

The Sports Column

Shattered image: The bad rap on athletes

By BARRY COOPER
Syndicated Columnist

There used to be a time, particularly in the black community, when parents used to find role models for their children by simply pointing to a big-league athlete and saying, "See him? Now that's a man."

Professional athletes may be men, all right, but many are no longer worth looking up to. There is a long list of athletes who have betrayed our trust and respect by involving themselves in illegal drug use, scams and shady business deals. You can check any daily newspaper, on almost any given day, for details.

The temptation is to list examples of big-name athletes who have run afoul of the law or who have otherwise embarrassed themselves.

But to further disgrace the athletes -- many of them black -- would serve no real purpose. After all, if these guys are rotten role models, then the least said about them the better.

Suffice it to say that there is a real problem in America today regarding those men who our kids can look up to.

Ballplayers are more hung up on massive ego trips, and more interested in their Rolls Royces, million-dollar annuities and floor-length mink coats than setting an example for the 8-year-old kids across town.

Entertainers are no better, either. They seemed determined to go the opposite of society, and will pierce their noses and dye

their hair strange colors to prove it.

Of course, the every move of big-time athletes is chronicled by your local newspaper. If Joe Athlete is busted for drunk driving, we know about it the next day. If he is the party to a paternity suit, then we find out about that in a hurry, too.

The feeling here is that it would be stupendous if we could somehow shelter today's youth from that kind of information. It would be nice if we could return to a day when ballplayers were pure and certainly worth idolizing. That day, sadly, may have passed forever.

But while we hear the every detail of athletes' lives, we do not hear about the people who may be the only real heroes left in this country: the men and women who make their money away from the ball fields, not on it.

Instead of glorifying athletes, today's youngsters should be taught to look up to such people as John H. Johnson, publisher of *Ebony* magazine and head of a business empire.

There are other examples, too, especially in the black community. There is Motown Records head Berry Gordy, Perry Sutton of Inner City Broadcasting, Edward Lewis of *Essence* magazine and Earl G. Graves of *Black Enterprise*.

These men never show up in the box scores or on the 6:15 sports highlights. That's too bad. If they did, we might have some real role models for our kids to look up to.

Sports Notebook

• More details have been leaked regarding CBS-TV's plans to make a made-for-television movie on Mississippi Valley football Coach Archie Cooley. The movie will feature Cooley's life and his work in building the reputation of the Delta Devils, who finished 9-2 last season with a high-scoring offense that was the rage of college football.

Said the ever-modest Cooley about the movie: "It will cover my life from high school to now and how I've been a part of a winner all my life." The movie is to be shown this winter.

• Former Grambling defensive end Robert "Big Bird" Smith, who never played a down after signing a big contract with the United States Football League Arizona Wranglers, has filed a \$3.6 million suit against the club. Smith, plagued by knee injuries while with the Wranglers, claims he was paid only \$200,000 on his four-year contract, which was worth a reported \$1.4 million. "I got a raw deal," Smith said. "The league started out good, but it ended up with a bunch of rich people playing games. We were all just a tax shelter for them." Smith, 23, is now with the NFL's Minnesota Vikings.

• Northwestern Coach Dennis Green, the only black man working as a head coach at a Division I-A school, had this to say about the NCAA and schools that violate recruiting rules: "If the NCAA was really serious, go sit in the parking lot (at some

schools) after practice and write down the license numbers (of the players' cars) and then go to the bank and find out how the car was financed ... because there are some conferences in this country where every player worth a damn has a car and that car was not bought by that individual."

• Insiders say that Georgetown could be one of the best teams in the country again this year, despite the loss of center Patrick Ewing. One reason for the optimism is news that Ewing's backup, Ralph Dalton, probably will return for a final season. Dalton has graduated but could play a final year by entering grad school.

• Troubles continue for Memphis State, which has not graduated a black basketball player in more than four years. Former Memphis State booster Harry Davis has accused the school of providing its players with money, cars and "pseudo jobs." Among those who have investigated the Tigers' program: the NCAA, FBI and U.S. Attorney's Office. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation plans to enter the fray soon.

The Mailbag

Q: When the New York Knicks drafted Patrick Ewing, Georgetown Coach John Thompson said he was sure Ewing could adjust. Has there been any evidence of that yet? -- William Sanders, Detroit, Mich.

A: Still too early to tell. One positive sign, though, is that Ewing has done well in media interviews thus far. That may sound like a paltry accomplishment, but it is critical that Ewing adjust to such attention.

