

More Survivors Come Forward as Student-Athletes Sue Ex-Coach Matt Weiss Over Alleged Nationwide Privacy Breach and Digital Exploitation

Detroit, Michigan – More than 50 women — including former student-athletes and a survivor of convicted sexual predator Larry Nassar — have filed civil lawsuits against former University of Michigan football coach Matt Weiss, the university, its board of regents, and third-party vendor Keffer Development Services, alleging systemic failure to protect sensitive personal data.

Weiss, who worked under Jim Harbaugh at the University of Michigan and previously coached for the Baltimore Ravens, was indicted in March on 24 felony counts of identity theft and unauthorized computer access. Federal investigators say Weiss hacked into cloud storage and social media accounts tied to student-athletes at over 100 colleges and universities, stealing thousands of private, intimate photographs and videos between 2015 and 2023.

“This is a digital sexual assault,” said Megan Bonanni of Pitt McGehee Palmer Bonanni & Rivers, P.C., who represents several plaintiffs in the case. “Just like a physical sexual assault, our clients are experiencing trauma, fear, and a sense of violation that will last far into the future. They do not feel safe, and they were never given the chance to protect themselves.”

Bonanni and co-counsel Lisa Esser Weidenfeller of Sommers Schwartz, P.C., say their clients never received any notice from the University of Michigan about the breach. One plaintiff, identified in court filings as “Jane Roe,” learned about the hack from the news.

“What Weiss did was reprehensible,” said Esser Weidenfeller. “But it’s also critical to recognize that none of these women did anything wrong. The institutions charged with protecting them failed them instead.”

Among the plaintiffs is a woman who identifies herself as a Nassar survivor. She described the betrayal of trust by yet another public university as devastating.

“Matt Weiss should never have had the opportunity to violate student privacy, and the University had a responsibility to safeguard our information,” the woman said. “Instead, they stayed silent. That’s not just negligence — it’s betrayal.”

Federal prosecutors say Weiss targeted more than 3,300 individuals, compiling files and notes about athletes’ physical attributes and sexual preferences. He allegedly exploited weak cybersecurity practices by Keffer Development Services – which maintained a database used by athletic departments – to access password-protected accounts and retrieve images over several years.

Weiss was terminated by the University of Michigan in January 2023, shortly after police began investigating computer crimes on campus. In a statement, the university claimed it promptly

referred the matter to law enforcement. However, the plaintiffs argue that the school has yet to issue public warnings, conduct an independent investigation, or take meaningful accountability. The lawsuit also notes that the University of Michigan has a history of institutional failures to protect students. In 2022, it paid \$490 million to settle claims from more than 1,000 survivors of former physician Robert Anderson. The plaintiffs say the latest scandal is part of a larger pattern of neglect and call on the university to enact real reforms.

"These victims are not footnotes to a scandal," said a statement from The Army of Survivors, an advocacy group supporting plaintiffs. "They deserve answers. They deserve justice. And they deserve institutions willing to say: 'We failed you. And we will do better.'"

The plaintiffs are represented by Sommers Schwartz, P.C. and Pitt McGehee Palmer Bonanni & Rivers, P.C., and encourage others who believe they were affected to come forward by reaching out to Sommers Schwartz for a free, confidential, consultation by

visiting <https://www.sommerspc.com/class-action-commercial-litigation/investigations-cases/matt-weiss-university-student-athlete-hack/>.

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CASE INFORMATION

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan

JANE DOE 1-11 vs. THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN; the UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN; KEFFER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, LLC, and MATTHEW WEISS

Case: No. 2:25-cv-10946-JJCG-APP

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