

Athletes and the Law

Should leagues implement supplementary discipline?

VIEW FROM THE SIDELINES

by Tony von Richter

Last week NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman suspended Toronto Maple Leafs forward Mark Bell for 15 games as punishment for being convicted of drunk driving during the summer of 2006. The suspension came as a bit of a surprise to most as Bell had already been suspended indefinitely for being placed in Stage Two of the NHL and NHLPA's Substance Abuse and Behavioural Program and will serve six months in prison once the NHL season concludes.

After Bettman's suspension the NHLPA released a statement condemning the suspension as unnecessary as he had already been suspended under the substance abuse program and had been sentenced to prison by the court.

Questions have been raised regarding the prerogative of leagues imposing supplementary discipline and if they should be penalizing players and officials if the legal system has already done so.

Some people believe that it's unfair for a league or team to punish a player after the legal system has delivered a verdict and decided the consequences of a player's actions, and that someone shouldn't be punished twice for the same crime. Others believe the opposite is true, and that leagues need to punish their errant players to show them that there will be severe consequences to any transgressions, regardless of the punishment that is dealt out by the legal system and to protect the image of their sport.

Which side is right though? Should leagues leave the punishment of players in legal situations up to the courts or should they be able to implement their own disciplinary measures as well?

In a perfect world, things would be left up to the courts and everyone would see the punishment handed down as appropriate, but unfortunately this isn't a perfect world and often times, athletes and celebrities receive special treatment from the legal system which leaves fans

angered and damages the integrity of the sport.

That's why I think that leagues should be able to add their own disciplinary measures to whatever legal punishment is doled out as the league should be looking out for the health of the sport.

At first glance, that sounds like a really bad idea, as people would be punished essentially for public relations issues. These players would be punished to help preserve the image of their respective leagues, which, in the end, doesn't seem justified.

However, if the leagues don't do more and the public sees the players legal sentences as inadequate, it hurts the image of the sport and over time could lead to fans believing that a league or sport is filled with cheaters and criminals who aren't worthy of their support. If that happens, players wouldn't have to worry about 'unfair' supplementary league discipline for their legal indiscretions as there won't be a league around to suspend them.

Now is the above example of leagues folding due to players' legal problems extreme? Of course it is, since it's only a miniscule number of athletes that get in trouble with the law to being with, and this isn't a likely scenario. But after the summer that the sports world went through, it would be a little foolish to not throw around the possibility (especially when you consider that if the Tim Donaghy scandal had spread to include more referees or even players and officials there's a good chance that it could have killed the NBA).

So while it might not be perfectly fair to the current generation of professional athletes, the years of athletes and celebrities getting special treatment from the legal system has finally resulted in fans demanding that athletes be treated just like everyone else, and if the legal system isn't willing to do it than the leagues themselves will have to send the message that they won't tolerate this kind of behaviour from their athletes and personnel.

Maybe if the suspensions and fines become big enough it will make some of these errant athletes stop and think before they break the law, which would be good for both the players and the leagues.

It would also be good for the fans as it would sure be nice to get back to talking about the drama that happens on the field rather than the drama that happens inside the courtroom.

Cougars end wet weekend with win



Jennifer McKenzie / The Brunswickian

The UNB Cougars squared off against St. FX and ABU during a rain-shortened weekend at Royals Field. On Saturday, the Cougars fell to St. FX 3-1 in the first game of a scheduled double-header. Peter Shaw took the loss, allowing just two earned runs over seven innings. The second game was postponed due to rain. On Sunday, UNB fell to ABU 6-1, before UNB pitcher Ryan Corey led his team to a 7-6 win in the second game.

Reds Cheerleaders kick off 2007-08

by Bruns Sports Department

The current incarnation of the Reds Cheerleaders was formed seven seasons ago, and has been a competitive squad for the past four years. Though it is known a cheerleading team did exist at the University of New Brunswick in years past, very few details have been established.

Reds Cheerleading takes part in many competitions throughout the year including CheerExpo in Halifax, King of the Capital in Fredericton, and has previously competed at Nationals

and Cheer for the Cure in Toronto. They also do many events such as Run for the Cure, a Cheerleading Retreat, fundraising at the market, socials, and several other events.

Since its rebirth, the squad has enjoyed a decent amount of success.

The 2003-04 season saw the first performance by the Reds Cheerleading team, which was greeted with enthusiasm from the crowds at UNB.

In 2004-05, the squad made their inaugural trip to University and Open National Cheerleading Championships (UNOCC) in Hamilton, Ontario. The team placed ninth in the Open Division, and although they would like to do better next time, the team was still satisfied at the opportunity to attend the competition.

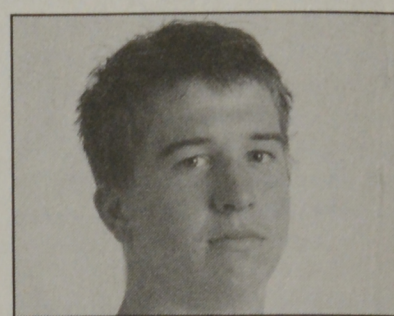
The 2005-06 season was arguably the most successful yet. The team competed

UNB V-Reds Athletes of the week



Ashley McAllister, Soccer
1st year MBA student
Cornwall, Ontario
#9 -Forward

Ashley McAllister, last week's UNB, AUS and CIS athlete of the week, was a force to be reckoned with again this weekend as the Varsity Reds split their games with a 0-1 loss and a 5-1 win. UNB was unable to score on Saturday as they hosted UPEI on College Field in very wet rainy conditions. Ashley set up numerous chances and gave UPEI trouble throughout the game but UNB was unable to capitalize. On Sunday, she proved to be too much for the MTA defence as she scored three goals to lead the V-Reds to a 5-1 victory over the Mounties. Ashley was named player of the game for her efforts on Sunday.



Ali Devereaux, Soccer
5th year BA student
Lower Sackville, N.S.
#10, Midfielder

Ali Devereaux is also the UNB athlete of the week for the second consecutive week as he scored a goal in each of UNB's two games this past week-end. On Saturday UNB played UPEI to a 1-1 tie while on Sunday they defeated Mt. Allison 2-1.

Ali was named Player of the Game for his performance on Saturday and now leads the AUS in scoring with 4 goals in 4 games this season.

"Ali's hard work and determination continue to be the difference for us", commented head coach Miles Pinsky.

at UNOCC 2005, held in Waterloo, Ontario, winning a respectable sixth place. The Reds continued competing into the winter semester and placed first at King of the Capital in Fredericton and sixth at CheerExpo in Halifax.

For the 2007-08 season, tryouts will be starting on Tuesday, September 18 and Thursday, September 20, from 5:45 pm until 8:00 pm in the Lady Beaverbrook Gym (West). The tryouts will consist of basic conditioning, stunting, and dance. They are open to any UNB or STU student, as well as any resident in the city of Fredericton, male or female.

The team practices three times a week to get themselves ready for competition and performances. Practices are mandatory, as is the Cheerleading Retreat that is being held on September 29-30. Registration for cheerleading is \$60,

which includes a Reds Cheerleading t-shirt and shorts.

"There are many benefits to joining a team while you are at university: meeting new

friends, learning time and budget management skills, staying fit and active, and

continuing to challenge yourself," said Becky Stavert, a representative of the squad.

"Reds Cheerleading is a team that builds on all of these things and more!"

In looking to set the squad for 2007-08, anyone interested - athletes, cheerleaders, gymnasts, and those with no background at all - are encouraged to contact the squad to get involved. Their website is www.unb.ca/clubs/cheerleading. They can also be contacted by email, at cheer@unb.ca.

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