

Gymnastics doctor sentenced to 40 to 175 years in prison

By DAVID EGGERT and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER
Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. — The former sports doctor who admitted molesting some of the nation's top gymnasts for years under the guise of medical treatment was sentenced Wednesday to 40 to 175 years in prison by a judge who proudly told him, "I just signed your death warrant."

The sentence capped a remarkable seven-day hearing in which more than 150 of Larry Nassar's victims offered statements about the physician who was renowned for treating athletes at the sport's highest levels. Some confronted him face to face in the Michigan courtroom.

"It is my honor and privilege to sentence you. You do not deserve to walk outside a prison ever again. You have done nothing to control those urges and anywhere you walk, destruction will occur to those most vulnerable," Judge Rosemarie Aquilina said.

Nassar's actions were "precise, calculated, manipulative, devious, despicable," she said.

When the hearing ended, the courtroom broke into applause. Victims and prosecutors embraced at the conclusion of the grueling 16-month case.

But the anguish of the past week will have little, if any, practical effect on Nassar's fate. Before serving the Michigan sentence, the 54-year-old must first serve

a 60-year federal sentence for child pornography crimes. With credit for good behavior, he could complete that sentence in about 55 years. But by then, he would be more than 100 years old if still alive.

He is also scheduled to be sentenced next week on more assault convictions in Eaton County, Michigan.

A prosecutor called Nassar "possibly the most prolific serial child sex abuser in history" and said he found competitive gymnastics to be a "perfect place" for his crimes because victims saw him as a "god."

Prosecutor Angela Povilaitis also said Nassar "perfected a built-in excuse and defense" as a doctor, even though he was "performing hocus-pocus medicine."

"It takes some kind of sick perversion to not only assault a child but to do so with her parent in the room. To do so while a lineup of eager young gymnasts waited," Povilaitis said.

She urged people to believe young victims of sexual abuse no matter who they accuse and praised journalists, including those at the Indianapolis Star, who were among the first to report on the allegations.

Although Nassar's work with gymnasts received the most attention, the allegations against him spanned a dozen sports over 25 years.

Nassar turned to the courtroom gallery to make a brief statement, saying that the victims' accounts had "shaken me to my core." He said "no words" can describe

how sorry he is for his crimes.

"I will carry your words with me for the rest of my days," he said as many of his accusers wept.

The judge then read from a letter that Nassar had written to her that raised questions about whether he's truly remorseful. The victims who packed the courtroom gasped as they heard passages that included "Hell hath no fury than a woman scorned" and another statement in which Nassar said the "stories" about him were fabricated.

He also complained about the sentence he had been given in the child-pornography case and defended his actions with the athletes as "medical, not sexual."

"I was a good doctor because my treatment worked, and those patients

that are now speaking out were the same ones that praised and came back over and over, and referred family and friends to see me," Nassar wrote.

One of the first athletes to publicly accuse Nassar of sexual assault was the last victim to offer a statement at the hearing.

Rachael Denhollander is a Kentucky lawyer who stepped forward in 2016 after the sport's governing body was accused of mishandling complaints of sexual assault. She said Nassar groped and fondled her when she was a 15-year-old gymnast in Michigan.

Denhollander's statements to Michigan State University police put the criminal investigation in high gear in 2016.

BULLDOGS: Honor seniors, five of six won their bout with lone loss going in OT

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was awesome, Trevor did awesome."

Faeteete was close to pinning his competition just 41 seconds into the bout, but opponent Tanner Fletcher got the reversal to cut the score to 3-2 after round one. The next two minutes were even more action-packed. A reversal for Faeteete, another for Fletcher, a near fall here, some more reversals there. But the score continued to give Faeteete the advantage, as he was up 12-8 entering the final round.

Fletcher got within one point, 13-12, with 23 seconds left and was threatening a comeback win but a final



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Hermiston's A.J. Tuia attempts to pin Hood River's Tristen Keely in the Bulldogs' dual-meet win against the Eagles on Wednesday in Hermiston.

point for a late escape gave Faeteete a 14-12 win by

decision. Zack Kirkpatrick (170)

and Hood River's Nathaniel Quintanilla were the last wrestlers of the night. Hermiston was up 39-21 at that point, but Kirkpatrick still needed a win to cement the Bulldogs' fate.

It only took him 1:16 to do so when he won by fall.

"Well you know every match is the same," Kirkpatrick said when asked about his mentality entering the final bout. "I just go out there with the same intensity and the same motivation, the needed a win and I had to give them the win."

The night ended with as much excitement as it began with.

Hermiston's Jake Palmer

(182) was the first man up after the team's started by pulling random weight classes. His match came down to the third and final period, where Palmer would escape for a 3-2 win. Hermiston got the start it wanted and was up 9-0.

Moises Avila (195) was one of two wrestlers to win by forfeit, and the other was Adrian Delgado (106) to give the Bulldogs easy points.

Joey Gutierrez moved up two weight classes to face Logan Jensen-Smith. Gutierrez had no problems getting through his bout unscathed, winning by fall in just 1:05.

Fellow senior Beau

Blake followed. Blake is the most probable Bulldog to make a deep run in the state championships. Ranked No. 2 in the state, he was paired up with Hood River's Adrian Ramirez — who claims the No. 4 spot in state rankings in the 285 division.

The six minutes of regulation time wasn't enough to pick a winner between the two. They battled it out under the ultimate tie-breaker with Ramirez coming out the victor, 3-2.

Hermiston honored its six seniors before the dual, but it won't be the last time the Bulldogs wrestle in front of a home crowd.

WRESTLING: Pirates bring small squad to Echo, win with mostly forfeiture

Continued from 1B

from the Riverside-Echo matchup were made available Wednesday.

In one of three of the Cougars' duals, they fell 40-30 at the hands of the Pirates.

Two forfeits started the match, giving Riverside a 12-0 advantage.

The Pirates went on to win their next two bouts, when Abraham Silva (120) faced Daylon Eng and Andrew Barker (126) wrestled Kyle Ranger.

Silva was able to pin Eng, while Baker went the full three rounds to win by a 13-2 major decision.

Echo's Hayden Hilliard (132) was the first Cougar to get points on the board after winning by fall over Christian Reyes.

Two Cougar forfeits sandwiched a win, as Mychael Pointer (145) pinned Jacob Harris to cut their deficit to 34-12.

Now, it was time for the home school to rack up easy points. Three consecutive forfeits in the 182, 195 and

220-pound division put Echo within striking distance, 34-30.

But another forfeit, this time favoring Riverside, sealed the Pirates 40-30 win.

Echo will be traveling to the New Plymouth Invite in Idaho on Saturday, while

Riverside stays close to home and will join Hermiston at the Farm City event held at Hermiston High.

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