

The ongoing saga of athletes' mis-behavior

Written by News Desk

Saturday, 21 September 2013 15:13 -



By [Art Parker](#) , Editor

It never ceases to amaze me how a politician can jump out of the closet and try to seize a public relations opportunity. It infuriates me because they attempt to look like a great savior that will rescue us from some great harm.

For the last two weeks I have stated the terrible situation we have with the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) levying fines on schools that are paid for with taxpayer money. As I have mentioned for years that young people do not learn anything when someone else pays for their mistakes. It only ruins what sense of responsibility we hope them to have.

Now we have a little different, but similar, situation with the University of Alabama football program. Unfortunately a politician has entered the scene trying to gain points with the Alabama faithful. The truth is the politician is nothing more than an opportunist. State representative Jack Williams of Vestavia Hills (Birmingham) is seeking the opportunity to look heroic in light of the Alabama football scandal involving a former player allegedly receiving money from an agent. Williams has proposed the dumbest thing I have ever heard of. He wants a moratorium of one year on any action by the NCAA or law enforcement regarding the scandal.

I find this to be another way of dealing with a problem by not issuing punishment, disciplinary action or anything else that violators deservedly need. The difference is that we are talking about someone in college, not a high school kid that misbehaves on the field. You are supposed

The ongoing saga of athletes' mis-behavior

Written by News Desk

Saturday, 21 September 2013 15:13 -

to be a man, not a kid, when you go to college, especially if our taxpayer institutions aid your life with an education and financial assistance. Part of the deal is that you play by the rules. This idea of Williams' is ridiculous, of course, it doesn't surprise me. Williams is the nut that sponsored a bill a couple of years ago that would have forced our senior citizens to go to the court house every year to re-certify for their homestead exemption. It makes me believe that Williams wants to inconvenience those that have helped to build our society and then provide clemency to those who break the rules. And we wonder why our state is in such a mess. It's like I always say, just look at the occupants of the State House.

There is no excuse for what allegedly happened at UA. Let's examine the responsibilities of those involved at UA. This is what you shall find on the UA Athletic website's compliance page: Alabama Athletics is committed and obligated to the principle of institutional control in operating its athletics program in a manner that is consistent with the letter and spirit of NCAA, SEC and University rules and regulations.

That's the introduction. Now, the most important sentence found in that compliance information...Each individual involved in intercollegiate athletics is obligated to maintain competency in knowledge of the rules; to act within his or her realm of responsibility in full compliance with the governing legislation; and to report any violations of NCAA, conference and/or institutional rules of which he or she is aware.

Moratorium? Second chance? Is it not clear enough? If the NCAA needs to change then so be it, but the rules today are clear. Play by the rules you have. Universities are spending tons of money just to make sure that rules are followed. Just a couple of months ago I read where Ohio State now has an annual athletics-compliance budget of \$1.1-million. My mouth was hanging open when I read the other night that Oklahoma was spending more on compliance than on recruiting.

Sports agents are the biggest part of the problem but they do not force players or universities to break the rules. The breaking of the rules at UA supposedly happened when an athlete took money offered from an agent. That means it takes two to tango. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that if the athlete says "no" then he/she and the university have not broken the rules. Universities are paying tons of money to teach these young adults the rules. I am sure the athletes are given the rules in writing. If they can't read the rules and understand them they don't deserve a scholarship anyway.