BY RICHARD E. LAPCHICK



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"CAN YOU WIN IN COLLEGE SPORTS WITHOUT CHEATING?"

he resignation of SMU's football coach, Bobby Collins, in early December marked the third time this year that a major college coach has resigned because of a scandal at his university. First it was Lefty Driesell who was forced out at Maryland in the wake of revelations following the death of Len Bias. Then it was Dana Kirk at Memphis State who was dropped after he was indicted by a grand jury. None of this is new, but we increasingly hear the question asked: can you win in major college sport without cheating? Can good players be educated or do they have to cut corners to stay eligible?

Two university programs in Washington, D.C. present some obvious answers. They are starkly different kinds of schools — one overwhelmingly white, the other predominantly black; one playing in the prestigious Big East Conference and the other in the less competitive Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference. Yet there are striking similarities: both Georgetown basketball and Howard football are winning a lot of games; both are graduating their athletes at 2-3 times the national average; both have head coaches who are black.

With the bowl games behind us and the furious march to the Final Four underway, the emphasis is now on college basketball. I have maintained for many years that the single most important symbolic event in college sport was when John Thompson put Mary Fenlon on the bench. Not another assistant coach for recruiting, but Georgetown's academic advisor. That told young players across America that if you wanted to play at Georgetown that you would have to be educated. No coach had done that before. Others have had to since.

Since 1972 when he came to Georgetown, John has become best known because he took a mediocre program (296 wins and 302 losses in the previous 25 years) and led his team to the National Championship. Georgetown consistently wins against the nation's best teams. Georgetown basketball players graduate at a rate better than 90 percent. Michael Jackson, a 1986 graduate and NBA draft choice who was cut by the Knicks, told me that he wanted to enter Harvard's MBA program when his playing days were over. There weren't many recent players at SMU, Memphis State or Maryland who could say the same thing.

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University Bisons is lesser known in Washington but a pioneer in his own right. Howard just ended their best football season in 12 years with a record of 8 wins and 3 losses. Jeffries has been at Howard since 1983.

Coach Jeffries came to Howard after coaching at Wichita State, one of those schools perennially in trouble with the NCAA. Most of Wichita's problems were in basketball and Jeffries was never personally implicated. When he accepted the position at Wichita State, he became the first black head football coach at a Division I-A school. As a result he was always under scrutiny.

This was a challenge to Jeffries as a black man since it made him feel obligated to do well in hope that other black coaches would be more readily accepted as head coaches at predominantly white colleges.

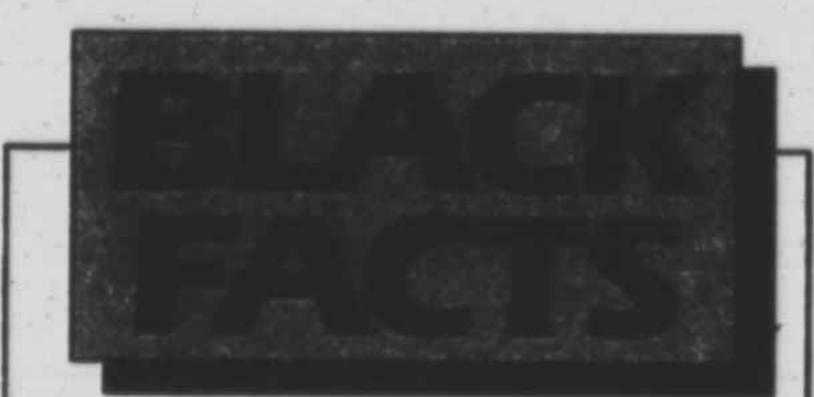
During his stint at Wichita State, Coach Jeffries remembers only one racial incident. A white player told him that he tried, but just could not play for a black head coach. Coach Jeffries told him "I'm glad you came to me now rather than when it was fourth and one."

Jeffries did do fairly well. With a limited budget, his teams played nationally ranked teams such as Alabama and Kansas. In the five years Jeffries was at Wichita, his teams played for three conference championships. Two of his former players are now in the N.F.L.

Wichita State football became the hub of the city's weekend activities. Winning brought forth large financial donations from alumni and local boosters. Ironically, the scandals, which were largely caused by illegal booster activities, eventually shut down that support when the teams stopped winning. Three years after leaving, Coach Jeffries noted that he "was very saddened" when he recently learned that Wichita State decided to discontinue their football program because of financial difficulties. Jeffries decided to resign when the athletic director and the college president both left Wichita State in 1983. It sounds like SMU, where the president and athletic director left with Bobby Collins. At his December 5th press conference, Collins insisted he would take another coaching job. In doing so, he added that "tough times don't last. Tough people do."

Jeffries might be tough, but he is also sensitive to the best interests

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During the 1960s
Dr. Martin Luther
King strongly opposed
U.S. policy in the Vietnam
War. Why did some of his
fellow civil rights advocates criticize King for his
stance?
Dr. Alice Palmer

Chicago, Illinois

Not being gifted with the same prophetic insights as King, some of the civil rights advocates as well as many other Americans, felt that Dr. King should stick to the narrow arena of Domestic Issues. In other words, they did not think foreign policy was the proper arena for a Civil Rights Leader. Later, as you know, most Americans came around to Dr. King's way of thinking.

By Anna R. Berry and Freddie Brian Vincent



Irwin Hazen is the originator of Dondi