

Bill Self Clears Mario Little for Competition

Kansas men's basketball coach Bill Self on Monday cleared senior Mario Little for competition. Little has missed the last six games after being arrested Dec. 16 on misdemeanor charges.

"Mario has met the requirements of the court and has received a diversion agreement on the two misdemeanor battery charges," Self said. "He has not only met the requirements of the court but also the requirements of our basketball program. One of those stipulations is his receiving weekly counseling that will continue through the end of our basketball season.

"We as a program take the events of December 16th very seriously," Self continued. "Mario made mistakes and exercised poor judgment. We have let the legal process play out, and have been able to evaluate Mario in the last four weeks in a variety of ways, including counseling. We feel he should be allowed to rejoin our team for games."

A native of Chicago, Little, 6-6, played in nine games prior to his suspension and is scoring 6.2 points per game. Majoring in African and African American studies, Little joined the Kansas program in 2008-09 and was a redshirt during the 2009-10 season.

"I have appreciated all the support people have shown me, especially my teammates," Little said. "I accept responsibility for what took place that evening and have learned from it and feel awful about it. I'm appreciative of the opportunity to come back. The last four weeks have given me time to reflect and reevaluate a lot of things with myself. I certainly anticipate not only handling situations better but also feel I have become a much better person because of this."

"I believe in Mario," Self said. "He has been a pleasure to coach and I am certainly proud of the fact he only has three hours left to graduate. I'm more concerned about what's best for our program rather than an individual, but in this case I believe he deserves a second opportunity to finish his career in uniform. I have consulted with many people about this, and after a lot of deliberation feel confident this is the best thing to do."