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NCAA begins investigating TCU

SWC athletic directors to discuss 'bad boosters'

Associated Press

FORT WORTH — An investigator from the NCAA met with Texas Christian Athletic Director Frank Windeger on Wednesday to probe the school's football recruiting scandal, while Southwest Conference athletic directors convened in Dallas, where ways to curb overzealous boosters are expected to be discussed.

With the NCAA presence on campus, TCU officials referred all inquiries on the matter to the school president's office.

However, a TCU source said one NCAA official was making the rounds and had started with Windeger's office.

TCU had requested an immediate NCAA investigation after six players, including All-American running back Kenneth Davis, had admitted taking cash payments. A seventh player, Ron Zell Brewer, came forth Tuesday night to admit he also violated NCAA rules.

The emotional strain was beginning to show on TCU head coach Jim Wacker, who started the in-house inquiry of booster player gifts. Wacker, a source said, broke down and cried at a staff meeting because of all the turmoil the school was going through.

Fred Jacoby, commissioner of the SWC, said a two-day meeting of athletic directors in Dallas had been scheduled in May. But "the booster problem may be discussed, although no definitive action will be taken at this meeting," he said.

The meeting will end Thursday afternoon.

Jacoby said the SWC had been notified of the NCAA's "preliminary inquiry at TCU. We've been informed the NCAA is on campus."

Asked if the NCAA had informed the SWC of a preliminary investigation at Texas A&M, Jacoby said the SWC had received no such information. A Dallas television station recently produced what it said was evidence Aggie quarterback Kevin Murray had taken booster payments. Murray denied it.

Jacoby said Southern Methodist's recent probation and TCU confessing its problems means the SWC "is going through a cleansing. We have more checks and balances than any conference in the country. In these cases, worse may be good if you see what I mean. We're cleaning things up."

Dick Lowe, the TCU alumnus who has admitted making payments to TCU football players, said the NCAA should ban the "money guys," like himself, from doing any athletic recruiting.

"Once you cut the money guys off from the coaches, they (coaches) darn sure don't make enough to do anything about it..." Lowe said.

The cost of recruiting top-notch players, Lowe said, is thousands of dollars. For example, the Fort Worth oilman said, a top running back would cost \$10,000 to \$25,000 in cash, plus an automobile and \$1,000 a month in spending money.

"That's my sense," Lowe said. "I also sense when you're talking about a Herschel Walker or a Marcus Dupree, it's even higher."

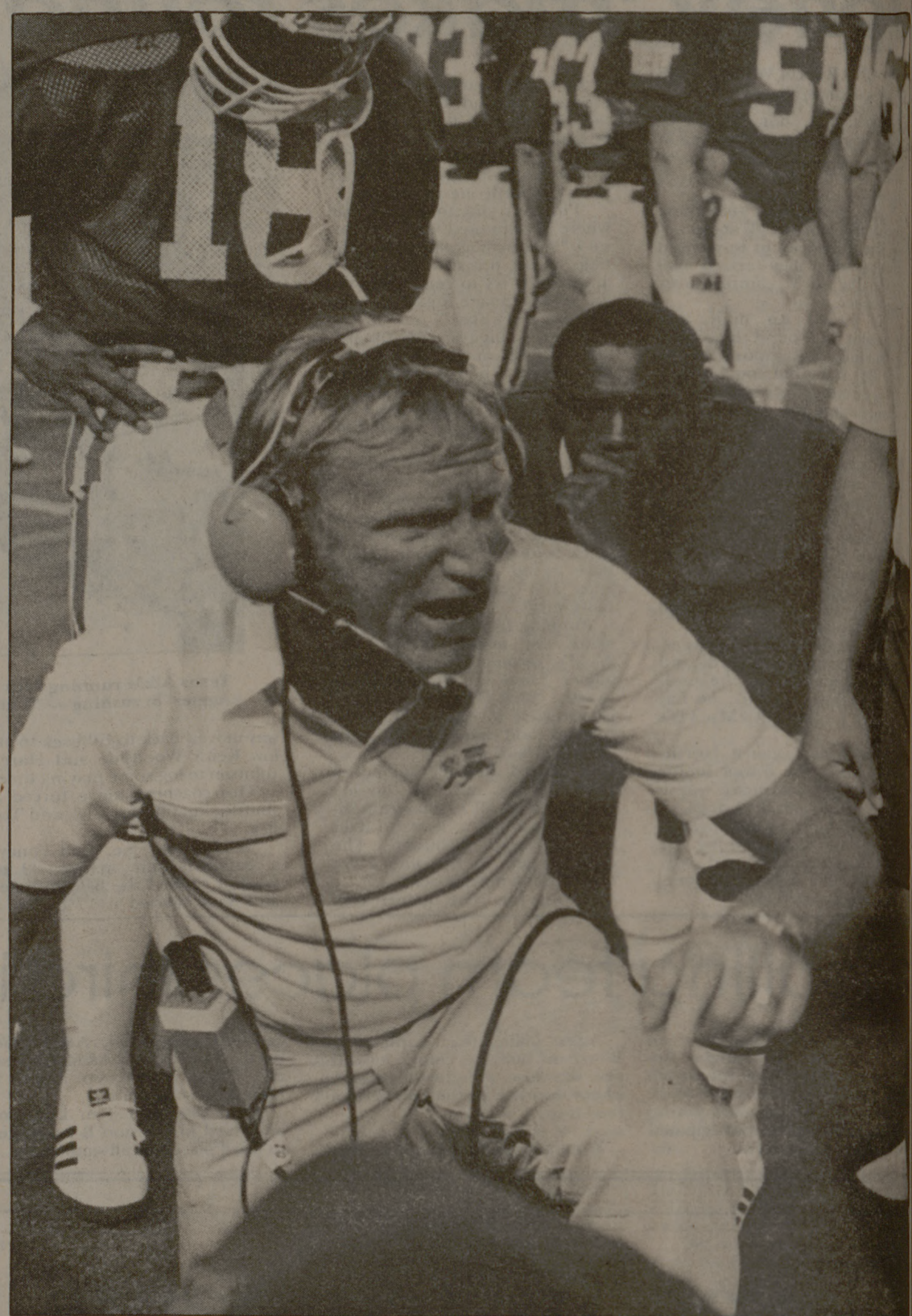
Lowe said he believes about 80 of the 91 Division I-A schools also violate NCAA rules by subsidizing top players.

