

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ONCE AGAIN! AN UNNECESSARY ATTEMPT TO STIR UP RACIAL DIVISION!



By Stephen L. Bakke  May 15, 2014

Here's what provoked me:

A "Counterpoint" opinion on May 14 took exception to a very insightful and sensitive article by sports writer, Patrick Reusse. He told of a tragic bar fight in which a well known former Gopher quarterback was in a fight with another individual who was seriously injured. He told of the tragic decline of the football player from star to potential criminal penalties. The quarterback walked away. The other fellow is unconscious and in critical condition with severe head injuries. The quarterback is white. The severely injured man is black. Patrick's primary point was to relate the tragedy of two lives ruined after just a few minutes of needless violence.

Mr. Reusse's article is being blamed for being racist. An excerpt: "Would the Star Tribune really draw these parallels of lives ruined if a black Gophers football player kicked a white, unconscious husband and father in the head? Would they really be suggesting that there are two victims?" I consider this a unnecessary and blatant example of trying to stir up racial division. Read on

Here's my response:

Once again, an unnecessary attempt to stir up racial division!

A May 14 opinion takes exception to the Patrick Reusse column about a tragic "bar fight" in Mankato. The fight involved a former University of Minnesota starting quarterback, Philip Nelson, and a former football player from Minnesota State in Mankato, Isaac Kolstad – married with one child. Nelson is white. Kolstad is black.

The facts are unclear but Nelson allegedly kicked Kolstad after he was on the ground. Police state that a video indicates Kolstad "struck the first blow." Kolstad is in critical condition and unconscious. Nelson walked away.

Reusse's sensitive article was about the well known Nelson and how, in just a few seconds, two lives were ruined. "Dang, almighty," he concluded.

The opinion claims Reusse's article is an example of "racial inequity" – i.e. "racist." It states: "The idea that there is some equipoise between the consequences faced by a person who gets kicked in the head and those faced by the person who kicked him is reprehensible Would the Star Tribune really draw these parallels of lives ruined if a black Gophers football player kicked a white, unconscious husband and father in the head? Would they really be suggesting that there are two victims?"

Reusse must be shaking his head after being accused of racism. He's a curmudgeonly pundit, to be sure, but a gifted sports reporter and even better when bringing in human interest aspects!

I am confident Mr. Reusse would have dealt with this in a similar way if the races were reversed!