

OUR VIEW: Welcome to Cheech and Chong University

By Sanda Kelly, for the editorial board

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Four hours before Washington State University tipped off Wednesday against Northwestern in the NIT quarterfinals, Washington State University Athletic Director Bill Moos announced he lifted forward DeAngelo Casto's suspension for a violation of team rules, saying he wanted the legal system to run its course.

Casto was cited for a small amount of marijuana in what many are calling a questionable search.

Even if the search proves to be illegal, Casto's attorney, Tim Esser, admitted Pullman Police Department found a small amount of the illegal drug in Casto's apartment, and that should be a clear violation of team rules.

When the report first came across, WSU coach Ken Bone suspended Casto for a game - just as he suspended Reggie Moore and Klay Thompson earlier in the season when they were cited for marijuana possession.

Before the suspension was lifted the basketball/pot situation at WSU was already embarrassing. To have three players cited for misdemeanor drug possession in the span of two months doesn't say much about a program struggling to get back into the national picture.

But to have one of those players reinstated on big-game day, that's deplorable.

WSU students, employees and alumni should be sickened.

No question Casto is valuable to the WSU basketball team, and he obviously played an important role in its 69-66 overtime win against Northwestern, scoring 11 points and pulling down eight rebounds. The Cougars are now headed to New York, where they will play Wichita State in the NIT semifinals. It should be a positive for what appears to be a rising program, but instead it comes with a cost to their reputation.

This athletic department was supposed to be focused on cleaning things up - on running clean, honest and honorable programs. This time around Moos Couged it.