

CHRONIC MYOPIA

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is \$15,000, that represents 0.001 or 1/1,000 of an athletic department's annual budget.

So, it is not really the money the NCAA is standing firm on, but a lack of vision and a Myopia condition that obscures their ability to even begin to want to understand the BCA's concerns and see the long-term consequences of their short-sighted narrow agenda.

Are the college Presidents - who are at the top of our educational system - and NCAA officials suffering from 'Chronic Myopia'???

The expansion of the NCAA's vision would allow them to see what Chaney and Thompson knows so well.

"I think they know," said Chaney. "We have expressed our ideas and concerns many times, but do they really care?"

Added Thompson: "This (the scholarship opportunities) isn't something that just relates to athletic participation or basketball. This affects our kids, because athletics has always been the main vehicle that we have been given. And until they devise other alternatives for im-



John Thompson

poor kids to come away from their problems, we can't be disinterested in college athletics - and this does not mean to say athletics is the only way out, but it is a vehicle."

As an engineering graduate, I know colleges adjust their curriculums to fit what the manufacturing sector wants. Since basketball generally earns its way, why can't that sector be treated likewise and address the coaches concerns at face value?

The kids that make their way down that educational path via athletics - seven out of ten times - come out as better people from the experience. I know! My father was a coach and he changed many lives through athletics.

BLACK HISTORY

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championships.

Michael Jordan is easily the epitome of greatness when it comes to basketball. His masterful way of taking over a game in the fourth quarter may never be able to be duplicated. Never say never, but when you speak of His Aimess, it is hard to duplicate his accomplishments.

The Cleveland Cavaliers are still a team that has concurring nightmares of the damage Jordan has done to them in the NBA's Eastern Conference Playoffs.

He was a part of the 1992 Gold Medal Dream Team that is labeled as the greatest team ever assembled in the history of the sport.

The final season of a nine-year NBA career, 1992-93, saw Jordan set an NBA Finals record by averaging 41.0 points per game, and also become only the third player, after Elgin Baylor (1962) and Rick Barry (1967), to score at least 30 points in each game of the final series.

Jordan took his seat at Berto Center, in Deerfield, Illinois, the site of the Chicago Bulls' training camp, with wife Juanita, and assured the league, paparazzi and a nationwide audience on October 6, 1993 that "the NBA will survive," and that "the game goes on and it will be just as exciting."

His Aimess had just shocked the world and even said that he "won't miss the cheers." Jordan

Raveling also knows, saying: "Coaches can relate innumerable stories about students who have proven to be diamonds in the rough when given the opportunity for achievement and a chance to catch-up and compete (re: Lorenzo Orr of USC, Russell White of California, and thousands more across the country)."

"What is the BCA's really about?" I inquired.

Says Raveling: "The BCA's mission statement is: 'We are a group that is deeply concerned and totally committed to youth. When our children wake up in the morning and they look out at the world from a tip-toe stance,

they need to see real opportunities, caring individuals, and a friendlier universe."

Why has the situation reached a crisis point to where a boycott is even necessary?

"Collectively we are looking to improve the process and increase opportunities," explained Stringer. "Certainly we don't want to eliminate opportunities. Moreover, opportunities have been few and far between in the first place."

Continued Thompson: "With all the crime, drugs and social unrest going on, its the worst time in the world to do what we are doing (eliminating scholarship opportunities), and one of

the purposes of our educational institutions should be to have a direct affect on what's going on in our society."

Chaney concurred, saying: "If you are going to service our youth and the community, then higher education has to address the needs of all." I know many of the coaches have worked on committees, written letters, attended conventions, educated themselves and generally done the right things. But, somehow their voices has continually fell on deaf ears.

"The coaches in the BCA have operated within the system for all their coaching careers," noted Raveling. "Now, we have

reached a point where we believe the system has failed the African-American student athlete. We don't have the same kind of trust in the system that we once had. There is a growing body of evidence that the system has lost respect for the African-American."

Maybe the system has lost some respect, but what hinders the Presidents Commission and NCAA from building a shared vision with the BCA is, a disease called "Chronic Myopia."

Is there a cure?

Well, the BCA is in the lab searching for an antidote, while many youths across America are banking on their discovery.

SOMEBODY'S DYING FOR A NEW PAIR OF SNEAKERS.

All over America children are the victims of violent crime. They are being assaulted and even murdered for the sake of anything from a pair of sneakers to some loose change in their pockets.

It's a situation that's only getting worse. Unless you do something to fight back, your child could become one of those victims.

You can make a difference. Start now by calling 1-800-WE PREVENT and we'll send you information on successful ways to join with others to protect your children from crime in your neighborhood.

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