

Opinion

Football strike makes sport a travesty

I've never been much of a professional football fan, but curiosity forced me to tune in to Sunday afternoon's games. What a travesty.



D.A. Jensen

I don't feel sorry for the striking NFL players, but it is obvious that a lot of other people do. Take, for example, the sportscasters assigned to cover the Sunday games.

The headline in *USA Today* proclaimed "Announcers take duties seriously" when referring to the announcers' preparation for Sunday's games. It may be true that the announcers tried to learn the new

players' names, but that's where the serious duty apparently stopped. I wish the headline was true — but from what I saw it wasn't.

The announcers took every opportunity to slam the strike-breaking players. They attributed every fumble, every incomplete pass, every error, to a lack of skill or experience. They didn't point out that many of the players had practiced as a team for less than a week. Some players arrived only days before the first game. This is not the announcing seen during a "normal" NFL game. A lot of objectivity was thrown to the wind, for nothing.

There was a lot of talk about the striking players' side of the story. Viewers weren't told that these players are striking for increased benefits and free-agent status. These are being lobbied for despite the fact that the players already are paid exorbitant wages.

The fans support the strike. I haven't figured out why, but they do. It seems they are not willing to let new talent infiltrate the sport. Thousands of tickets were returned this weekend by faithful NFL fans. They were urged to boycott the games, and they did. The sacrifice was needless because there were some interesting games played Sunday. The fans, had they seen the games, might have been surprised at how much unutilized talent exists outside the league.

Maybe the most serious supporters of the strike were not even aware they were showing support. The automobile and beer industries pulled their advertising from the networks. This indicated to every person watching that they were not willing to support football as an industry and risk annoying their own unions. This surprises me because I think the strike-breaking players are

like a new product. Just think what these companies would do if the consumers refused to try their new products.

The advertisers wouldn't have fared that poorly if they would have run their ads. Network viewing didn't drop much, so I guess they made a bad call.

What does all the support mean to the strike? I think the answer is obvious considering the fact that the owners are not willing to negotiate the unreasonable demands of the overpaid players. The strike is not doing the players much good.

Management is holding out on resuming negotiations, and for a good reason. The chances of the strike lasting much longer are slim. Union members are slowly distancing themselves from the union and crossing the picket lines. I guess it's hard to give up more than \$60,000 per week like Buffalo Bills

quarterback Jim Kelly is forced to do by the strike.

Greed, or financial need as the players call it, is finally starting to take its toll on the nasty strikers. There is a lot of talk from a lot of players about crossing the picket line. The complaints about financial hardship — from players who are making millions of dollars — are numerous. I guess I shouldn't expect some of the players to have money management skills since some don't even have language skills.

The strike won't last much longer, but even if it did I wouldn't be sorry. I've enjoyed seeing other people get the opportunity to play professional football, even at the expense of the "real" players.

D.A. Jensen is a senior journalism major and a columnist for *The Battalion*.

Mail Call

Color is only skin deep

EDITOR:

A very close friend of mine recently had a brief encounter with prejudice. She was talking on the phone with her Bonfire Buddy, and he made some racial comments. She could not understand why he was making these remarks without even knowing if she were black or white.

Why is man so blind that he cannot see color is only skin deep? One should not judge a man by the color of his skin, for skin is only a covering for what lies inside of man. What's inside a person is what makes them good or bad. It is a fool who likes someone only because they are like them. Our differences make us special. *Not one race is superior!* God made us all equal, and equal we should be.

My dad has always called me gullible and naive, but I don't think I will ever be able to understand why someone cannot like another person because the color of their skin is different, their religion is different, or their race is different. Prejudice is the result of ignorance. I thank God for blessing me with parents who taught me to accept people for what they are, and I pray for those who cannot do the same, both black and white.

Kim Edwards '90
accompanied by five signatures

A shocking statistic

EDITOR:

I was shocked and horrified after reading in the Oct. 2 *Battalion* that more than 84,000 abortions were performed last year in Texas alone. It would seem that people have lost all sense of decency and any compassion for the unborn. The number is a staggering figure and a mournful occurrence.

