

College Sports 1.2

Attention Getter:

A modest proposal to improve college sports...

Call for a five-year moratorium on all television broadcasting
...and chase the media out of the lockerroom

During moratorium, institutions could determine the purpose
and priority of college athletics on their campuses

They would then develop...or realign...their intercollegiate
athletics programs in a manner consistent with
this "mission" or "vision" statement

The universities would have to learn how to control the
costs of intercollegiate athletics, scaling back their
programs (and their aspirations) to more realistic scales.

Who knows...they might have to learn to live without
athletic dorms, shoe contracts, and big time promotion...
...and learn how to treat coaches as normal staff
and athletes as students...

AFTER this period, television would be invited back in...
but allowed to televise events ONLY on the terms of
the institutions...and consistent with the academic
priorities of the institutions...

...Th, F, Sat BB

...2:00 pm Sat football

by commentators approved by institutions...

control of advertising...

The Thrill of Victory,...the Agony of Defeat

Hail to the Victors...

...Ann Arbor on a brilliant, crisp, weekend in the fall

...walking through campus to Michigan Stadium,
falling leaves, tailgates, student excitement

...Walking into that magnificent stadium...

105,000 fans

...Michigan Marching Band

..."Hail to the Victors Valiant"...

Special Moments in life

Excitement of a traditional rivalry

...Michigan vs. Ohio State
...or Michigan vs. Notre Dame
...#1 vs #2...

Special events such as
...the Rose Bowl
...Olympic Games
...NCAA Basketball Championship

Cinderella story of UM NCAA Champions
Steve Fisher story
Rumeal Robinson...
personal story
fitting that his two free throws should win it all

Steve Abbott

Bridgette Venturi

Feelings
Excitement
Pride
Involvement

The Dark Side of the Force

...quasi "professional" athletic programs on our
campuses--inconsistent with our academic
responsibilities

...taking advantage of our student athletes
Graduation rates...meaningless degrees...
David Broder:

"Colleges maintain the fiction that the players
who make these vastly profitable games
possible receive nothing in return but
subsidized college educations--a myth that
is regularly exposed by enterprising journalists
and by the NCAA itself--there is resistance to
the obvious solution."

...pressure to win at all costs which causes
cheating...scandals

Images of misbehavior...
...Taunting
...Coaches tyrades

...Drugs, crime

Commercialization

...Scheduling

...every night of the week

...Media hype

...Vitale-Vitalvano syndrome

...feeding frenzy of sports press

...When Bo resigned, 17 TV teams

headlines bigger than Iraqi War!

...even on college campus, Michigan Daily devotes more attention sports page than calling for revolution on its editorial page...

...Pressures

NCAA 1A football championship

Conferences realigning...Penn State, Arkansas,...

maximum TV negotiation power

\$1 B NCAA...greed!!!

...Bizarre priorities...

...UM has finally won a national championship in football

...by being ranked #1 in the football recruiting wars

Signs of Growing Concern

Public concerns

"Scandal" books

Editorials

every major columnist and paper has taken a crack

...New York Times, Washington Post

...from David Broder to George Will

Polls

Harris poll showed 78% of public believe

"intercollegiate athletics is out of control"

Calls for reform

Knight Commission

Congress, Legislatures

President's Commission

Conference of Conferences

Radical proposals

Wide range of proposals...

Adopt Ivy model of "amateur" play

Professionalize college sports...pay the players

What Is the Problem?

The usual human frailties?

Greed?

Fame?

Arrogance?

Ignorance???

Real Problem:

College sports has become a major source of
public entertainment in America

Coaches and players have become media celebrities
creating serious conflict and confusion for students
...sitting next to Bo signing autographs

TV dollars have distorted institutional priorities

Feeding frenzy by media

...become gossip columnist

...pander to public

Advertising

Hypothesis:

As long as colleges continue to allow the media (television,
print) to push college sports as an entertainment industry,
there will be little progress on true reform.

Until colleges insist on the primacy of academic objectives
and values over those of competitiveness, visibility,
and the financial bottom line, true reform is impossible.

Must put student as individuals first

Cannot be in the business of exploiting students because
this tells ALL students that we don't care enough to
respect their rights for education first

Not just academic objectives first. Message needs to be that
we value and care about our students--and
accept responsibility for their education.