"A very simple barometer," he said, "is if you drive on campus and you see \$30,000 to \$40,000 sports cars belonging to kids whose parents can't afford it."

Lowe's involvement came to light when Wacker suspended six players from the team after one of them admitted taking payments.

Lowe then resigned his post as a TCU trustee early this week.

On Tuesday, Wacker said as many as 29 TCU football players may have



TCU Coach Jim Wacker (above), according to an anonymous Associated Press source, broke down and cried at a Horned Frog staff meeting because of all the turmoil the school was going through.

been receiving illegal payments from alumni before he took over as head coach in 1983.

Wacker made the statement at a meeting of the Frog Club, an organization of TCU sports boosters.

Later, he announced that Brewer, a senior on the team, was suspended Tuesday after he said he had been receiving cash payments in violation of NCAA rules.

Brewer, a reserve tight end from Dallas, told TCU coaches about the payments, Wacker said.

He was the seventh TCU player to be suspended since Thursday amid allegations that the players violated National Collegiate Athletic Association rules by accepting payments from alumni.

Brewer was recruited in 1981 under the school's previous football coaching staff, as were the other players who were suspended. He spent the 1984 season as a redshirt.

Wacker first set the number re-

ceiving cash payments at 29, but backtracked a little.

"I don't know if I'm right (about the number)," Wacker said. "I'm not sure, but I think that is the number I heard from somewhere."

"When we came in, the boosters evidently cut that list to nine and

made a decision not to let me or anybody know that."

Cash payments by boosters to TCU football players were common knowledge among team members under former coach F.A. Dry, according to former TCU quarterback Anthony Gully. Another player said the payments were widespread.

"A majority of those who came in my year (fall of 1981) were aware of what was going on," Gully said. "It (payments) wasn't any big secret. All the guys recruited by coach Dry knew what was happening."

Dry, now an assistant coach at

Baylor, has denied any knowledge of illegal payments, calling statements by TCU boosters linking him to violations "fabrications."

Others suspended last Thursday at TCU were Egypt Allen, Gerald Spann, Gerald Taylor, Darrell Turner and Marvin Foster.

The six met with Wacker Tuesday afternoon and learned of Brewer's suspension.

The meeting ended when Allen, by Davis, stormed out of the office. Wacker would not say what was discussed at the meeting.

"I had a meeting with them, everything else is privileged information," he told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

The Star-Telegram said the players were apparently angered because they believed Wacker and Windeger were about to take their athletic scholarships. Windeger has said they will let their scholarships.

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