No Charges Filed In Bribe By Investigation Continuing

By PAUL BURKA

A Rice University student has been expelled, another has lost an athletic scholarship, and two others have been arrested in the aftermath of an attempt to "fix" the outcome of the Rice-Baylor basketball game.

The expelled student, who was classified as a sophomore although he entered Rice in September, 1989, allegedly asked guards Herb Steinkamp and Dickie Cramer to assure a slim Rice victory over Baylor.

He offered Cramer and Steinkamp $500 each if they would Shaw points in the game, according to basketball coach Johnny Franklin. Rice was a solid favorite to win; the job of the players would have been to hold the point spread down, so that the student could bet on Baylor and collect.

Frankie sneaked at the $500 offer, explaining it didn't make any difference, that the fixer told the players they wouldn't have to lose the game.

"He told the kids they could sink for the Rice re-serve and not respect the margin close. But once those guys get their hooks into you, you're gone. Suppose we told them to lose the next game!"

FRANKIE FIRST heard of the offer before the Rice-SMU game in Dallas, February 16. Steinkamp and Cramer told trainer Eddie Wojcicki, who sent them to Frankie.

"It scared hell out of me," Frankie commented, "that anyone would try to do a thing like that to our kids."

Frankie turned the matter over to Athletic Director Jesse Jones, who in turn notified the administration. A week later, the story as brokers in the Houston post.

THERE WERE conflicting reports about the news leak. A Post sportswriter claimed that a broker had told him. But a Houston Chronicle sportswriter said that the school gave the information out.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was called in, and reports have been circulating that no betting syndicate was involved. But a Rice student who associated with the expelled sophomore said, "He didn't have that kind of money. Somebody must have put the pressure on him."

Although the student was reportedly quite wealthy, the second student added, most of his money was in a trust fund. According to published reports he planned to place a $40,000 bet on the game with various bookmakers over the nation.

Louis Mazzurana, 238 pound tackle for Rice football team and a roommate of Steinkamp's, lost his scholarship for the spring semester for failing to report the offer after he knew about it.

"HE KNEW THEY were going to be approached beforehand," Neely said, "and didn't report the offer." It appeared that Mazzurana was the student who invited the basketball player to the brier's off-campus apartment, according to reports reaching Frankie.

When asked if Mazzurana would continue to play football, Neely replied that any student at Rice was eligible to try out for football if he had sufficient scholastic standing.

Mazzurana returned to practice Monday afternoon and continues to work with the second team.

NEELY SAID he was "awfully glad the boys had enough judgment to come down and report the offer. The boys deserve to be commended."

"I hope this is the last we'll hear of it," he added.

But it may not be. Administrative sources revealed to the Thresher that the matter is still under further investigation by the Texas Department of Public Safety. The decision not to press charges still stands.

ASKED WHY no charges were filed against the student, who is reported to have left the country, Frankie said, "You'll have to ask Neely," and Neely said, "You'll have to ask the school."

The school was not available for comment.