

Lack of diversity in management and coaching in sports

[Business](#), [Management](#)



In recent history it has been evident that some of the most popularize sports in America have been dominated and overran by African American and other minority athletes. In turn when the coaching and management positions in sports are analyzed and broken down, the number of minority coaches and managers in sport are almost non-existent and have been since those sports organization became established. In 2006 Blacks made up about 14% of the population, 12% of all college enrollments, and nearly 24% of all collegiatescholarshipathletes.

In some major sports, such as basketball and football, blacks make up a great percentage of athletes participating. In 2005 over 55% of all collegiate athletes on football scholarships were Blacks and about 62% of all collegiate athletes on basketball scholarships were Black and this is out of the NCAA's 328 Division I schools. Despite the large number of Black representing the athletes in collegiate sport, the percentage of African Americans in coaching and administrative position were very small.

In 2005 roughly 7% of all head coaches of men's teams at the nation's largest universities were black and only 6.5% in women's collegiate sports. The numbers are even smaller in the big-time revenue generating sports such as basketball and football. Just to give a breakdown of these percentages, there were only 3 head football coaches at the NCAA's 119 D I-A schools. What tends to help the racial lines seen been athletes on the field/court of play and the people who are in the position of power.

One thing that helps alleviate this barrier is the number of minority assistant coaches in position. The percentage of minority assistant coaches in

collegiate sports are far greater than that of head coaches in power. It seems that it's expected for a white man to be in power and for blacks and other minorities to be in assistant roles that it's become normal in sports and unquestioned. The authority of white head coaches is often legitimized through the eyes of black athletes when it's seen that black assistants are taking orders from a white coach.

This is an issue that has become to be expected in both collegiate and professional sports (Anonymous, 36-37). It may not be thought about much but there are some racial games that are played. Although the Rooney Rule has at least given minority head coaches a chance to potentially get hired because they actually get a chance to get an interview, many still see it as just a rule put into place to make it seem like everything is equal and to save face from scrutiny about racial issues in sport. In 2003, Mike Millen the president of the Detroit Lions was fined for not interviewing a minority.

He was not fined for intentionally not interviewing minority coaches, he actually contacted five different minority coaches and each of them turned the request for an interview down. Each of them felt like the job was already Steve Mariucci and felt like they were just being interviewed just so that the Detroit Lions could fill their obligation to interview a minority coach. The problem not only lies with collegiate and professional sports organizations and the issue of not interviewing and hiring more minority coaches and managers but also stems from these minorities feeling that they don't have a fair shot at the position.

Some minorities looking for a head coaching position also have negative feelings towards getting called up for an interview just because of rule that was put into place that forces teams to do this. Some feel like if the Rooney Rule wasn't in place that general managers wouldn't go out of there to try and search for minority coaches to interview like that have to do now. A subconscious bias is happening within these organizations because the managers are taking the notion that we're giving "them" a "fair" chance at the position because we are given them an interview just like everyone else.

In reality its being done to help shift focus away from the lack of diversity and make it seem that things are much better in that department and that organizations are treating the issue with an open mind (Nordlinger, J. , 25-26). On the issue of the lack of minority representation in the administration side of sport lacks even more than minority coaches. The hiring of administrators of color has been extremely limited and still continues to be today. In 1999 NCAA reported a combined percentage of minority administrators in position is a mere 10%, which includes all areas of the administrator sector in NCAA D-I sports.

This statistic includes both women and men which shows that representation of minorities have been scarce both on and off the field in NCAA D-I sports. The biggest concern with the lack of minorities in top leadership positions in collegiate sports starts with top-level managers themselves such as college presidents, athletic directors, and conference commissioners not aggressively pursuing minorities for leadership roles. This not happening will

continue to bring up the same issues about underrepresentation in sport period.

Putting more minorities in position will lead to more and more minorities potentially getting opportunities for interviews through the passing of knowledge from other minorities alike. The NCAA is taking steps to trying to bridge the gap by planning to open a Minority Institute to develop minorities and give them the necessary skills needed to compete with their white counterparts (Greenlee, 1). I feel that both professional and collegiate sports can do a little more than what is being done to bring more diversity to its organizations and teams within its governing body.

The Rooney Rule is a start for sports as a whole period to bring in more minorities, although the rule is only geared toward the NFL it kind of opens the eyes of other leagues to potentially implement a rule or some different policies that give minorities an equal shot of obtaining the same position as whites. I believe that clinics or some programs should be set up to help minority coaches and minorities looking to get into the administration side of sport, gain knowledge and skills to help make them more successful as leaders.

In turn this could make organization better as a whole because different ideas and not just the same mindset of how things should and could be done within the organization. General Managers and other administrators would get a chance to better interact with a person of minority working within an organization and would be able to gain knowledge from them as well. Depending on how well the minority coach or administrator does and the

type of knowledge the person possesses could really open of the eyes of his/her white colleagues and help others get their foot in the door.

Ever since minorities have gotten a chance to take on roles such as head coaching positions and in different management position they have been seen as unsuccessful. I believe that this is because they have had limited opportunities and have not always come into the best of situations with teams that have hired them. Ultimately whites are seen as most successful because they are the majority they have more people in position that are and have succeeded but also more that have ailed. Their successes have been highlighted over their failures and it seems like minority coaches and minorities in top-level management positions failures have been highlighted over their successes. Although the number of minorities hired for coaching and management positions are very limited they will have to be successful in order for them to be legitimized and given fair shots at getting major positions within sport organizations and leagues.

Until minorities represent a percentage that is seen as acceptable in relation the country's population in America is then where the issue of the lack of diversity in major level positions in sport die out.

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