

# Black Coach: White wife hampers my career



**George Curry**  
Guest Columnist

The University of Florida's football team made a statement recently when it defeated the University of Oklahoma 24-14 and was declared national champion for the second time in three years. Charlie Strong, the African-American defensive coordinator who kept the Sooners far below their 54 points a game average, made an even louder statement when he declared that despite all of his success at Florida, he has been passed over for head coaching positions because of his interracial marriage.

"Everybody always said I didn't get that job because my wife was White," Strong told a columnist for the Orlando Sentinel. He added, "If you think about it, a coach is standing up there representing the university. If you're not strong enough to look through that (interracial marriage) then you have an issue."

Strong's assertion caught many by surprise. When you look at African-American sports figures — including Charles Barkley and Tiger Woods — many have White wives. So do many big time Black coaches, including Lovie Smith of the Chicago Bears. Interracial couples are so commonplace in athletics that one would be forgiven if he or she thought it was a requirement for Blacks participating at the top echelon of sports.

There is no doubt that interracial couples are less of a social taboo today than they

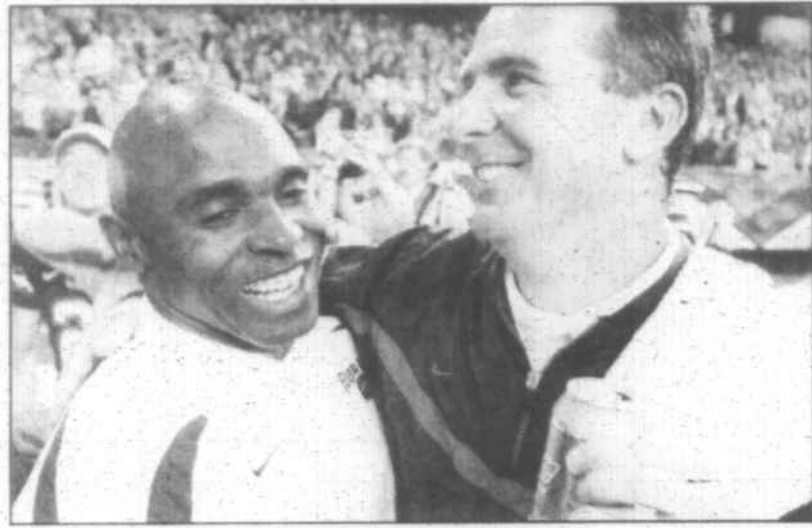


Photo by Gary W. Green/Orlando Sentinel/MCT

**Florida's Charlie Strong, left, and Coach Urban Meyer celebrate their 2006 38-28 victory over Arkansas in the SEC Championship.**

were just two decades ago. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2003, more than three-quarters of all adults — 77 percent — said it is "all right for Blacks and Whites to date each other." In 1987, that figure was only 48 percent.

But Coach Strong's allegation speaks to a more subtle point. From the days of the Founding Fathers, White males have never objected to interracial liaisons. You can look at the complexion of any group of African-Americans and see that racial lines have been blurred: White men, ranging from the supposedly enlightened Thomas Jefferson to segregationist Strom Thurmond, have had children by Black women, often against their will. The objection has been to the voluntary union between Black men and White women. That has been particularly true in the Deep South.

Gunnar Myrdal's landmark "American Dilemma," written in the mid-1940s, observed the South's "fixation on the purity of White womanhood." Myrdal explained, "The South has an obsession with sex which helps to make this region quite irrational in deal-

ing with Negroes generally..." "The Matter of Color," a book written by retired U.S. Appeals Court Judge A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., notes that if a free Black man had sexual relations with a White woman in South Carolina during the Colonial period, he would automatically lose his "freedom."

In 1955, Emmett Till, a 14-year-old boy from Chicago, was murdered near Money, Miss. for allegedly whistling at a White woman. Although his killers later bragged about killing young Till, they were never convicted.

Until 1966, interracial marriages were illegal in 16 states. That year, in the case of Loving v. Virginia, which involved a marriage between a White man and a Black woman, the United States Supreme Court invalidated anti-miscegenation laws.

According to the Census Bureau, the number of interracial marriages remain relatively small, increasing from less than 1 percent in 1970 to slightly more than 5 percent in 2000. A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2005 found that more than one-fifth of all Americans — 22

— say they have a close relative married to someone of a different race.

So, what was the reaction to Coach Strong's remarks on the Orlando Sentinel's Web site? Here are some of them.