Ram Report

From Page B1

with a hometown friend, Kelvin Bryant. He is good friends with the former Carolina all-America, now a standout with the Baltimore Stars of the United States Football League.

"We live in the same neighborhood (East Tarboro)," Handsome said. "I know him pretty well. We have workouts together."

Kelvin's brother, Wayne, and Calvin Bridges, both players for Elizabeth City State, also took part in the Tarboro training sessions.

"Kelvin gives us pointers on running," Handsome said. "He tells us how to work on the basics and shows us how he runs."

Not that Handsome needs many pointers on running. WSSU assistant coaches have clocked him in 4.25 seconds for the 40-yard dash, "a world-class

time," according to Hayes. "I think the coaches might have been a little quick on the trigger, but make it 4.35 and that's still world class."

Handsome has run the 100 meters in 10.5 and the 200 in 21.9. He ran on Tarboro High School's 400-meter relay team in 1983. It finished second in the state meet.

The Ram sophomore is used to the wing-T, since Tarboro operated from the alignment. Handsome, also recruited by Wake Forest, East Carolina and North Carolina State, rushed for 1,213 yards on 127 carries as a senior.

While he may not get those kinds of numbers while he's at WSSU, it's likely you won't soon forget No. 22 -- after you see him sprinting past the opposition's secondary.

COLLEGE STANDINGS

| CIAA | | |
|--------------------|------------|-------|
| Northern Division | Conference | All |
| Hampton University | 2-0-0 | 3-0-0 |
| Norfolk State | 2-0-0 | 2-1-0 |
| Elizabeth City | 1-0-0 | 2-0-0 |
| Virginia State | 1-0-1 | 1-1-1 |
| Virginia Union | 1-1-0 | 1-1-0 |
| St. Paul's | 0-2-0 | 0-3-0 |

| Southern Division | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|
| Conference | All | |
| Livingstone | 1-0-0 | 3-0-0 |
| Payetteville State | 1-0-1 | 1-0-1 |
| Winston-Salem State | 0-1-0 | 1-1-0 |
| North Carolina Central | 0-1-0 | 1-2-0 |
| Johnson C. Smith | 0-2-0 | 0-3-0 |
| Bowie State | 0-3-0 | 0-3-0 |

| MEAC | | |
|----------------------|-------|-------|
| Conference | All | |
| Delaware State | 2-0-0 | 4-0-0 |
| Bethune-Cookman | 1-0-0 | 2-1-0 |
| South Carolina State | 1-1-0 | 1-3-0 |
| Howard University | 0-1-0 | 0-3-0 |
| North Carolina A&T | 0-2-0 | 0-4-0 |
| *Morgan State | 0-3-0 | 0-3-0 |

*Ineligible for MEAC Title

CIAA Results
Winston-Salem State, open date
Livingstone 51, UDC 6
Hampton 31, Virginia Union 0
Norfolk State 38, J.C. Smith 0
Grambling State 45, North Carolina Central 14
Elizabeth City State 27, Bowie State 0
Payetteville State 7, Virginia State 7
Delaware State 46, St. Paul's 6

MEAC Results
Delaware State 46, St. Paul's 6
South Carolina State 51, North Carolina A&T 14
Bethune-Cookman 23, Howard University 14
Central State 30, Morgan State 13

SWAC Results
Grambling State 45, North Carolina Central 14
Southern 22, Texas Southern 14
Jackson State 21, Prairie View A&M 3

SIAC Results
Albany State 44, Miles 0
Morris Brown 19, Tuskegee 9
Fort Valley 36, Morehouse 0
Alabama A&M 28, Savannah State 17

CIAA Schedule
Winston-Salem State at Hampton
Payetteville State at North Carolina Central
Johnson C. Smith at Bowie State
Elizabeth City at Norfolk State
Virginia State at St. Paul's
Livingstone at Virginia Union

MEAC Schedule
Morgan State at N.C. A&T
Delaware State at N. Iowa
S.C. State at Howard
Bethune-Cookman, open date

SWAC Schedule
Mississippi Valley at Jackson State
Oregon State v. Grambling State at Shreveport, La.
Alcorn State at Stephen F. Austin
Alabama State at Texas Southern
Prairie View A&M at Southern University

SIAC Schedule
Alabama A&M at Albany State
Savannah at N. Alabama
Clark at Tuskegee
Morris Brown at Fort Valley State
Union at Knoxville
Miles v. Lane



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