

Media's job is to report news, not hire on for public relations

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The story made the national wire. I was quite impressed with the scope and depth of the article, not to mention the guts it took to print it in a student paper.

A few days after their story broke, Roland overheard two students blasting the newspaper for "putting FAMU out like that." The hotel didn't press charges so why was there a story.

I love what Roland wrote next in her editorial: "These critics must not understand the role of the newspaper. It is our job to provide an accurate record of contemporary history. We did not report the story badly, we just reported a bad story."

Can't be said any better.

As long as I stay in this business, I will never understand how the messenger became more hated than the perpetrator "Report a bad story" about black folks, and the first thing people ask is "How could you write that?", when they should be asking "How could they do that?"

A victim choosing not to press charges doesn't mean he wasn't victimized. The Marching 100 is a public relations recruiting tool for FAMU. The band travels all over the country representing not just themselves but the university as a whole. So acting like a bunch of hoodlums with no home training IS a big deal.

What do you think that hotel's perception of FAMU is now? And, although it's grossly unfair, they may or may not book another black university for a 1-o-n-g time.

Do white people steal and cut-up? Of course they do - worse in some cases, but there's a double standard in this country that's not going away any time soon. Instead of worrying about "putting FAMU out there," those students and more should have jacked up the band members as soon as they stepped foot on campus for embarrassing the university.

I still won't forget a local men's basketball coach who, after getting hired, made the mistake of telling a reporter - not me - that the players needed discipline and more time in study hall.

His phone didn't stop ringing for a week. Coach was getting so many daggers thrown at his back that he asked another reporter - again not me - to write another more favorable article.

The one question I ask is did those same folks who lambasted him for basically telling the truth, also vent their anger towards the folks who allowed the undisciplined behavior in the first place? I think not.

How many times can it be said? We, i.e. the black press, are not your public relations agency.

If you don't want to get caught with your hand in the cookie jar, wipe the crumbs off your face.

BONITTA BEST is sports editor of The Triangle Tribune in Durham.

Season brings closure, changes

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made the playoffs for the first time in 19 years and promptly went through 220 bottles of champagne to celebrate. The Motor City desperately needed something good to happen at a time when tens of thousands who have lost jobs in the auto industry are drowning their sorrows with something cheaper.

A slugger chasing Roger Maris and the Babe, though no one outside of Philadelphia really seemed to care. Ryan Howard would have been huge news a few years ago, but home run records are now a joke and making sense of any of it is just too much for the average fan.

The return of Moneyball in Oakland, where the As made the playoffs for the first

time in three years. They were helped by, of all things, a guy who is used to making big money. Frank Thomas gets the last laugh on the White Sox after leading his young teammates to the AL

West title.

Almost unnoticed in the clamor over the work Oakland GM Billy Beane does is what GM Terry Ryan and manager Ron Gardenhire did in Minnesota.

The Twins came back from 12 games behind and join the As as two of the hottest teams in baseball heading into the postseason.

The return of the Rocket for one last hurrah. But is it?

Cougars on track

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but a shoo-in with first-year Ardey Kell at Independence Friday.

BACK ON TRACK: Charlotte Catholic. The Cougars are nothing like the crew that lost a couple of games early in the season. The Cougars' wing-T offense is moving the ball with conviction and the defense is playing better. Catholic has already cleared its biggest hurdle to the Queen City 3A/4A title when the Cougars beat Olympic last month. In reality, they should be playing for postseason positioning now.

ROAR RESTORED? The only blemishes on West Charlotte's 4-2 record are losses to 4A powers Independence and Wilmington Hoggard, but how good are the Lions? WC's Quintero Long is the best kick returner in Mecklenburg County and the defense is quick if a bit undersized.


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