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**BIG 12 CONFERENCE**

# Big 12 battles corruption

By **Brandon Schulte**  
Staff writer

Microsoft and NCAA men's basketball may have more in common than most people might think.

Both are giants of their domains — Microsoft of the computing industry and men's college basketball of intercollegiate athletics. But the two are linked in a more sinister way as well: both have recently undergone probes by a federal grand jury.

But unlike the Microsoft investigation, which centered on anti-trust laws, a grand jury in Kansas City, Mo., is hearing testimony on the corrupt underworld of summer recruiting that involves shoe companies and advisors who act more like agents than coaches.

So far only a few players have been affected by illicit actions during the summer, but two of the three players who have lost eligibility over the scandal so far come from Big 12 country.

Missouri became the first conference school to be bitten by the inquiry, as freshman Kareem Rush was suspended in conjunction with an investigation of his brother JaRon Rush, a sophomore at UCLA, who was suspended on Dec. 9 for allegedly receiving money.

Then just last week Oklahoma State's Andre Williams was the second Big 12 player to be implicated in a similar scandal as he was ruled ineligible by the NCAA for the rest of the season for receiving a high school scholarship. The NCAA said he also would have to repay \$20,000 to his Maine prep school.

OSU has filed an appeal on his behalf and Coach Eddie Sutton said there were conflicts with the summer recruiting process.

"I think it's a problem; any college coach will tell you that," Sutton said.

"There are a lot of great people that work with players over the summer, but there are others that you wouldn't want working with your players over the summer."

The NCAA intends to discuss the issue of the summer recruiting this week at its annual meeting in San Diego. While most Big 12 Conference coaches don't expect any changes to result from the meeting, they have mixed views on how summer recruiting should be handled.

Kansas Coach Roy Williams thinks all parties in the issue should be brought together to discuss the issue.

"There is not an easy answer," Williams said. "The first thing we need to do is to get everyone involved together — the coaches, the NCAA officials, the high school federation

Kansas joined elite company this weekend with its 84-69 win at Colorado on Saturday. It became the third team in NCAA history to post 1,700 victories — a mark previously reached by North Carolina and Kentucky.

Coach Roy Williams, who was also in charge for all-time wins No. 1,400, 1,500, and 1,600 in KU history, realized the importance of the victory mark. "I'm just glad I haven't been here for all 1,700," Williams joked. "I appreciate the history and I know how important it is to the folks around here and to folks around the country."

Iowa State junior Jamaal Tinsley carved his own niche into Big 12 Conference lore by recording only the second triple-double in Big 12 history.

He accomplished the feat by scoring 12 points, handing out 11 assists and grabbing 11 rebounds in ISU's 86-81 win over Missouri on Saturday.

For his play this past week he was named as the Phillips 66 Big 12 Rookie of the Week. Former Baylor player Brian Skinner recorded the first triple-double in conference history in the 1997-98 season.

Oklahoma's Eduardo Najera averaged 19.5 points in two victories over Texas A&M and Lamar last week.

Najera is the only Sooner to reach double figures in every game this season. Judging by his consistency, it's no coincidence OU is off to its best 14-game start since also going 13-1 in the 1988-89 season.

and the shoe companies — If we could get everyone together I think we could resolve some things."

Kansas State Coach Tom Asbury said summer recruiting wasn't the culprit, but rather the early signing period was.

"I've got a quick fix," he said. "Eliminate the fall signing period. I've said that for two or three years. That way the summer would be an evaluation period instead of a hands-on recruiting period."

The summer recruiting season has turned into a bonanza for coaches and players since the NCAA instituted the fall signing period more than a decade ago in an attempt to control recruiting costs.

**BIG 12 NOTEBOOK**

Texas A&M freshman Bernard King, who is averaging 16.8 points per game, is on pace to break the school's single-season freshman scoring record, which was set by Damon Johnson in 1991-92. Unfortunately for the Aggies squad, King is one of the few bright spots on the team as it sports a 4-8 record, which is the worst mark in the conference.

Kansas State's Galen Morrison garnered Big 12 player-of-the-week honors for averaging 22.5 points in two outings for the Wildcats last week.

The junior guard hit seven of nine three-pointers in a 27-point effort in KSU's win over Nebraska on Saturday. The 27 points eclipsed Morrison's previous career-high point total of 18, which was also set last week in a 70-64 loss to Long Beach State.

His seven 3-pointers against NUTied him for third most in Kansas State history and for the most 3-pointers by a Big 12 player this season.

Despite a 50-6 combined record from Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Iowa State and Kansas, the Big 12 Conference took a dip in two power-rating indices.

The league fell one spot in the RPI Report from second to third behind the Big Ten and Pacific 10 conferences and to fifth in the Sagarin rankings, even though five league teams are ranked in the top 30.

*The Big 12 Conference notebook was compiled by staff writer Brandon Schulte.*

Sutton said the recruiting period allowed mid-major schools that don't have large recruiting budgets to see players they ordinarily couldn't see play.

Several coaches thought the summer recruiting days should be limited, but Oklahoma Coach Kelvin Sampson said the summer recruiting period needed to be ended.

"There is only one solution," Sampson said. "You can do everything you want to try to fix it, but the only way to stop it is to eliminate summer basketball."

"We have a set of rules in place. What we need to do is have coaches follow them, and the NCAA has to enforce them."

## Cook's comeback called 'amazing'

COOK from page 16

But he didn't sulk. Instead, Cook used his injuries as motivation to improve when he got back on the board.

Cook is not a stranger to playing catch-up. Last season, he claimed All-American status on both the one-meter and three-meter springboards following his injury-riddled redshirt season the year before.

He spent last summer at the World University Games and seemed to be back in top form until the injury bug attacked his back again with an entirely new strain.

Last Thursday, though, Cook caught up again.

In a performance that his diving coach Jim Hocking called "phenomenal," Cook finished seventh on the three-meter springboard at the All-American Diving Invitational. The event featured more than 130 of the top national and international divers.

Cook relished coming back from injury again to become a factor in collegiate diving.

"I think every time I get hurt, it tends to make me push myself to do better and improve," he said.

Hocking was amazed at the success his diver had in his first competition since the injury.

"Considering that it was his first time basically on the board being competitive since the injury, dealing with the twisting and turning that a dive features, it was a remarkable job by Erik," Hocking said.

The mental game has always been a factor in sports. Hocking said Cook faced a mental battle to maintain the drive to return to a competing-to-win level.

"An athlete always goes through the doubting phase, not doing anything in practice everyday," he said. "But Erik fought it out."

Last week's results are an important

step for Cook on his way back, but he said he knew it would not be easy to claim the top spot in the conference diving race.

The Big 12 is loaded with All-Americans, including probable U.S. Olympian Troy Dumais of Texas.

"There are bigger meets ahead all right," Cook said. "With Troy in the conference, just to get close to him is an accomplishment."

Hocking is more upbeat about Cook's chances.

The coach who has seen Cook overcome so much already is no longer surprised by what his diver can do when the chips are down.

"It's tough to beat athletes like Troy and the other All-Americans in our conference, but a diver has to do 11 different dives," Hocking said. "One major mistake, and you slip from first to sixth."

"It won't be simple, but Erik's a player."