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## Movement of Coaches but Not Players - Notre Dame Sold its Soul and Lou Took It

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Being away for a month leaves one with a sense of having missed any number of important or semi-significant events. Upon further reflection it is apparent that most of the time in the world of sport it is "deja vu" all over again. While in England the World Cup came to an end, including the tragic (to the English) Argentinean victory on penalty kicks, which sent the lads home; Wimbledon had a more satisfying set of results for English tastes; and the Tour de Drugs was just getting underway.

In the meantime back here at the center of the universe I missed two marvelous events which affirmed some old themes. First, the Chicago Bulls decision to appoint Tim Floyd as "director of basketball operations" was done with a total disregard for credulity, and has been treated as such by the media.

What has been missed in this story is the way in which it points up one of the continuing and entrenched inequities in the intercollegiate athletic system. In an interview this past week Floyd was discussing this past season at Iowa State where his team performed at a less than impressive 12-18 level. Floyd explained that in fact it was a successful season as the Cyclones were in a rebuilding year, and with nine freshmen he felt the team had performed above expectations.

In addition to demonstrating that Floyd is a wonderful coach, this raises several questions that were not asked in the interview. First, when Floyd recruited these nine players did he tell them that he might well be heading off to Chicago as soon as Phil Jackson left his post? Furthermore when the coach leaves a program should the nine players who came to play for him be able to move on without penalty?

Is there any justice in a system that binds an athlete to a program when the coach is not similarly bound? If I go to East State University to study economics with a Nobel prize-winner and he leaves for West State University you can bet I will transfer to West State to continue studying with Dr. Nobel. I will not be required to stay out of economics courses for a year at the new institution.

Yet, this is what these players must do. If they leave Iowa State to go to play for another coach of their choosing they

will not be able to play for that coach for a full year after their transfer. Someone needs to challenge this rule in court.

As long as we live in an athletic system in which coaches are allowed to move from job to job without honoring their contracts with their players and their schools there should be similar freedom of choice for the players.

Even more entertaining, and I am really crushed that I missed this one, was the age-discrimination trial against the University of Notre Dame, one of the holy places of college football. What was revealed in this case was not only that age-discrimination had taken place in the firing of offensive line-coach Joe Moore, but that Lou Holtz left behind a football program at Notre Dame worthy of his dismal track record at Arkansas and Minnesota.

I remember several years ago having dinner with some Notre Dame supporters a year or so after Holtz arrived on the South Bend campus. I told them that I could no longer be a Notre Dame fan. They thought that Lou Holtz was the football messiah, and I told them I was disappointed that Notre Dame would sell its soul for the resurrection of football glory. I predicted that ultimately Lou would desecrate the program, tarnish the Golden Dome, and leave Knute Rockne spinning in his grave. I also suggested that if Father Hesburgh were still running the place, Holtz would never have set foot on the campus.

I may have been wrong about the latter, but it is now clear that Lou Holtz has left behind a sordid legacy at this once great institution of athletic and academic rectitude. Tales of out of control coaches, out of control players and out of control cheerleaders rolled out of the courtroom in the Moore Case. It is also clear that by the end of the Holtz regime many people had finally seen through his phony act as bumpkin-genius and standup comic. Near the end some of his assistant coaches were even questioning Lou's sanity, proving they are slow learners.

The corruption at Notre Dame, which became entrenched in the Holtz years, has tarnished the program. The Irish can no longer claim to be a bastion of integrity. Instead they have become just like every other program: cutting corners, squeezing ethics, and abusing one another.

None of this should surprise anyone. Lou Holtz's record is consistent.

Notre Dame got what they paid for, except they did not get a top-five football team. As for Holtz the power of his appeal rolls on, as his new book, *Winning Every Day: The Game Plan for Success*, is No. 7 on the Wall Street Journal best-seller list. No doubt Lou is still getting those hefty fees for his motivational and inspirational speeches to management fools.

This remains for me one of the primary pieces of evidence of the total vacuity of the American Business culture, not to mention the continuing silliness of business and educational leadership; and not just at Notre Dame. If Lou Holtz defines success for these leaders, we have achieved moral bankruptcy.

On Sport and Society this is Dick Crepeau reminding you that you don't have to be a good sport to be a bad loser.

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