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Blazers implicated in sex scandal

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Police unsealed a report Tuesday that alleges several members of the Portland Trail Blazers had sex with two 16-year-old girls who attended a party at the team's hotel.

"There was a party, and these girls attended that party — that much we know," police Lt. Marty Vuyk said. "What transpired after that is what is under investigation."

One of the girls told investigators she had sex with "four or five players," and the other girl said she had sex with three. A third girl, age 15, said she did not have sex, was "very frightened," and witnessed some of the incident.

No charges had been filed by Tuesday afternoon, and Vuyk said he didn't know whether any would be. Police at first took the unusual step of sealing the report, but made it public late Tuesday.

The police report, parts of which were blacked out to withhold the identities of the girls and results of hospital exams, mentions the first names of seven men, six of which correspond to the first names of Portland players.

Police said the girls' parents and guardians reported they ran away from their suburban Murray homes and spent Saturday night in the players' hotel rooms after meeting them at a downtown shopping mall earlier in the day.

The Trail Blazers were in town to play the Utah Jazz on

'There was a party, and these girls attended that party — that much we know. What transpired after that is what is under investigation.'

— Marty Vuyk,
Salt Lake City police lieutenant

Sunday.

Chartese Berry, assistant director of media relations for the NBA, said the league had no comment on the investigation.

Police and Trail Blazers officials said they had been contacted by officials of NBA security, who are assisting in the investigation.

Prior to the release of the report, the Trail Blazers held a team meeting to discuss the allegations. No players came forward to say they knew anything about them, said Geoff Petrie, the team's senior vice president for operations.

Coach Rick Adelman expressed concern.

"I was a little angry that anybody would put themselves or the team in this situation," he said.

The incident was reported after the girls were arrested for

shoplifting Sunday afternoon at a store in the mall. Store detective Loni Gosdis confirmed that he arrested the girls and called police. He declined to elaborate.

Hotel security officers responded to a report of run-aways in a room registered to a Blazers player, according to the report, and the three girls were ordered from the hotel.

One of the 16-year-old girls told police she had "sort of" consented to sexual intercourse after initially fending off advances. "She said she was too afraid and didn't know what to do," the report said.

Referring to a player by his first name, she stated "he had hurt her, and she was very uncomfortable. She felt that the whole episode had been her fault." Officer Kevin Clark wrote.

The age of consent is 16 in Utah. Sexual intercourse with a girl 16 to 18 is simple fornication, a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The allegations arose after the girls' parents demanded to know where they had been Saturday night. The downtown mall is adjacent to the hotel where the team stayed.

Vuyk said detectives are looking into whether the girls were given alcohol, even though they told investigators they had not. The legal drinking age in Utah is 21, and giving alcohol to minors is a misdemeanor.

Players react angrily to allegations

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Members of the Portland Trail Blazers reacted angrily to a Utah police report alleging that some of the players had sex with two 16-year-old girls at the team's Salt Lake City hotel last weekend.

Salt Lake City police have filed no charges and a police spokesman said he didn't know whether any would be filed. A police report made public on Tuesday listed only seven first names and no last names; six of the first names correspond to members of the Portland team.

"I don't know why these people insist on trying to smear the names" of Portland players, the Blazers' Clyde Drexler said before Tuesday night's game at home against Golden State.

"A guy's reputation is on the line," Portland's Terry Porter said. "A guy tries to build some type of reputation at this level and do the good things and try to be good people. To have someone throw your name out there when there's not even any type of facts to back it up is just ridiculous."

Tracy Murray said reputations have already

been damaged, regardless of the accuracy of the allegations.

"Everybody whose name is on that piece of paper has had their image ruined," Murray said.

"I'm not going to let it be a distraction," Buck Williams said. "We've been too much of a team this year to allow this to separate us."

Center Kevin Duckworth said the team wouldn't have had a Saturday night party, as had been alleged, with a Sunday afternoon game coming up against the Jazz.

Portland coach Rick Adelman said his initial reactions were concern and anger.

"I was a little angry that anybody would put themselves or the team in this situation," he said. "Anybody ought to know better. No matter what the situation is, the players must understand they can't put themselves in a position, no matter how innocent, where something could be brought out against them."

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