

Norfolk State Track Stars Arrested After Racial Incident

Contributed by Joe Cook, Nicole McGloster--Black College Wire
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Whites allegedly hurled racial slurs before shots were fired

After winning the last seven track titles and the last four indoor titles, the Norfolk State University track team has suffered a severe hit to the program.

Junior Carlton Phipps and Raymond Eric Brown of the NSU track program were arrested during spring break in Daytona Beach, Fla. Sunday, March 15, according to police reports. Brown and Phipps allegedly fired gun shots, using a .357-caliber glock and a .380-caliber bersa, into the air to scare off a group of whites, also on spring break, who spewed racial slurs at them while they were in a hot tub with three females, also black, at the Sea Oats Resort.

The two were charged with aggravated assault, possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime and discharging a firearm in public, police said. Raymond Eric Brown, 23, of Columbia, Va., is an NSU graduate and former track team member.

Phipps is currently a member of the track team and was a part of the MEAC championship track team. Phipps specialized in distance running. He ran on the distance medley relay team that finished first at the MEAC Indoor Championship this season.

The future for Phipps' track career at NSU is bleak. According to a statement by NSU Athletic Director Marty Miller, Phipps is suspended from the track team until the outcome of the case.

"We understand that Mr. Phipps is innocent until proven guilty. However, he will not be allowed to compete or practice with the NSU track team while the legal case against him is still pending. Our feelings go out to Mr. Phipps and his family."

In an interview with WVEC 13 News, Miller was troubled by the recent events.

"It's unfortunate for the student athlete as well as his family and the thing about it is that he is such a nice young man. It was hard for us to believe that something like this had happened," said Miller.

NSU student Taneil Brown feels that it was wrong for Raymond Brown and Carlton Phipps to pull out the guns and shoot them in the air, but she also feels it was wrong for the racial slurs to have been said.

Matt Michalec, the sports information director for Norfolk State, said the university is aware of the incident and is still getting information. The two men posted bail on charges of aggravated assault.

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Joe Cook and Nicole McGloster write for the Spartan Echo, the Norfolk State University student newspaper, which originally published this article.