberts is reprimanded and placed on probation. She leaves university.

June 1995: University pays off Moeller, who had just begun his new

job as tight-ends coach for the NFL's Cincinnati Bengals. To much criticism from legislators and others, Moeller receives \$388,026 for the final two-

plus years of his contract. February 1996: After an all-night party at a Detroit hotel featuring liquor, marijuana and strippers, five basketball players and a prized recruit they are entertaining, Mateen Cleaves of Flint, narrowly escape death when Maurice Taylor falls asleep at the wheel of an expensive new Ford Explorer. The vehicle, owned by his aunt, veers off the highway and rolls over. U-M takes only five days to investigate the incident; players receive a brief suspension that costs them no game time.

April 1996: NCAA investigates cars driven by an unknown number of basketball players, including the Explorer that Taylor crashed. No irregularities found.

April 1996: Quarterback Brian Griese is suspended indefinitely for smashing a bar window in an "alcoholrelated incident." Griese tells police he broke a window after he had been locked out of a campus-area bar by its

November 1996: Football player Charles Winters is charged with assault with intent to commit murder, accused of beating his mother's exhusband with a baseball bat. Winters, then 22, a senior defensive back, is accused of attacking Horace Davis, 42, outside his mother's home in Detroit. Winters allegedly knocked Davis down with the bat and then struck him another five or six times.

November 1996: Albert White is dismissed from basketball team for unspecified reasons. He leaves school.

March 1997: The university announces it had been ordered by NCAA to reopen its investigation into the circumstances of the February 1995 Explorer crash, and the new probe had turned up evidence of at least

two minor NCAA violations by a booster, Ed Martin of Detroit. Martin was disassociated from the program. When anonymous allegations to the NCAA claim Martin might have given cash and gifts to players, U-M hires prestigious a Kansas City law firm to launch a third investigation. Results are expected to be announced in a

March 1997: A Detroit News article reveals basketball player Robert Traylor of Detroit has leased a custom-built Chevrolet Suburban — complete with a television and two stereos — worth \$47,906, without registering vehicle with athletic officials. The university says it will investigate.

April 1997: Fisher is forced to withdraw basketball scholarship he had awarded to Dionte Harvey of Flint after News articles reveal Harvey had been convicted of sexually assaulting a 16-year-old neighborhood girl.

June 1997: Basketball guard Brandun Hughes is dismissed from the team. Fisher says he "failed to maintain the necessary commitments to both academics and the basketball

July 1997: Jones, now a rookie tight end for the Jacksonville Jaguars, is arrested after police said he threw a punch at an off-duty police officer. According to the police report, Jones refused to leave a nightclub stage during a performance by a rap band and when an off-duty officer working at the club tried to escort him away, he threw a punch. After leaving Michigan, Jones transferred to Southern Illinois, where he was suspended twice - once for yelling at a coach, and once for yelling at an official.

July 1997: Rose is escorted off a Northwest Airlines plane at Detroit Metro Airport after allegedly spitting his gum at a flight attendant who asked him to provide identification before boarding.

- Fred Girard, The Detroit News