Suspicion: few universities...and conferences...and
associations...have been able to withstand the
tremendous pressure and rewards of "BIG TIME ATHLETICS"
--not to mention alumni, public, and governing boards--
to insist on the dominance of academic principles over
financial and entertainment objectives.

Evolution of College Sports in America

Classical "amateur" model

From ancient times, it has been recognized that athletics are an important ideal for teaching values of character, motivation, endurance, team loyalty, personal best--qualities of great value in citizens.

Scholar-athlete

Education whole person

Athletics as extracurricular activity

Ivy League comes closest...but even here, an ideal

Concern even at that time...

"aggitate a bag of wind"...

"Community" event

Evolution from participatory to spectator model

Serves to bring together complex campuses

...Clark Kerr's "multiversity"...connected only by a common heating plant...or a need for parking

Alumni pride

,,,tears in the eyes of even the most hardened alumnus as the UM Band marches onto the field

Promotes institution

...visibility...marketing institution

"Big Time Show Biz"

Cheap form of public entertainment

Produced, promoted, and marketed as show biz

...Dick Vitale

...Media hype

...Sport columnist voyeurism

Dollars: \$1 B NCAA, \$200 M conference contracts

Celebrity status for coaches and players

...groupy phenomenon

How many of us turn first to the sports section when we pick up our morning paper.

Conferences are run like professional leagues

...Big Ten --> NFL...

Many colleges sell their soul for contract bucks

...Ohio Valley Conference agreed to start games at midnight for ESPN!

...beer commercials or advertisements

It is clear that television and the media have seriously distorted the nature of intercollegiate athletics

,,,distorting schedules

...excessively long seasons

...post-season play

...conference tournaments which trivialize seasons

...call for football playoffs

media hype--kids have become celebrities

...pressures on coaches and players

...prssures to cheat

College Sports, Inc. has become a huge commercial entertainment conglomerate with extremely well-paid coaches, elite athletes, gleaming facilities, and enormous media coverage

Myths and Realities

1. Colleges make lots of money off of college sports

Don Canham: "Over 99% of the schools in this country don't balance their budgets in athletics."

Indeed, Michigan, in winning the Big Ten championship, NCAA, Rose Bowl, 7 national telecasts, averaging 105,000, still lost \$2.5 M in 1989.

Continuing the example, Michigan's entire intercollegiate sports budget is only \$23 M...just slightly over 1% of its total institutional budget.

Aside: The time when Bo Schembechler began complaining about the pressures he faced to keep Michigan Stadium filled...and the losses we would face if attendance dropped 10%

...leading to a loss of \$1 M per year...

...and JJD pointed out that he Michigan football was bush league

stuff compared to the University Hospitals, in which a 10% drop

in bed occupancy would cause an income loss of \$50 M/y

Some critics see the never-ending scramble for dollars as simple greed.

However a careful examination of the financial books, especially of such items as ticket sales, TV rights fees, and corporate

sponsorship reveals necessity more than greed. And the main cause of this constant need is shortsighted management at the local and the national levels.

The culture is wrong...

...competitiveness creates revenue-driven management model...generate more and more dollars...and then spend it all
...never really pay any attention to expenditure control
...the team that spends the most wins the most...

Ticket sales are still the main source of revenue for big time athletic programs--but they are declining because of wall-to-wall telecasting overexposure.

Television has not only begun to erode gate receipts of large schools, but it undercuts the attendance at lower division schools.

Oversaturation applies both to football and basketball.

Bowls also don't generate revenue

...Conference sharing
...Expenses
...Below the line commitments...buying tickets

The bottom line on these financial problems is clear: they are systemic and give no indication of improvement.

2. Winning teams make alumni give \$\$\$

Some do give...but generally only to athletic programs, not to universities

Most university support is from alumni and friends who identify with ACADEMIC nature of the institution...
...not its athletic prowess (as evidenced by Northwestern's spectacular fund-raising ability)

3. Television is making colleges rich...\$1 B NCAA contract with CBS...

For the most successful institutions, real payoff is in gate
...not television revenue

Indeed, suspect that much of pressure for excessive television exposure comes from the "have-nots", those institutions who have chosen not to (or who

are unable to) mount competitive programs, but through revenue-sharing depend heavily on sharing TV revenue generated by the “big box office draws”. (Also see this in the resistance of small schools in NCAA to allow big schools to implement reform measures which might threaten the size of the payoff pot)

Speculation: Suspect that the additional costs to mount “TV quality” events tend to track right along with the increasing revenue in such a way that the more you make, the more it costs you...