Our society continues to deem permissible those acts that once were thought unthinkable. Now it condones the murder of thousands of unborn children each year.

Most ironic is the fact that there are solutions to unwanted pregnancy other than abortion, adoption being one. Any choice would be better than the deprivation of the most valuable gift: life.

Yale St. Clair

Stop your bellyaching

EDITOR:

I will graduate from this fine institution in December, and since I've been here, I've read nearly 770 *Battalions*. Within these august pages have appeared hundreds of letters condemning the traditions of A&M. Some of these letters were no doubt valid in their claims, but most bordered on ridiculousness. Well, the straw that broke this elephant's back appeared on Oct. 6 and was titled "Wanted: Inoffensive Stories." My remarks are not directed at insulting Mr. Provines or those who signed his letter. Rather, this is directed at all those past and future letter-writers who point out "injustice" in all of its insidious forms:

STOP YOUR BELLYACHING!!!

The truths are:

1. "Tradition" is not a dirty word.
2. Texas A&M is already a "world-class" university, renowned the world over as a great school.
3. It won't destroy your lifestyle to observe simple A&M traditions like not stepping on the MSC grass, standing up for football games, or saying "Howdy!" to strangers.
4. Half the world's problems could be solved if people tried to get along with each other and were more tolerant.
5. The Corps of Cadets is a positive influence on A&M.
6. As Milo Bloom pointed out in Bloom County one day, moral purity is a worthy goal, but it is unattainable in an imperfect world. Censorship of anything, besides being un-American, is not the answer.

The point of all this is if you see a real problem, speak up and offer constructive advice. If something insignificant offends you, try to ignore it. Besides being totally harmless, some of the "grode stories" are pretty funny. Lighten up, self-appointed saviors of Aggeland. Be proud of your school. I know I am.

Greg Martin '87

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

The Battalion

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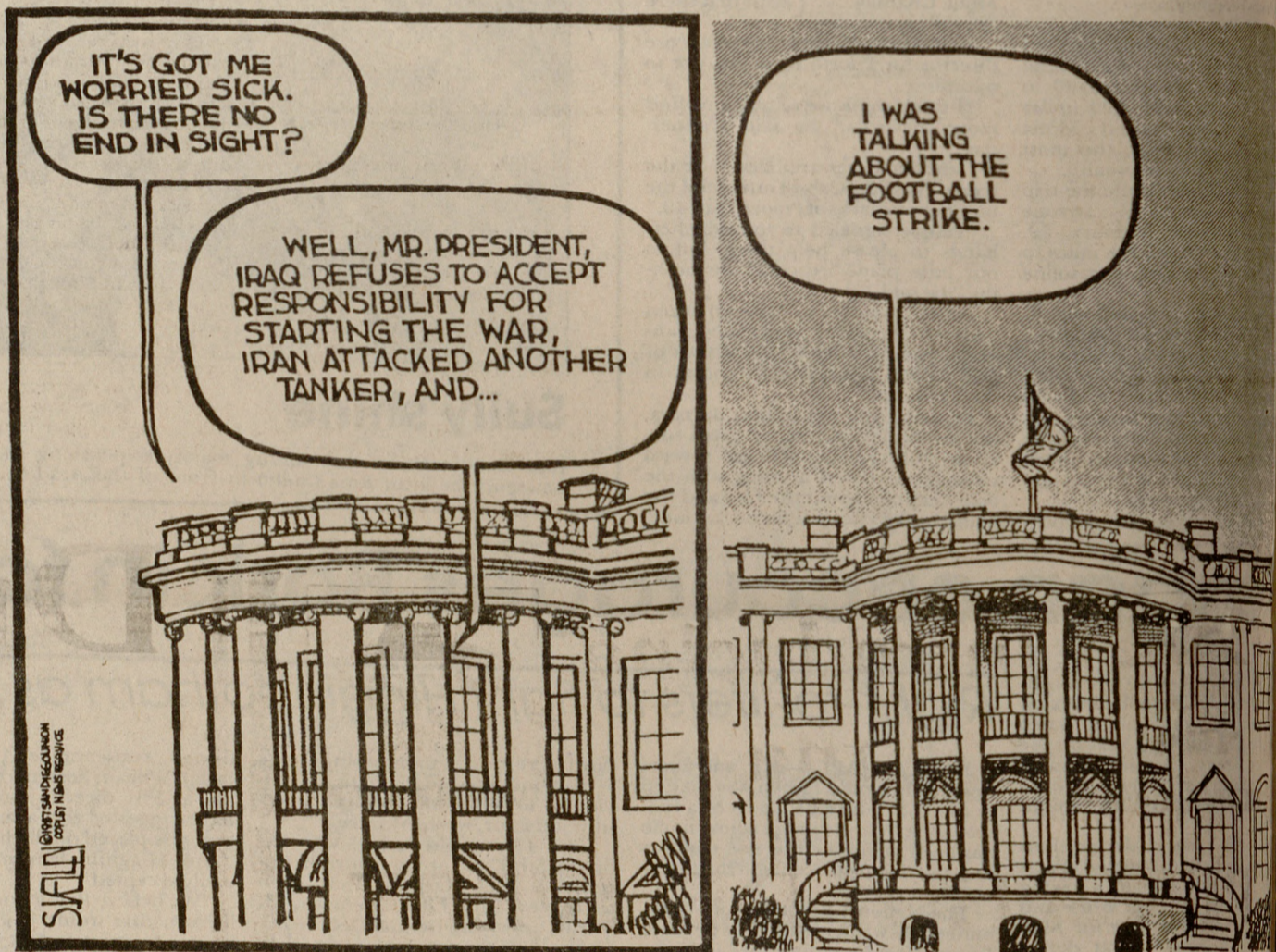
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Bruno eats scab-loving fans and then spits out their bones

