Dunavant Complaint: Sexual Harrassment

Women’s Basketball Coach Has Resigned, But Says Allegations of Misconduct are Untrue

This Isn’t The First Time

EMU is not the first university from which Mike Dunavant has departed amid allegations of sexual harassment. The former women’s basketball coach faced similar accusations after he resigned from coaching at Rice University’s women’s basketball team. According to the biography posted on EMU’s website, Dunavant’s last college-level coaching position before coming to EMU was at Rice, in Houston, Texas, where he spent four years before resigning at the end of the 1992-93 season. In an interview for The Rice Thresher, Dunavant cited the birth of a new son and a disappointing record as reasons for his departure. The Rice women’s basketball team disagreed.

Unnamed members of the team told the Thresher that they had taken complaints about Dunavant’s behavior to Rice’s athletic director Bobby May and threatened to refuse to play the next season if nothing was done.

Three sources on the team and one former player described incidents of verbal and physical sexual harassment by Dunavant, including inappropriate touching, sexual advances, and descriptions of sexual fantasies involving players, and team discussions about sex.

The team said they had not come forward earlier because they were afraid of losing their scholarships. “Morally and ethically, I would never do something like that,” Dunavant told The Thresher in response. “I’ve been coaching for 18 years, and this couldn’t be true if I had been guilty. I feel that it’s sour grapes to accuse someone of this after they have already resigned.”

He attributed the accusations to dissatisfied players, saying, “…I don’t understand why they would want to get rid of me.”

Dunavant told Weather Vane that the Thresher story was based on incorrect information. He explained that one