

Maryland Basketball Player Dez Wells Files Lawsuit Against Xavier

by Anthony Caruso on August 26, 2013

A new lawsuit against NCAA school Xavier University by a former basketball player may challenge universities' legal grounds for the expulsion of athletes in the future.

Former Xavier guard Dez Wells - who now plays basketball for Maryland - is suing the school for damages, claiming that his expulsion from the university in 2012 over allegations of sexual assault destroyed his reputation. The prosecutor who investigated the case not only declined to charge Wells, but noted that the allegation "didn't reach anything close to a standard of proof" and "should never have gotten to the point where someone's reputation is ruined." After he transferred to Maryland, the The NCAA also made a rare sports law decision to grant Wells immediate eligibility to play, rather than forcing him sit out a season as is customary with most transfers.

As the allegations were never proven in any legal atmosphere and Wells was never formally charged, the grounds of his expulsion and the potential reputational damage that may follow are being called into question. Wells is requesting that the expulsion be reversed and noted that the school "violated its own policies" when they dismissed him, according to Yahoo Sports. In a statement, Wells said he has been "publicly humiliated, and felt ashamed, emotionally distraught, and violated."

However, the school claims that it followed the standard process utilized by most American universities, and did not reveal the specific charge against Wells, dispelling any claims that his reputation is in jeopardy.

Many schools maintain a Student Code of Conduct, and violations can result in several types of sanctions depending on the severity of the case. In certain instances, however, where both universities and legal professionals are unable to prove any violations occurred, determining the scope of punishment may become a more complex matter and pave the way for legal action on behalf of student athletes.