And exposure can convey both ‘good news’ and “bad news” ...particularly if there is a scandal...

is it really necessary for college athletics to do back flips to achieve attractive contracts? (Suspicion: TV will take whatever we give them...after all, the production costs of college sports are nil...and the America public is VERY interested...

4. Corporate sponsorship

First of Bowls

Then of selected games...Buick wanting to name Michigan-Notre Dame

Scoreboards, commercializing...ABSOPURE...

5. We are exploiting athletes. Should give them a cut.

Argument usually goes that college sports is golden...

\$1 B NCAA...\$6 M payout at Rose Bowl

And yet athletes don't even get pocket money.

Look how much Larry Bird and Magic Johnson make...

Reality 1: What do universities make from athletics?

UM is a good example, since we probably generate as much revenue as any school in the nation

UM: \$1.8 million TOTAL from TV...

Football, basketball, Rose Bowl, NCAA championship

...spread over 150 football, basketball, hockey athletes...

amounts to \$12,000 each per year!

\$18 million total gate receipts

...spread over 700 varsity athletes...300 coaches, staff...

-amounts to \$18,000 per athlete per year...
Of course, we haven't said anything about expenses.
These--at every university in the nation--are larger than
revenues.
Hence, NET revenues--e.g., profit--is zero!

Reality 2: What do players get?

UM: Instruct Cost + R&B P support: \$30,000 per year
...or \$150,000 per athlete over five years

Of course, the actual value is far higher...since
it provides athlete with earning capacity far
beyond that of high school education...even
far beyond that of professional career!

Note that only a few achieve high paying professional roles.
Most who turn pro are only moderately compensated.
Many college athletes don't even make it to the pros.
So if we accept them as students, we need to help
equip them for productive lives. They need education
and
need help to see the razzle-dazzle in perspective.
They need to prepare for meaningful work, citizenship,
and fulfilling lives just as for all students.

Reality 3: Those who are call for professional college athletes
are once again approaching it as show business...not as
part of an academic enterprise.

Only in show biz does the star make obscene amounts.
In academics, the Nobel Prize winner doesn't make that
much more than others

In the corporate world, the inventor of a device which
earns IBM millions makes only a little bit more

Moral: Cannot apply the perverse reward system of the
entertainment industry to college sports. We simply
cannot allow media pressure to commercialize colleges
sports any longer.

Aside: US Department of Education Study (Clifford Adelman)

College athletes are promised that if they spend 30-60
hours a week during season for 4-5 years, they
will get a degree, not have to worry about finances
as undergraduates, and learn how to use their
status to land jobs at decent salaries.

Study of 8,100 college students, including 200 athletes,
from 1972 to 1986.

By age 32, athletes have the highest rate of home ownership
(77%),

lowest rate of unemployment
earnings 10% above mean

Despite having relatively poor high school records, test scores,
and preparation for college, athletes graduate at rates
only slightly lower than others.

Reason for academic success was being on scholarship
and having access to support and encouragement not
available to other students.

Athlete likely will have a 2.8 GPA and get degree within 5.5
years.

Once in work force, the athlete will hold job as a manager,
salesman, or teacher at an average income of \$26,000

Even Broder notes: "The study suggests that college did not fail--
or ruthlessly exploit--these jocks. Whether the care and
resources

the colleges invest in the few hundred players who draw such
huge

crowds and produce such vast revenues is consistent with the
overall education mission is another question altogether,
to which my answer is a resounding no."

Michigan Philosophy

Importance of intercollegiate athletics at Michigan

The University of Michigan has many
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the place it is...
and among the most visible and most important
is the role of intercollegiate athletics at Michigan...

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We are intensely proud of our athletic teams...

Michigan is unique in its combination of
world-class academic programs...and its
winning tradition in athletics...
...If you compare the two top ten lists...
the top ten universities in academic quality...
and the top ten athletic programs in football...
You will find only one name on both lists...Michigan.

Yet, as important as winning is, we are also
proud of our programs for their integrity...their class.

And of course, we have long taken great pride in
having many of the nation's leading coaches...
including its leading football coach...

