

Point-Counterpoint

School Athletes Should Be Paid By Musafir

Not paying college athletes for bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to their schools is an exploitation of labor. I won't hesitate calling this a modern day slavery. This is specifically true for football and basketball.

College athletics is a big business. The student athletes are supposed to spend a minimum of 20 hours a week practicing their games. In reality most of them spend 40 hours a week in addition to the studies. In return, they receive a meager amount (a few thousands of dollars) in scholarship money for their contribution.

Imagine an employer giving free tuition benefits to its top employees, but paying only \$5,000 per year in salary. How many of us would like to take that job? Yet, we expect the college athletes to do so. If the schools want to maintain the purity of game (that's why they don't pay the student athletes) then they should charge only five to ten dollars per ticket from the spectators. That should provide them enough money to maintain their stadia and pay the coaches.

The fact is that they charge an excessive amount of money from the spectators, TV networks and other sponsors. To give an idea, it costs more than \$1,500 per ticket to attend the NCAA Men's Final to sit among a crowd of 1,500. The coaches of winning schools are paid five to six million dollars per year. I will not call that the purity of sports. It's a business no matter how it's looked at

The above businesses are successful because the student athletes put their life on line. The players themselves still make zero (not counting the scholarship). Somehow, this doesn't seem right. College sports is a multi-billion dollar business where the only people who are restricted in their earnings, in any way, are the athletes. If an acting major can earn for acting in movies and a music major can sell records and get royalty, why can't an athlete be paid for his/her contribution? I think it's actually immoral to restrict only one class of person from benefiting to their level of worth.

School Athletes Shouldn't Be Paid By Bala Prasad, MD

In our capitalistic society, everything is judged against capital, A.K.A., money. A related topic of discussion, that has been going on forever and perhaps will never be resolved, is whether college athletes should be paid for representing their university in athletic games.

The very word amateur means that they are not professionals and thus, should not be paid. That is because this status as an amateur opens up many other doors for them, including participation in the Olympics. Many college athletes attend university on scholarships, and have different studies and score requirements. Receiving a salary of any kinds will change that. Furthermore, there is no easy way to fix the salary of a college athlete. What criteria can there possibly be? All athletes are not equal. Many of them will not make it to the professional level (and perhaps, do not strive for this). Other than basketball and football, few college teams actually bring profit to the school. I imagine there are some teams that universities actually lose money on. So where will the money come from and who will pay it, and how much? The individuals who do well, in a team sport like basketball and football, do need the effort of the whole team to thrive. So how to calculate the money to all the players, without causing heartache or rancor?

The average full athletic scholarship is about \$65,000, which covers living expenses and tuition. In order to have this much money to spend, the salary would have to be at least \$100,000. While this may make little difference to the player, who will make up the difference and how?

Moreover, college athletes are only part of the source from which famous professional athletes rise. As we have seen time and time again, every great college athlete does not become a professional athlete. It takes hard work, diligence, and training. This will not happen quickly and often takes many years. The college years are formative years and should be used to develop a bright future.

And if somebody has a high opinion of themselves, matched by superior talent, they should seek positions with professional teams, which they often do. But, while in college, athletes who represent their school should be left pure and untainted by money, and the many problems that would bring to their team.