

Verlin issues apology for altercation with Helbling

Men's coach will pay \$5,000 fine, take leadership classes

Michael-Shawn Dugar/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

Last Thursday, Idaho men's basketball coach Don Verlin was captured on camera ejecting assistant coach Chris Helbling from the Vandals' 72-65 loss at Northern Arizona. Verlin tossed the seven-year assistant's binder into the stands and gestured for the Moscow native to leave the bench — which he did.

Verlin issued a formal apology for his actions on Monday.

“My actions during the game at Northern Arizona were inappropriate,” Verlin said in a statement. “I apologize to the University of Idaho and our loyal fans. I can assure everyone, this type of behavior will not occur in the future.”

According to the statement released by the team, Verlin will attend leadership development classes and pay off a \$5,000 fine to the university that will go to a charity of his choosing.

“The actions demonstrated by Coach Verlin during the Northern Arizona basketball game clearly violated the standards expected by coaches at the University of Idaho,” director of athletics Rob Spear said in the statement.

Helbling, who traveled on a separate team bus Thursday night but was seen back on the bench in the team's 79-77 overtime loss at Southern Utah on Saturday, will also be reprimanded “in accordance to Athletic Department policy” but it's unclear what his role was in the altercation.

Idaho spokesperson Becky Paull released this statement Friday after the incident: “We are aware of the situation and it has been discussed. It was a misunderstanding during an intense, emotional part of the game. There was no correlation with the incident during the game and the transportation post-game.”

Verlin will hold his weekly press conference, addressing the media for the first time in person since the incident, at noon today in Cowan Spectrum.

The Vandals (11-14, 6-8 Big Sky) occupy the seventh spot in the conference standings, with their final home-stand coming this Thursday and Saturday in rematches against the Montana schools. Both contests will be played in Memorial Gym.

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