But perhaps of most importance of all is the way
in which Bo and his coaches dedicate themselves
first and foremost to the education of the
student-athletes who don the maize and blue.

Michigan belief

Athletic competition can play an important role
in our fundamental mission: education

I suppose it is something in the very nature of a university
that causes us to continually ask the questions about
our values, our goals, our priorities...

What are we?...what do we strive to become?...

Interestingly enough, I suspect that if one were to go through
one of you talks to your teams with a highlighter, you would
get some pretty good ideas...

Words...

Pride...in institutions and in one's self

Sacrifice for others...for the team

Dedication to the achievement of excellence

A disdain for mediocrity

Courage, confidence,...

Leadership...

Integrity, honesty,

Quality, Class....

It is certainly true that intercollegiate athletics can provide
students with a marvelous opportunity to develop those

qualities so important in later life...particularly when led by inspiring and enlightened coaches such as yourselves

But it can do more, for these programs also serve as models not simply for the university community, but for many others throughout their society...

How many youngsters dream of the day they could play in the Rose Bowl or the Final Four...and learn from others the qualities necessary to get there?

And how many of us as adults tend to identify with these teams ...sharing their thrill in victory...and suffering with them through defeat.

All of intercollegiate athletics...is a game, to be sure... but it is also a remarkable model of life...and those factors which lead to a program's long term success are also the factors which prepare young men and women for life itself!

While it is important that we always keep it in perspective...that we always place primary emphasis on the first word in "student-athlete"... it is also important that we acknowledge that the lessons that you as coaches teach to the young men and women who don the maize and blue of Michigan are some of the most important lessons of life...lessons every bit as important as those we teach in the classroom or laboratory...

The role of intercollegiate athletics

We understand the dedication and commitment required to balance the demands of intercollegiate athletics with the demands of a Michigan education.

A Michigan education is challenging enough, without the additional pressures of participation in one of the nation's leading athletic programs.

But, I suspect that later in life most of our athletics look back upon their experience at Michigan

as providing an extraordinary education, in the most complete sense of the word.

It has sometimes been said that the purpose of a college education is to learn the art of life... And, in this, you as student athletes may have a certain edge, since most of you are benefiting from a full-range of experiences on our campus, from the intellectual to the athletic to the cultural...

The experiences encountered in athletics provide our students with marvelous opportunities to develop qualities so important later in life: dedication, commitment, integrity, leadership.

The value of athletics--when combined with a Michigan education--becomes all the more apparent when meeting former Michigan athletes who have gone on to great success--indeed, leadership--in their careers as business executives, doctors, lawyers, engineers--even Presidents!

Michigan's Role

UM has particular challenges:

- i) One of most successful and visible programs
- ii) A long tradition of playing strictly by the rules
- iii) Really the envy of America

UM has particular responsibilities:

- i) We stand for all that is good in intercollegiate athletics
- ii) Michigan = Integrity, quality, class

UM has important opportunities

- i) We really set the pace, provide the leadership
- ii) UM, perhaps more than any other institution in America has the capacity to address many of the problems in intercollegiate athletics today...
 - ...substance abuse
 - ...academic performance of athletes
 - ...regaining control of programs from television

Some Fundamental Principles

The Key: First establish the fundamental reasons you want competitive athletic programs...and this then determines your philosophy and fundamental principles

The reasons for college sports...

...educational opportunity...students as participants

...community events...students and others as spectators

The treatment of student-athletes

i) admissions:

0. The underlying principal of our admissions policies is...just as in

other things we do at the University...excellence and achievement.

But we are certainly aware that excellence is a multidimensional

concept...it comes in many forms...in academic ability, athletic ability, artistic ability,...

For that reason, we do not insist on blind, one-dimensional standards for all students...

Rather, we seek diversity in our student body...and it is this search for

diversity which justifies our commitment to building a successful intercollegiate athletics program.

1. Fundamental Concern: What is best for the student?...

Does the student have the capacity to benefit from a Michigan education?

Do we have confidence that with sufficient support, the student has the ability to pursue meaningful studies at Michigan and graduate?

Only those students who have a high probability of graduating are admitted

2. We must be able to come to a shared understanding of what is good for the student.

We must be able to jointly consider and discuss each of these "at risk" cases on an open, cooperative basis.

