

2-26-2007 Race & Athletics (Hiring)

1 (File: 20070226mwm Race & Athletics (hiring))

2 JOSH CENTOR: Good morning. And welcome to "Mondays
3 With Myles". Recently we've seen a lot of news articles
4 criticizing the NCAA and member institutions about hiring
5 practices for minority coaches in football.

6 Is this a problem, Dr. Brand?

7 DR. MYLES BRAND: It is a very serious problem and
8 it's a frustrating problem, too, because we have not been
9 making a kind of progress I think we ought to make. It's a
10 problem about which I spoke many times in the last four years
11 that I've been here, but nonetheless it's proved to be very
12 close to intractable at this point.

13 JOSH CENTOR: What is the national office's role in
14 helping member institutions identify candidates?

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, that's a very important
16 question, Josh. I'm glad you pointed to that. The media and
17 some others get confused about what the NCAA is.

18 There is the national office, which are the people in
19 Indianapolis; and then there are members. In the case of
20 hiring and firing coaches in their athletic departments, the
21 members have full autonomy in that regard. They also keep to
22 their own autonomy the use to have their funds and what kind
23 of resources they will spend, whether it's coaches' salaries
24 or others.

25 So while the NCAA national office has some opportunity

1 to have input on, for example, academic reform; there are
2 other areas, hiring and firing and salaries and other monetary
3 issues, that are entirely in the province of the individual
4 institutions.

5 JOSH CENTOR: Professional football has had similar
6 problems in the past. But in recent years, it's been quite
7 successful in hiring a diverse group of coaches. The
8 comparisons are inevitable. What's our role here?

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: It's interesting, in the case of the
10 NFL, they institute what's called the Rooney Rule after the
11 owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers team. And what the Rooney
12 Rule really does is focus in on the process for hiring. It's
13 a practice. It's not a mandate, although the national NFL
14 office does have the ability -- the Commissioners have the
15 ability to fine teams that don't follow this best practice.

16 But what it essentially does is say that when you are
17 looking for a head coach, you have to include an interview of
18 a minority member in your final group, and the NFL has done
19 that. I think in only one case they haven't, and they've seen
20 some significant changes as a result.

21 Interestingly the NCAA has the functional equivalent
22 to the Rooney Rule. It has the same effect. It's the hiring
23 report card by the Black Coaches Association, BCA. And that's
24 been in effect for three years. In fact, over the last three
25 years, the average of the final interviewees, 30 percent have

1 been African American, and that's quite a remarkable increase
2 from what we saw before that.

3 Now, while there is no financial penalty brought to
4 bear, the BCA hiring report card is very detailed, and those
5 results are made public. And the public pressures of that
6 report card have, in fact, changed the hiring process.

7 But here's the key point, unlike the NFL, even though
8 we've changed the hiring process, we've not seen the results.

9 JOSH CENTOR: You are speaking to a Congressional
10 subcommittee tomorrow. What are some of the things that you
11 expect to happen?

12 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, there's a Congressional
13 subcommittee whose chair is Congressman Rush from Illinois.
14 And frankly, I'm very pleased that he's called this
15 subcommittee hearing, because it gives an opportunity to, I
16 think, air in public this very important issue. And so we
17 will be talking about this -- not just me, but the other
18 panelists will be talking about the hiring of African American
19 football coaches, primarily in Division I, but also in
20 Divisions II and III, which are also experiencing similar
21 hiring problems.

22 JOSH CENTOR: Do you think we're taking the right
23 steps here? The conversation you alluded to the BCA report
24 card is very public. And are these conversations the ones
25 that can really change the practices?

1 DR. MYLES BRAND: I think it will help by shining
2 light on it and have people, particularly those who are
3 engaged in the hiring process and the decision making, look
4 more carefully at it. The fact of the matter is it's very
5 complicated in the case of a college hiring for a head coach
6 compared to, say, the NFL, which may only involve or primarily
7 involve the owner and the general manager or --

8 But in the case of the college ranks, it involves the
9 board of directors, the president, an athletic director, other
10 constituencies that might have input and any consultation, or,
11 in fact, any consultants they use in a hiring team of
12 consultants -- and there are such folks out there, head
13 hunters for coaches. The NFL doesn't do it that way. So it's
14 a much more complex affair.

15 Having said that, it seems to me that one of the next
16 steps beyond getting the process of interviewing right, which
17 I think we've already accomplished that, and it's a mistake to
18 continue to focus on that, because I think the BCA report card
19 has done that. What else is missing?

20 I think there are a couple things. We need to be able
21 to make sure that these talented African American coaches have
22 an opportunity to be part of the informal network before the
23 hiring is made. I think that's critical. I think we must
24 provide the kind of background, not just in Xs and Os if you
25 like, but all that's involved in being a head football coach,

1 which is a very complex job. And the NCAA has been helpful in
2 that, in terms of providing expert coaches, academies, and so
3 has the NFL and the AFCA. And we're beginning to see some
4 coaches hired who have gone through that.

5 I think we also have to make sure that there's a good
6 opportunity for the coaches to present themselves to athletic
7 directors and others, and get those individuals who actually
8 make the decisions past the point of view of being risk
9 adverse on this.

10 JOSH CENTOR: All right. Well, an important topic and
11 one that we will follow on the DoubleAZone. Safe travels to
12 Washington tomorrow.

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: Thank you, Josh.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25