*Blah, blah, blah. I know that it is so politically correct to support inter-racial marriage as if it's perfectly acceptable, but I am personally disgusted by it, and I know plenty of others are too. I also find it ridiculous that such a disproportionate number of these marriages involve rich and famous Black males who are big in the world of music, sports, or movies. Apparently Black women are not good enough for these guys once they reach a certain status in the world.*

• Fungus

*Wow Fungus. Your name is spot-on. You are a Fungus. I am a successful WHITE male, married to a beautiful, successful BLACK female, with a gorgeous little girl who is 3 and another one on the way. Sorry to disgust you, you Neanderthal, with my choice to marry a beautiful woman of a darker skin tone than Barbie.*

even appreciate the constructive criticism. I took it all as love. Thank you.

*Anthony Hill is the former sports editor for The Chronicle. He can be reached at thrill021@yahoo.com.*

DEAL with it.  
•Freekoffthisleash

*Stop complaining, he married that snow bunny and he knew the consequences. He is a self-hating Black male, that believed he was too good to marry an educated Black woman.*

• I'm Glad

*Black haters that say the dude shouldn't have married a White girl. Maybe Coach Strong should say "Thank you Mr. White man for the job that I have, and I enjoy your smell." White man takes us out the jungle and look how we repay him, by creating rap music, dating White women, and voting!*

• Ol' Balls Coach

Maybe we haven't made as much progress in this area as we were led to believe.

*George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of Emergence magazine and the NNPA News Service, is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach. He can be reached through his Web site, www.georgecurry.com.*

## Track

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500m dash.

Also, Crystal Webley finished sixth in the women's pentathlon with 2,904 points in the event. Her best single event finish came in the women's 60m dash, when she finished third in the pentathlon's upper division with a 9.22 in the event.

Senior Malliron Hodge and sophomore Persha Lane had some strong performances in the lower division of the pentathlon. Hodge finished second in the women's 60m hurdles with a 10.24. Lane finished in the women's high jump in the lower division with a 4'11" (1.50m). Hodge finished second in the women's 800m run in the lower division.

Both teams will return to action in two weeks when the squads head to Chapel Hill to take part in the Carolina Invitational.



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## Hill

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number one man before that interview.

I'm going to miss many aspects of my job. I'm going to miss sharing great stories about some of the former, present and up-and-coming athletes of this area. Winston-Salem is so rich with tradition and talent. I told several people that my job was easier than it looked simply because there were so many good things to write about. All I had to do was relay stories to the community. It was completely my pleasure.

Another thing I'm definitely going to miss is the relationship I had with my co-workers. I was even cool with my superiors. We were so much like family that I still feel like I'm leaving loved ones as I turn the next page of the book called my life. I genuinely loved going

to work every day. I even loved working on weekends, holidays and late-night hours. I loved seeing some of the same people every day. And, you always hope to be in a situation where you love what you do, and the people you do it with. That's what I had at The Chronicle. I even care for a lot of people that I've met as a result of working for The Chronicle. I've definitely made several good friends. But nothing lasts forever. And, all good things come to an end.

Sometimes you're forced away from what you love. Sometimes it's taken away. And, there are times when you simply know it's time to move on and do something else. No matter what the situation may be, you have to deal with change. You have to motivate yourself to turn over a new leaf. And you can't dwell or hang your hat on what you did in the past.

I've gone through several changes in my life. I remember when I thought going from being an athlete my entire life to one day waking up with nothing but questions and worries about life without sports was going to be the biggest change. Then, I managed to find happiness in writing about sports. I also had to deal with the change of transitioning from a daily newspaper in Alabama to a weekly publication in North Carolina.

I really don't know what I'm going to tackle next. I've still got a few things going on. I'm also working on some new projects. We'll see what HE has in store for me. It should be interesting, though. I simply want to thank all of you for your support throughout the years. I also want to thank you all for reading my stories, columns and interviews. The e-mails and calls really meant a lot to me. I



Photo by Marlon Hubbard

Some Mustangs watch the action from the bench.

## Carver victory

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scoring."

But Carver maintained an aggressive offense and defense throughout the game — not letting up — even after a 29-19 lead in the first half. Parkland's #55 David Bishop, #23 Jerrae Thomas and #15 Alex Mitchell hustled the court, trying to find the synergy that could give them a boost, but they had no luck against the aggressive Carver team.

The Mustang standouts were not as consistent as



McGuinness

Carver's Denzell Rice, Wendell and Devontea Miller, who consistently

took the ball to the hoop. The stellar play of the Yellowjackets seemed like mockery late in the game when it was clear that Carver's lead was insurmountable. Miller, who is known as "Slim" by his teammates, made several slam dunk attempts in the fourth quarter.

McGuinness, who said he strives to teach his players character and good sportsmanship, said he didn't feel Carver needed to continue such aggressive play after gaining such a large lead in second half.

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