

Black athletes give views on BSM

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Freshman Cathy Alston, in the October 20 edition of *Black Ink*, expressed concern over Black athletic participation, or lack thereof, in the BSM. Ms. Alston isn't the only one who feels this way.

To hear some tell it, Black athletes are totally out of touch with the organization and the Black community in general. However, these



Todd: BSM important and necessary

sportsmen and women quite naturally have their side of the story. So, here it is.

Full back Kenny Mack feels that the criticism leveled at Black athletes is true. Explaining why he said "The main reason we don't support it (BSM) is because of a lack of time. We're always practicing, and when we don't, we have a game. The only time you see us is at a dance that the BSM, or a fraternity or sorority sponsors.

"As far as attending protests, if something were to occur there, sportswriters are always writing

"The small number of students who attend BSM meetings shows that there are many more nonathletes who don't attend"

something bad about you. I don't mean attending a rally is bad, but if something were to happen like a fight, it would be stretched. Athletes are easy to identify as a group. You can pin them to anything."

On the other hand, Mack believes that pointing to athletes is wrong because "a lot of other Blacks don't support the BSM; you need to find their reasons too." He added that because athletes don't physically attend BSM meetings, does not mean they don't support the organization in principal.

Rod Broadway attributes his small amount of participation in BSM functions, to unfamiliarity with its structure.

"I support the BSM" the senior defensive tackle said, "as far as attending programs by the dancers and choir and parties too. As far as attending demonstrations and meetings, we hardly know anything about what's going on with BSM. The only things we really know are what we read and it's hard to even get a paper.

"There's been a lot of criticism because we really don't have time and when we do, nobody tells us anything. Since we don't have anytime, we're not going out looking for it."

Broadway, a senior from Oakboro, entered the University when all Blacks were automatically members of the BSM. Later, when interviews were required for membership, he did not go through one, and so consequently is not an official member. He too, was worried that if athletes attended a protest, "it would be blown out of proportion." He conceded that he would march if it concerned something he believed in, regardless of the pressures he might be under.

Nonetheless, of the 12 athletes interviewed, only three had ever participated in a BSM march or confrontation with the administration. Wayne Tucker and Carey Casey abstained from participating, not because they were concerned about repercussions from the press or officials, but for entirely different reasons.

Tucker a wingback on the football squad, and an "outstanding quarter-mile prospect" in track, believes there are "other and better methods" the BSM could use to express its position.

Casey said he could "support marches as long as they weren't violent. I'm gonna stand up for something I believe is God-led. I don't move on motives of what needs to be done for Blacks. I move on motives of what needs to be done for all people in general so we can be brothers and sisters in Christ."

None of the demonstrations within the past three years have been violent, and with one exception (the David Duke affair in '75) all inside protests have been silent.

Casey was to have played football last year, but an injury caused him to miss most of the season.

The native Virginian expressed this sentiment several times "vocally I'm 110 percent behind it, but I don't have time. If they really need me, I would be willing to help as long as it is for justice."

He admits that his experience with the Black student organization at the Oklahoma junior college from which he transferred prejudiced him toward the BSM. Several Black students did not want whites to join the group, and Casey felt the BSM at Carolina might have the same policy.

When asked about his contact with the BSM Phil Ford answered "I haven't been involved with the BSM or any political organization on campus. Once you get involved with politics it goes on and on, it's nothing you can just stop.

"I've been asked by guys running for congress to help support them. But by being an athlete at a school like this that requires a lot of hard work, I don't think I'll have that much time."

Clarifying this, Ford said "The BSM isn't political but once you get involved, you have to keep becoming involved and I don't think it would be fair to the BSM or fair to me if I wouldn't be able to give my whole to the BSM or any other group."

Besides, traveling to New York to be photographed by Sports Illustrated

and making commercials, the olympic gold metallist says he attends cultural activities sponsored by the BSM. Coach Dean Smith, he added, "really encourages us to become involved with campus affairs."

Eight of the athletes interviewed complain about what they perceived as the lack of available information on the BSM.

Junie Chatman, senior player on UNC's tennis team, was no exception. He suggested that general body and nonentertainment functions weren't as publicized as social activities.

"Blacks need," in his opinion "an organization to let others know how they feel about particular matters." He said he knew very little about the internal structure of the BSM, but admitted that people inquire about what they are really interested in. "It's a matter of what you really want," he stated.

The athletic greatness of the individuals discussed, will undoubtedly be remembered for many years after their departure. So too were basketball greats Charlie Scott and Bill Chamberlain.

Scott and Chamberlain graduated 1970 and '72 respectively, but not without voicing and displaying support for the BSM to the UNC administration.

Junie Chatman on Scott and Chamberlain: "It was commendable on their part as long as they weren't coerced."

A list of 23 demands were presented to the administration December 11, 1969, by the BSM. According to the Observer Carolinas News Service, "The demands included more active recruitment of Black freshmen, establishment of an Afro-American Studies department, and the firing of two university officials." Another demand was that Chancellor Sitterson "officially recognize the BSM as representing the 255 Black students on campus."

Scott was quoted as saying that he attended a meeting hoping to "help bridge a communications gap between Black students and the administration."

Chamberlain said, "I feel that if I'm going to represent the university on the basketball court, they (the administration) should represent me and my Black brothers."

In addition, the two athletes joined then BSM chairperson Preston E. Dobbins and three other BSM officials in a conference with Sitterson.

Certainly Chamberlain and Scott had to practice and attend to scholastic matters. Scott was the First Black scholarship athlete on UNC's campus. A member of the Grail, Scott worked with Upward Bound (a tutoring service) and with a summer program for underprivileged children. Both athletes were married.

Responding to Scott and Chamberlain's experiences with the BSM, shot put and discus thrower Rosie Riddick stated "Scott and Chamberlain were influential people, and influential people can make a difference, depending on who's in the position at the time. But I don't think it's fair to single out athletes. The small number of students who attend BSM meetings shows that there are many more nonathletes who don't attend."

"I think," said Junie Chatman, "it was commendable on their part as long as they weren't coerced. But

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