

10-16-2006 Committee on Infractions

1 (File: 20061016 Reggie Bush welcome)

2 JOSH CENTOR: Welcome to "Mondays With Myles". In our
3 effort to answer questions from our faithful bloggers,
4 Dr. Brand and I will spend our time today discussing a
5 question submitted by Orson Swindle.

6 Dr. Brand, if the allegations of Reggie Bush taking
7 improper benefits are proven true by an NCAA allegation, what
8 are the steps that will be taken to punish the infractions?

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, Josh, I can't answer that
10 question, as much as I'd like to, because we have an ongoing
11 investigation. And the NCAA, properly so, does not comment on
12 any ongoing investigations.

13 JOSH CENTOR: Okay. But we can talk about it in more
14 general terms, about student athletes in general.

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: Yes. Let's do that, leaving out any
16 discussion of Reggie Bush. But I'm happy to talk about it in
17 general terms.

18 JOSH CENTOR: Okay. So talking about infractions and
19 how those -- the investigation works, penalties work, how do
20 things like that happen?

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: Senior staff members who have
22 experience in law enforcement, or attorneys, will investigate
23 on campus and in related areas whether an infraction, major
24 infraction has taken place. They will then submit their
25 investigation to a Committee on Infractions.

1 The Committee on Infractions is separate from the
2 staff. The Committee on Infractions is made up of people from
3 the membership and the public, such as sitting judges, people
4 in law schools, law deans -- people who understand these
5 issues and also understand intercollegiate athletics. They
6 will then pass a judgment. And on the basis of that judgment
7 sanctions will be enforced or not.

8 There is an opportunity, of course, as there is in any
9 judicial system, for an appeal.

10 JOSH CENTOR: We're talking about some high profile
11 student athletes. Journalists have often said that these
12 student athletes, when they get paid, basically that's what
13 we're talking about, they're getting what they deserve.

14 Can you weigh in on that?

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, one of the more
16 interesting bank robbers of all time was Willie Sutton. He
17 was a very attractive figure, and people sort of gravitated to
18 him. He was also a celebrity of some sorts. That doesn't
19 mean robbing banks was a good thing to do, even though we
20 liked him.

21 The fact of the matter is a celebrity, the interest,
22 the sympathetic feelings we have for an individual, does not
23 give them permission to break the rules.

24 JOSH CENTOR: I mean, to reiterate again, why are some
25 of those rules there? Why can't high profile student athletes

1 who are getting their jersey sold in bookstores across -- in
2 campuses across the country, why aren't they getting a piece
3 of the pie?

4 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, they are getting a piece
5 of the pie for themselves. They're getting an education.
6 That's the most important thing. And for those high profile
7 athletes, they're also positioning themselves in a way they
8 could never do otherwise for their own future careers in the
9 pro leagues, if they are so talented.

10 But implicit in your question is the answer. The
11 answer is the reason they can't get money right now, the
12 reason we don't pay them, the reason why they don't take
13 endorsements, is because they're students. That is the big
14 difference between professional athletics and collegiate
15 athletics. These are students who are enrolled in regular
16 programs in our institutions of higher education.

17 It's -- they're free to do something else, work in pro
18 leagues, in other countries, or in the United States, if the
19 rules permit that, and according to the colleagues. But they
20 can't do that when they are students.

21 JOSH CENTOR: Now, when you have a student athlete who
22 has left an institution and is maybe playing professional
23 sports, maybe he's working somewhere else, and then you find
24 out that there's been some sort of an infraction, some sort of
25 a violation, how do you go back and penalize that student

1 athlete, that former student athlete who is no longer on
2 campus? How does the Committee on Infractions, how does the
3 Staff look at things like that?

4 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, what the enforcement process
5 does is take away eligibility. Now, obviously if a student
6 has become professional and is earning a livelihood, they're
7 no longer a student and have no eligibility left. So it isn't
8 the student that gets penalized, it's the program. And you go
9 back and enforce sanctions on the program. That's very
10 selfish of student athletes then, because it's the program --
11 the other student athletes, the school itself that is
12 suffering. And it's a very selfish act on any student then to
13 harm others in the program just for their own benefit.

14 JOSH CENTOR: And sometimes wins can even be, you
15 know, taken away from a program. That's what you might mean
16 by penalizing a program. We've seen that in the past; is that
17 correct?

18 DR. MYLES BRAND: Oh, yes. Wins, championships, a
19 whole year's worth of wins have been taken, wiped off the
20 books, not allowed to raise the flag. I mean, I think it's
21 devastating to a team and to a school to do that -- very
22 selfish on the part of those student athletes.

23 JOSH CENTOR: And that really bothers me, as well.
24 You've got a student athlete who, you know, maybe takes a
25 little bit because he thinks he deserves it, or is told by

1 other journalists that he deserves it. And then his teammates
2 who, you know, might not be as high profile, might be on the
3 bench, they might lose a ring or wins that they've, you know,
4 put in the time for.

5 DR. MYLES BRAND: And lose a lot of pride and lose the
6 ability to recruit the next class. I mean, it is very harmful
7 to that team. I think students who do that should be ashamed
8 of themselves, frankly.

9 JOSH CENTOR: All right. Well, thanks to Orson for
10 submitting that question. And thank you for answering that,
11 Dr. Brand.

12 We want to see more questions sent our way, don't we?

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: Yes, we do.

14 JOSH CENTOR: Well, thanks for listening to "Mondays
15 With Myles". We'll see you next week.

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