

Petrino stands by team, denies email allegations

Vandal football coach addresses mass email: 'I'll live by how I work'

Michael-Shawn Dugar/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

Idaho coach Paul Petrino joined his players in completely dismissing the allegations presented via an anonymous email from an unidentified individual claiming to be a member of the Vandal football team.

"It's an email sent by someone who wouldn't sign their name, Petrino said Tuesday when asked about the email sent out Monday to members of the UI team and local media.

The email, written by an individual using the screen name "Joe Adams" (there's no such player on the team roster), raises several accusations against Petrino, including excessive vulgar verbal reprimanding, unequal treatment and NCAA practice violations (holding more practices than allowed).

The Daily News has reached out to the anonymous sender, but the individual has chosen not to identify themselves "so I don't lose my scholarship."

Petrino said Tuesday that he does not believe the email was written by a member of his team.

Members of the football team sent out a response email Monday, denying the contents of the original email entirely - "We do not support any of these accusations, in fact they are completely false," their statement reads," - and included hand-written signatures from a majority of players on a PDF document.

"What I stand by is what our captains came out and wrote, and what the whole team predominately signed," Petrino said. "I know that I come to work every day and work as hard as I can. I know we've never broken any NCAA rules, we had two days of two-a-days this last fall camp."

The Vandals held 18 fall camp practices, which included two sets of two-a-days, according to a practice schedule released by the team in August.

The NCAA does not list a maximum number of total practices a football team can conduct in the preseason. Programs are permitted a maximum of four live-contact practices per week and a total of 12 per preseason camp. When a team schedules a two-a-day session, live-contact sessions are only allowed in one practice (NCAA Bylaw 17.9.2.4).

"We coach as hard as we can, we work as hard as we can, and I firmly believe that," Petrino said. "There were so many players that came in and out of my office yesterday, they know the love I have for them. They know I have their back and I'll live by how I work."

The team had an off-day on Monday, so Petrino did not have a chance to formally address the team regarding the email, but said he planned to discuss it later Tuesday.

"One of the best things is that our players addressed it," Petrino said. "The players addressed it and said 'It's someone that's trying to tear us apart, someone that's trying to pull us apart.' Someone that has their own agenda. If you read the letter close you can really tell it's someone that has never played football before.

"They got people trying to take them apart, they gotta come together, we gotta stay together, move on, and the most important thing this week is getting ready for this game."

The UI released a statement Tuesday morning saying "the welfare of our students and student-athletes is our primary concern and as such, the university takes these allegations very seriously."

The university has initiated an investigation, and upon its conclusion, the school will take "the appropriate action."

"The university's Internal Audit (IA) unit has referred the specific allegations to NCAA compliance (which reports to UI General Counsel) and to the department of Human Resources and will monitor the progress of the investigations by each area," the statement said.

Matt Linehan's listed as "questionable"

After Saturday's loss to Georgia Southern, Petrino said starting quarterback Matt Linehan had an ankle injury that had been bothering him for a couple of weeks. Linehan was reportedly wearing a medical boot after the game, and Petrino said if necessary, backup QB Jake Luton would have gone in for the final series.

Petrino said Tuesday that Linehan's status for this Saturday's game at Arkansas State is "questionable," adding that the redshirt sophomore is about "70-30" on whether or not he will play.

"I'm hoping (Linehan will play), but I feel good if Jake's really well prepared, he will do a good job either way," Petrino said.

Linehan told the Lewiston Tribune on Tuesday that he's "waiting for the ankle swelling to go down" and the team hopes to have him out of the medical boot today.

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