

J Boney Speaks: What About the Kids?

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney, Associate Editor
Thursday, 26 July 2012 08:49



If you haven't heard by now, the Penn State football program was hit with a litany of penalties that were handed down by the NCAA for its handling of the allegations against former assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky, who was convicted of molesting several boys over a 15-year period. That is a stiff price to pay by any football program and one that is unprecedented. While I wouldn't wish that type of punishment on any football program at any university, I must tell you that I believe it was justified and the right thing to do.

The most shocking and stunning thing that I have seen come out of this whole thing is the outcry and screams of injustice coming from people who believe that the NCAA went overboard and should have been more lenient. Are you freaking kidding me? A man molests countless young, vulnerable boys over a 15-year period and you are upset that the university is being punished. These kids were under the trust and care of a man who had no regard for their innocence, and you are worried about the university losing scholarships, not being able to compete in a bowl game and being fined and penalized?

The NCAA imposed an unprecedented \$60 million fine, a four-year ban from postseason play and a cut in the number of football scholarships it can award. The NCAA also erased 14 years of victories, wiping out 111 of legendary Hall of Fame coach Joe Paterno's wins and stripping him of his standing as the most successful coach in the history of big-time college football. He surpassed the legendary coach of Grambling University, Eddie Robinson, to accomplish that feat.

The Big Ten Conference also said Penn State will not be allowed to share in the conference's bowl revenue during the NCAA's postseason ban, an estimated loss of about \$13 million. Due to the recent sanctions, Penn State is already starting to see an exodus of their recruited

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athletes, in that the NCAA has indicated that current or incoming football players are free to immediately transfer and compete at another school.

The Paterno family released a statement saying, "This is not a fair or thoughtful action; it is a panicked response to the public's understandable revulsion at what Sandusky did." Many people have joined in with the Paterno family to say that the punishment was excessive, but the NCAA fell short of instituting the most extreme punishment, which would have been the death penalty; a temporary suspension of the football program.

It is clear that Penn State was well aware of what had been going on and chose to do nothing, according to the Freeh report, which was a report commissioned by the university's board. The report found that Penn State had a failure of leadership at the university's highest levels and knew about it and did nothing. A main part of the Freeh report that many people have failed to highlight was the recommendation to deal with the Penn State culture and its football obsession, which gave unlimited and unchecked power to the football program. The report states that this culture gave key Penn State employees and decision makers the feeling that it could avoid adhering to applicable legal obligations and that they could usurp the proper chain of command by protecting a man whom they knew targeted vulnerable young boys.

Okay, so what is the downside of Penn State receiving this penalty? So what they lose \$60 million which will go towards child welfare organizations. So what they won't appear in any bowl games for a few years. So what they can't receive any bowl revenue for a few years. So what Paterno had his statue removed and some of his wins vacated. What about the kids?

**THE MAN RAPED KIDS!!!! AND THE UNIVERSITY KNEW ABOUT IT AND DID NOTHING!!!!!!
WHY IS THIS EVEN A DISCUSSION?**

The student-athletes at Penn State will still be able to play football and get an education. If they choose not to go to Penn State, they have a choice in the matter. If they believe they can still win at Penn State as football players, then so be it. Those players can still go to the NFL and play the game they love. Those innocent victims can never regain their innocence and have been robbed of their sexual purity and have been scarred. And you care about scholarships and bowl games? That is beyond callous in my opinion.

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MAYBE I SHOULD REPEAT.....THE UNIVERSITY KNEW AND DID NOTHING!!!!!!!!!! These recruits attended the school because of these coaches and the trust that they earned from the parents. Who knows if some of the players weren't touched and abused by Sandusky and others, under the guise of leadership?

The NCAA could not just sit back and send a message that it is open season on young children. They can't let the folks (sports coaches), who have the most power and are the highest paid employees at the university, do what they want and everyone turn a blind eye with no accountability.

Bringing young boys and/or girls on a college campus where you are the most powerful person on campus and using the athletic facilities to run through them and run them in and out of there with no severe punishment is beyond what we should expect from anyone, as long as dudes get to run up and down a field and get to play for the national championship.

Penn State will be back as a program, just like Baylor bounced back after the Patrick Dennehy murder and scandal involving then-basketball coach Dave Bliss. If anything, Penn State should be grateful. At least with this punishment, they have the ability to reassess their proper role as an educational institution that loves its' football, but loves to protect those that are most vulnerable amongst us. All I have to ask is, "If it was your young child being molested by Sandusky, would you too turn a blind eye and do nothing?"

Jeffrey L. Boney is Associate Editor for the Houston Forward Times newspaper, a Next Generation Project Fellow and a dynamic, international speaker. Jeffrey is the Founder and CEO of the Texas Business Alliance and is an experienced entrepreneur and business development strategist. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org

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