

Organized Religion not the solution

Recent tragedy sparks religious controversy



SHARMILA BADKAR • THE BATTALION

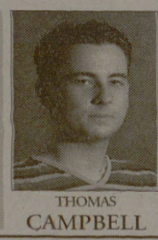
Michael Jordan should stay off the court

Michael Jordan left the NBA at the top of his career. He hit the winning shot in the NBA Finals and left on top of the game. In Jordan's last six full seasons, he won six championships. Charles Barkley characterized Jordan as "the best to ever play the game."

By announcing his return as a player, Jordan relinquished his role as President of the Washington Wizards where he was in charge of player operations. While rebuilding a team can take time, there has been no headway in his effort to make the Wizards a championship-caliber team.

Jordan has been working out and practicing since March in an ill-advised effort to make a second comeback. On Tuesday, Jordan announced by fax, the much anticipated decision to return as a player to the NBA. Jordan's return, however, will not benefit himself or the Wizards.

Jordan will always be considered at least one of the best ever, but his imminent comeback is a mistake. At age 38, Jordan will no longer be able to play at the level he once played. Jordan will not only be playing against



THOMAS CAMPBELL

other teams or challenging his teammates — Jordan will be playing against his own title as the greatest basketball player ever. Jordan will be competing against how great he was with the Chicago Bulls — and he will lose.

A few months ago, Jordan broke some ribs in a scrimmage. One of Jordan's best friends, Barkley, witnessed Jordan's injury. Barkley said "It wasn't a rough tactic when he got hurt, and it was something that 10 years ago wouldn't have affected him." Things that would not have bothered Jordan before have become more of an issue now, since his body is aging.

Jordan's return will also be bad for the future of the Wizards franchise when dealing with their NBA success. The best thing the Wizards can do is build their team around the young and talented Kwame Brown, their number one draft pick in 2001. Brown is 20 years younger than Jordan, and has the potential to play many more years. The Wizards team is young, and when Jordan plays with them, it could stifle the team's growth. Jordan will be the go-to player, which would mean less chances for the young and inexperienced players to improve.

The Wizards are no-where near where a championship team needs to be. The team will

be more reminiscent of the Chicago "Jordanians" of the late 1980s — teams that were good because of Jordan, but had no one else. Jordan's championship teams in Chicago had very good supporting players — which he will not have in Washington. Washington will improve with Jordan, but not enough to contend for the championship. And they will have too good a record to continue rebuilding through the draft.

One reason for a comeback is money. Right now the Wizards are not one of the most marketable teams in the NBA. Their only "star" has never played a game above high school varsity. Washington is scheduled for no games on NBC.

Adding Jordan would instantly add millions of dollars to the Wizards revenue as well as to the Wizards internationally marketability. NBC Sports Chairman Dick Ebersol stated that NBC would show the Wizards on television the maximum number of times, 11, if Jordan came back. Turner spokesman Greg Hughes said that TBS and TNT would broadcast their maximum of 15 games for the season should Jordan return.

Going from not being nationally televised to being seen more than any other team would instantly add to the Wizards profits, which

Jordan has a vested interest. Jordan is currently an owner in the 5-10 percent range according to ESPN. According to CNN, Jordan, the Wizards and NBA Commissioner David Stern had meetings to talk about transferring his share in the Wizards for a larger share of the Washington Capitals, an NHL team, as well as the parent company of both teams.

Jordan's return looks more like a financial deal than anything else, despite his pledge to give his entire salary to victims of the attack in Washington and New York. The only people it would benefit are those in line to make money off of his return, including Jordan himself, despite his charity in donating his salary.

Jordan has passed the torch to such stars as Vince Carter, Allen Iverson, Kobe Bryant and Tim Duncan. By taking the spotlight away from these young players, NBA fans may lose interest when Jordan retires again in a year or two.

It is time for Jordan to make his mark and show his excellence in a new way, in the front office of the Wizards. Jordan can create a new legacy a GM, and further build the legend of his His Airness.

Rich Bray is a junior journalism major.

Thomas Campbell is a senior agricultural journalism major.

MAIL CALL

Banning media protects lives

In response to George Deutsch's Sept. 26th column:

Mr. Deutsch's idea of letting the media accompany the military during combat operations may sound like a great idea in the classroom and on paper, unfortunately it doesn't work nearly that well out in the field. My own experience in dealing with the media came while serving as a machine gunner in the United States Marine Corps in Somalia in 1995. My gun team, along with three others, was sent

UT grad admires Aggie pride

As a 4th generation UT graduate, I never fully understood the Spirit of Aggieland until Saturday, Sept. 22nd. I was on campus to watch my son, Kenneth, who is a fish in the Corps. Once I saw the t-shirts, I had to have one and to attend the game. Thank goodness I could still get a ticket. The half time performance of the Aggie Band was incredible and in the silence prior to the playing of God Bless America someone yelled, "Beat the hell Outta, bin laden!" Before I knew it, I let out

a whoop! with the rest of the Aggies. I am so proud of the students' efforts to RWB Out Kyle Field and of the cooperative efforts of Aggies across the state to produce the shirts. The patriotism displayed by the current and former A&M students was obvious. They are the type of people who have and will continue to make our country great.

Ann Symanek

Get off the phone

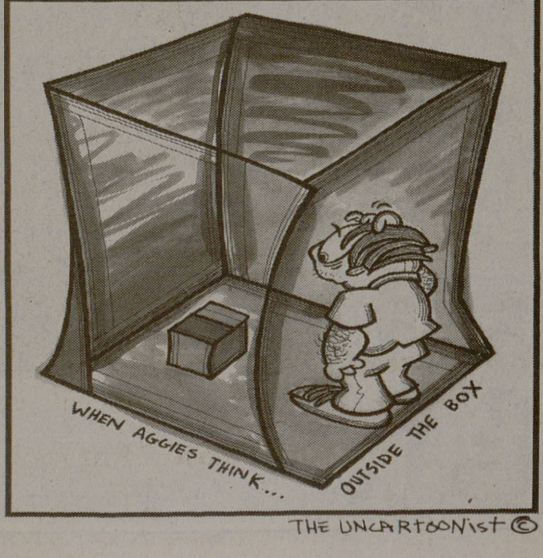
If there is one thing that was never meant to happen in the progression of mankind, I think it would be talking on a cell

phone while riding a bike. There is a fundamental problem with using one hand to steer and the other to hold a cell phone to make an undoubtedly important phone call.

I used to get frustrated with traffic on freeways caused by distracted drivers talking on cell phones, but I think that this is a far greater danger to people. It amazes me that people can ride their bikes around campus wherever they want and expect priority over the vast majority of campus, pedestrians.

Thomas Franklin
Class of 2005

CARTOON OF THE DAY



THE UN-CARTOONIST ©