

Meeting with Shane Richardson (with Rick Comley)

11/3/25 2pm

Shane Richardson was informed that we are investigating a serious matter that has been brought to our attention. We expect truthful and full participation and confidentiality. He was also informed of our retaliation policy.

Prior to giving Shane the player's name we indicated that we were informed about an altercation with a student athlete. We described that it was on the football field, during a no-pads practice on October 2. Without the student's name Rich said he didn't recall any incident or anything of a serious nature. We did say there was video from the Dome. Shane did ask to view the video. It was agreed once we had a physical copy we would make another meeting time to view it together.

It was shared that the incident involved [REDACTED] in which Shane confirmed it was [REDACTED]. He is injured now. He was not at the time of the incident. Shane stated he had a fun, joking relationship with the players, he had no conscience that any action would be out of anger. Once given the player's name Shane did say he remembered the interaction. Shane said he and [REDACTED] have a good relationship. He didn't think that [REDACTED] would have taken it that way. It was not Shane's intent. Shane said we should talk to Joe Gatz since he was right there.

It was shared that we've seen the video and although there's no audio Shane looked angry, was in the student's face, and there were three slaps. With enough force that it appears the student's face was visibly pushed aside.

Shane said that their conversation and what occurred was not in anger. It was more of motivation. Shane stated that would not condone this behavior – of himself or other coaches. He believes it was misinterpreted. He stated he was sorry and sorry that we all had to do this.

Shane stated he's all in – fully participating in this investigation. He wants his team to maintain their schedule and keep the flow. He would quietly move aside and just let the other coaches keep it going. Rick stated he would be hands on. Shane asked that the meetings for today to go on as well when he heard the meetings prior to 7:50pm would be canceled. Shane also clarified that the whole team is to be together at 6:45pm. Rick confirmed he would meet with the team at 6:45 then.

We did tell Shane that they would not be told any details and we would respect privacy and would maintain confidentiality to only those involved or with a business need to know.

Shane ended the meeting saying that he won't create a ruckus and he'd be professional. He understood he made a mistake and the visibility of this looks bad.

Meeting with Joe Gatz (with Rick Comley)**11/3/25 2:40pm**

Joe Gatz was informed that we are investigating a serious matter that has been brought to our attention. We expect truthful and full participation and confidentiality. He was also informed of our retaliation policy.

Joe recalled Shane Richardson touching [REDACTED] but nothing note worthy. Joe wouldn't describe it as "hauling off to hit him." Joe recalled him slapping him once for sure; he did not remember a second or third time.

[REDACTED] brought up his trap release with trainers and would be missing Tuesday and Wednesday that week. Joe said [REDACTED] was not a great communicator. He and Shane were talking about the injury – it wasn't a true injury so he needed to better at communicating issues with trainers. Joe didn't recall Shane as unnecessarily angry. He was just talking to [REDACTED] about how to communicate with trainers.

Joe confirmed he did not report the action. He didn't think it was serious. He now understands the position though.

Joe confirmed it was just the three of them. There was no one else we should talk to. No one else engaged in the conversation.

Rick stated that as coaches we can't assess judgement, we must report. We can't touch the students. Rick stated he was concerned that Joe didn't have a reaction when Shane slapped him. Joe confirmed he did not react or report.

Joe did apologize for his bad judgement.

Call with [REDACTED]**11/4/25 9:23am**

Called to set up a meeting time along with Rick Comley. [REDACTED] would not like to participate in this investigation.

[REDACTED] stated he believed he understands what incident I was calling about. He didn't want any part of it. I stated we were calling to understand what occurred and to ensure his protection and rights, including retaliation. He said he didn't need protection. He didn't say anything before for a reason. He would like to move past this.

I stated I have seen video and there is no audio. I would like to discuss the context and the severity of the situation. [REDACTED] said that the video is not how it appears, "this is all a misunderstanding." [REDACTED] said that he respects the coaching staff. Again, he didn't

think anything of it. He doesn't remember the discussion. When given the details of the slaps on the video he said that he didn't really remember the incident.

I asked if he spoke with [REDACTED] about the incident. He didn't recall. I said I heard he spoke with [REDACTED] very recently. Again, he didn't remember if he did.

Since he was not forthcoming with any additional details, I did tell him about our retaliation policy and that is my job to explain it and ask if he feels he's been retaliated against by anyone – players, coaches, anyone else. He said he has not. He said that the team did have a meeting yesterday but didn't know why the coaches weren't here.

[REDACTED] ended the discuss that he does not want anything to come of this. He wants the coaches back and the coaches don't deserve this.

Meeting with [REDACTED] (with Rick Comley)

11/4/25 12:00pm

[REDACTED] first learned about [REDACTED] getting yelled at for an injury through another player. This other player also got yelled at about being injured. [REDACTED] was doing an injury review with Jenna Bruttomesso and she said she heard through another player that [REDACTED] was slapped. [REDACTED] at the time had a new injury.

When [REDACTED] first heard that [REDACTED] was yelled at he reported it right away. Last Thursday, October 30, [REDACTED] approached [REDACTED] about the encounter he heard from Jenna. [REDACTED] confirmed he was yelled at and said "well I was slapped as well, four times." [REDACTED] was forthcoming about the encounter that day (10/30). He confirmed it happened and knew exactly when it occurred – "Thursday of Saginaw week, during stretch." After that discussion, [REDACTED] texted Jason Laxo requesting to talk, to report. Due to schedules [REDACTED] and Jason met Monday, November 3.

Last night, November 3, after the team meeting [REDACTED] talked to [REDACTED]. He asked [REDACTED] if [REDACTED] had told anyone about what happened. He was wondering since it was Coach Rich and Joe (Gatz) that were on leave. [REDACTED] confirmed he did report that he was yelled and left it at that.

When asked if [REDACTED] remembered the incident, [REDACTED] stated that he did remember [REDACTED] getting yelled at. He saw the three of them – [REDACTED], Shane and Joe – together on the field. That's when [REDACTED] started hearing more from players about getting yelled at about injuries. He thought they could have been talking about travel since he was injured, especially since Joe was a part of the discussion. [REDACTED] described the incident as a combination of a discussion and yelling. Yelling isn't abnormal in coaching.

Meeting for Shane Richardson to view the video

11/4/25 2:00pm

Once able to open and view the video clip provided from Director Bath I reached out to Shane Richardson to set up time to view the video together. Rick was also invited to the meeting but was unable to attend at 2pm. The meeting took place in the HR conference room.

Shane viewed both angles of the encounter. He did react to seeing the first slap.

Shane asked if there was a camera view from the other side of the field, to be able to see [REDACTED] face – to give context to [REDACTED] reaction.

To provide more details about context and intent, Shane described the action “to the extent of motivation. It was to get him [REDACTED] back on the field. To push him through.” It was not threatening. Shane clearly stated “I’m not denying it happened. Of course. As we say in football ‘The tape doesn’t lie.’”

Shane described the relationship between him and [REDACTED] as non-threatening. There’s no tension between them. [REDACTED] responds well to coaching hard. He’s not overly emotional. Hence why Shane was coaching him hard, but he understood “that doesn’t make it right.” It was just not out of anger or discipline.

Shane described his style as a horseplay attitude. They all interact in that way. Shane stated he had a good feel for [REDACTED] and how he can be coached.

I stated that Rick Comley and I have seen the video and are concerned about the reaction and presence of Shane in the encounter. I described what we saw as close proximity, finger pointing and what appears to be angry. Shane understood that is what could be seen. But he described it as a “façade” to give his words weight. It was facetiously – not sincere anger.

Shane also stated that he and [REDACTED] have had normal interactions since then. That’s why he truly couldn’t recall anything of serious nature when we first met yesterday.

At the conclusion we agreed I would inquire about another camera angle. Shane also asked for a copy of the video. This is a decision from PD and the policies. I said I would ask Mike Bath to contact him about this request.