My name is Bruno Thudpucker, and I play middle linebacker in the NFL. I'm mean, I'm lean and I eat quarterbacks and spit out the bones.



Lewis Grizzard

A lot of you nickle-and-dime scab-lovers out there are saying that me and the other pro football players got no business going on strike.

Nobody tells us what we ought to do and what we ought not to do because we are fam-a-lee and are the meanest mothers in the valley, too, and we'll put a fist through your windshield or your face, whichever you want, scab-lovers.

You think we got it soft, right? Well, we don't. You take me. I had to scrape through college on a measly thousand a week I got from that oilman who adopted me as his son when I signed for my scholarship.

Our quarterback got two thousand a

week from his new daddy, and he was driving around in a Mercedes convertible. All I could afford was a Corvette.

Then, when I signed with the pros, all my agent could get me was a half million a year, a chain of convenience stores, and a cheerleader a week.

I could hardly scrape by what with the payments on my Mercedes, my truck, my Harley, my condos in Palm Springs and Maui, my boat and all them paternity suits.

You ding-bats probably think it's easy playing pro football, but it ain't. You got to go to practice every day for three hours and then play on Sunday, and that usually takes until four in the afternoon.

And then you got to talk to them nosy reporters and take a shower, and sometimes it's six before I get over to Scooters for a few beers with the boys and cracking a few of the customers' heads for staring at me.

Road games is even worse. Before I got to be a star and got my picture in *Sports Illustrated* knocking some quarterback into next year, I had to sit back in the tourist section on the

chartered plane.

And one time we are out in L.A. to play the Rams, and the suite in my hotel didn't have one of them mini-bars so I had to send the bellman out for beer.

Plus, my TV was on the blink and I missed rasslin' and the starlet my agent lined me up with didn't bring any cash with her and I had to pay our trainer double for a hit for me and whatever her name was.

Like I said, us ballplayers going on strike ain't none of your business. If we weren't for us, what would you do with your Sunday afternoons, hang around with your wife and kids in that doublewide you live in? Go down to the laundromat and watch clothes spin around in the dryer?

Listen, you pencil-neck geeks, you need us or your life really would be miserable. So shut up about us going on strike for what we deserve or I'll come over to your house and kill your dog.

That's all I got time to say. I got to go down to the picket line and throw eggs. Plus, we got a Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting at four.

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BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed

