

Reaction To Joe Arbena's Paper

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1. One's first reaction to a paper about an athletics booster is ho-hum - perhaps not too exciting a paper.

2. Then I recalled the tragic death of Augustinius Jaspers at Clemson University and the aftermath resulting finally in the resignation of President Bill Atchley for daring to recommend (1) that the athletics program be re-organized there and (2) that the AD be transferred to another assignment within the University.

3. Couple this with my recent week-long experience at LSU in Baton Rouge where the theme was Ethics & Athletics, and - all of a sudden - I was reading Professor Arbena's paper as if it were deathless prose!!

4. As a matter of fact, Joe's article is literally horrifying to me, because it points out simply and with significant clarity how a seemingly harmless IPTAY club begun in 1934 to help poor old Coach Jess Neely develop a winning football team has steadily mushroomed into a gargantuan monster that has tended to devour the body educational otherwise known as the Tigers' Lair (or Clemson University).

5. What we have, therefore, is the prototype of each and every alumni booster club in the United States - groupd made up of well-intentioned, often unenlightened souls who really don't comprehend what they are doing to their presumably beloved Alma Maters.

As President Giamatti of Yale said in an interview reported on April in **The New York Times**:

"This commercialization of undergraduates is a very, very destructive thing. It is destructive not only to the education of those young people who are used that way, but destructive also of the public's faith in higher education."

Athletics has literally been moved out of the educational realm.

Finally, he believes that it is a "cop-out" to say that athletics is the one and only way to get alumni back on campus "What a condescending comment to the alumni of a public institution to thnk that the only thing that could bring them back on the campus would be to watch semipros masquerading as children or kids playing sports."

6. Thus, what Professor Arbena has done is to render us a service by faithfully reporting how it all began at Clemson 50 years ago!

Further, I believe that he asks all the right questions in his concluding section.

7. As I said at the LSU Ethics Conference two weeks ago, somehow we need an enforceable code of ethics for athletes and coaches alike - especially if athletes are semipros as well.

Further, we must be aware and responsive to the means whereby athletes, coaches, administrators, trustees and toher officials seem to be able to "get beyond ethics" in this regard in North American culture.

Finally, highly competitive sport is steadily becoming an ever-stronger social force that simply **must be directed toward the social good**. If sport is not a "socially useful servant, " and cannot be made into such an instrument, reluctantly I can only come to the conclusion that it should be abolished in Division I institutions.