3. Image of the University

Michigan is not only one of the most visible, but also

one of the most highly competitive institution in the nation.

We must be sensitive to the public reaction to admissions of students who depart significantly from our normal standards.

The burden will be on us to justify such admissions... and we can do so only if we are confident that the student will have a reasonable chance of success.

4. The Provost, as chief academic officer, has responsibility for the quality, standards, and success of the academic programs of the University. This includes:

Admissions

Academic Counseling

Academic Eligibility

Hence, the final decision point on admissions and academic standing will rest with the Provost...(not the President or the Regents).

In a sense, the Provost is responsible for the academics... ..just as the Athletic Director is responsible for intercollegiate athletics.

ii) academic progress

Careful monitoring of progress toward real degrees by academic officers (not athletic officers)

Strong academic support services

No freshman eligibility

iii) Commit of financial aid and support until graduation...not just until eligibility is complete

Fairness

Equal opportunity for women to participate ...particularly given value in character building and education

Particular sensitivity to the importance of strong academic opportunities to minority students

Broader overall participation

...among non-revenue sports

...for all students...not just "professional athletes"

The treatment of coaches

Understanding of your challenges

We realize that this success was not simply the result of good luck

It took extraordinary effort:

Understand well the rigors of:

recruiting

coaching

working with your student athletes

handling the enormous public attention...

particularly from the media

adhering to the complex rules governing intercollegiate athletics

Understand as well the commitments each of you has had to make...

...long hours of work

...extraordinary travel schedules

...frustrations, disappointments...

...but also rewards

...not simply in winning...

...but even more, in seeing the development and success of the young men and women who wear the maize and blue

i) Treated as teachers...not as professional coaches

ii) Long term commitments

iii) All compensation through university

Financing

i) expenditure control

ii) strong university budget control

iii) equity in revenue sharing

iii) multitiered

Contrast "spectator" from "participatory" sports

Spectator...funded from revenues

Participatory...funded from General Fund

Integrity

1. Integrity -- always playing by the rules

The right way is the Michigan way!

Quality and class

Michigan is not only one of the most visible, but also one of the most highly competitive institution in the

nation.

We must be sensitive to the public reaction to our standards

...to our admissions policies

...to the academic performance of our student athletes

...to the conduct of our coaches and teams and fans

i) conduct of programs

ii) convey proper image of university

...control of broadcasting

...beer commercials, Vitale,...

Winning???

How do we evaluate successful programs?

...Won-loss records

...Gate (revenue)

...Graduation

...Success of student-athletes

Successful teams

We aspire to excellence in intercollegiate athletics, just as we do in every endeavor in this institution.

Just as we seek to have the #1 programs in the nation in psychology or classical studies or engineering or law, we also aspire to leadership in football or swimming or softball.

But, as important as success is, it is not the most important goal that we have.

Winning must not come at the expense of other more important values such as integrity and the academic success of our student-athletes.

Teamwork

In the past there has been a sense of isolation from the mainstream activities of the University...

a separation between those of you on the athletic campus working hard to build successful programs within the rules

and those of us "up on the Hill" who frequently didn't understand

the challenges you faced.

Believe it extremely important that we work together in and open and cooperative fashion, to respond to your recruiting needs while at the same time protecting both the academic integrity of the University and the

interests of these student-athletes.

Concerned that all too often the relationship between Admissions and the Athletic Department has been confrontational. Hence, we believe it important that both sides work to remove this friction and develop a process through which we can work together.

Over the past couple of years we have tried to break down that isolation, and to draw you, your student-athletes, and your programs more fully into the life of the University, since we believe that you are very important parts of this institution.

...Anne and I have arranged receptions for your students and coaches

...more visible participation by leadership of University

...more open dialog...

...a spirit of cooperation, not confrontation and control

Final Comments

Importance of intercollegiate athletics...

...to the student-athlete

...to the university communities

...but not really to armchair America...

We must strongly resist the efforts of the media (electronic, print) to continue to pressure college sports to become an entertainment industry.

The academy must recapture control of college sports-- or give it up entirely.

We must FIRST establish our own priorities, objectives, and principles for college sports...and then commit ourselves to holding fast by these in the face of the enormous pressure that will be exerted by the public at large.

Academics must dominate

Appendix: The Financing of Intercollegiate Athletics