

# James Wiseman's high school eligibility case: Here's what we know

**[KHARI THOMPSON](#)** | MEMPHIS COMMERCIAL APPEAL  
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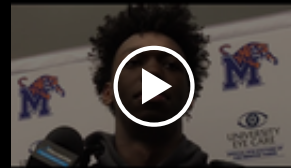
Memphis attorney Leslie Ballin announced Friday the Tigers' star freshman James Wiseman has been ruled ineligible by the NCAA, according to multiple reports.



**NCAA rules Memphis star James Wiseman ineligible but judge clears way for him to play**



**James Wiseman ruled ineligible by the NCAA**



**James Wiseman on the first basket of his Memphis career**



**James Wiseman on making his Memphis Tiger debut**

[James Wiseman's ongoing legal battle with the NCAA](#) isn't the only controversy over the heralded Memphis freshman center's eligibility. There are concerns over his status during his junior year at East High as well.

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An Oct. 3 ruling from Chancellor Jim Kyle stated that the TSSAA "correctly applied" its coaching link rule when it declared Wiseman and teammate Ryan Boyce were ineligible for the 2017-18 season.

Here's what we know about Wiseman's battle with TSSAA and how it differs from his battle with the NCAA.

### **It's about Team Penny**

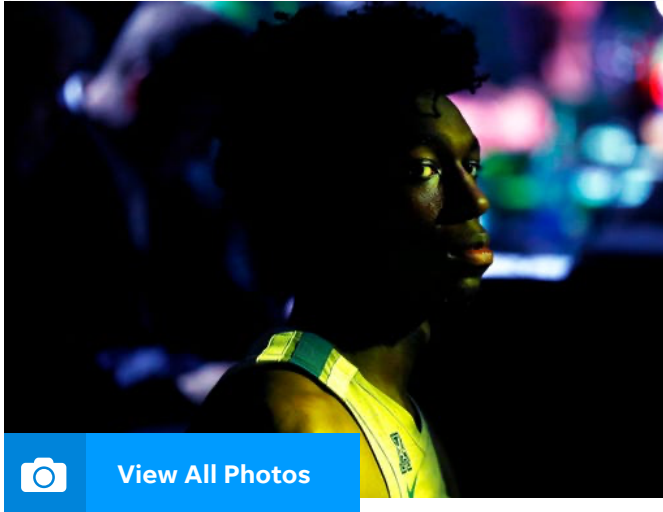
Wiseman's case against the TSSAA is about his [involvement with Team Penny](#), an AAU program that was affiliated with [Penny Hardaway](#).

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## James Wiseman Memphis Tigers basketball Penny Hardaway



This is different from Wiseman's case against the NCAA, which is about an "impermissible benefit" of \$11,500 from Hardaway, now the Tigers coach, who was deemed a University of Memphis booster.

Because Wiseman and teammate Ryan Boyce played for Team Penny over the summer before they transferred to East, the TSSAA ruled them ineligible due to a violation of the state's "prior link" coaching rule, which [states the following](#):

"If a student with an athletic record transfers to a new school where an "athletic coaching link" existed in the past 12 months, that student is ineligible for 12 months past their first date of enrollment at the new school at all levels in the specific sports where a linkage was present."

The rule goes on to state that a coaching link may include:

1. Attendance at an individual camp (and then transferring);
2. Playing on non-school (independent) teams (and then transferring to that coach's school)
3. Transferring into a school where a former coach has been hired.

4. Transferring to a school where a former or current personal trainer or strength and conditioning coach is employed.

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## **Shelby County Schools sued TSSAA and got an injunction**

East appealed the decision and TSSAA denied the appeal. That's when Shelby County Schools stepped in and sued the TSSAA. Kyle, the same judge from the Oct. 3 ruling, issued a temporary restraining order that allowed Wiseman and Boyce to play out the season.

The pair helped East go 31-3 and beat Whitehaven to claim East's third consecutive Class AAA state title.

### **It's not over yet**

Shelby County Schools has motioned for an appeal of Kyle's ruling, arguing that Hardaway was a sponsor of Team Penny, not a coach, and that the word "sponsor" is nowhere to be found within the rule.

**JAMES WISEMAN**

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- 'I don't recruit kids' or read rule book: What Penny Hardaway said about James Wiseman in 2018 deposition
- In sworn statement at 16, James Wiseman gave contradictory reasons on why he moved to Memphis
- Memphis judge rules in favor of TSSAA regarding James Wiseman, Ryan Boyce coaching link
- How James Wiseman's NCAA lawsuit features shades of the Derrick Rose case at Memphis



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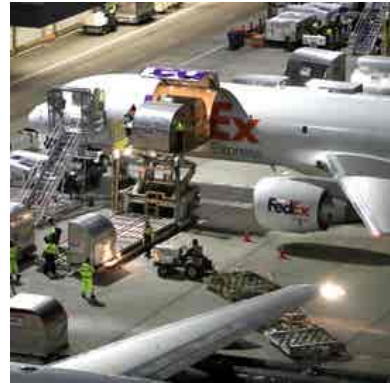
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