

The Sad Similarity Between Sports and Political Commentators

(Like Birds of a Feather, They Purposely Forget Together)

Arthur Solomon

There's a lot of similarity between sports and political commentators and that's a shame because most of it is shameful.

Anyone who follows the sports scene is aware of the many athletes who have committed serious anti-social acts being lauded for their play on the field with minimal, if any, mention of their hideous off-the-field behavior (which often receives only scant mention after it is exposed by a print reporter.)

Even worse, the unsociable acts of many of these athletes are awarded by broadcasting networks that hire them as game day analysts and sports marketers who ply them with money for endorsing products ranging from golf equipment to gambling concerns.

In the sports universe, good conduct doesn't measure up to bad conduct when a superstar is involved. What counts are what's in the record books; what's on police blotters is unimportant.

Playing down the evil of individuals is also a hallmark of political commentators, the most famous being the "see no evil" acts of Donald Trump, the twice-impeached president of the United States and his vice-president, Mike Pence – but

with a difference that astonishes me.

The right wing political commentators still act as if the twice-impeached former president of the U.S. was a gift from heaven, when history shows that hell is located in Mar-a-Lago.

One thing you can say about the right-wing commentators who support the twice-impeached former president of the U.S. The commentators are consistent.

Not so many of the liberal and moderate commentators when referring to Mike Pence.

Ever since Pence defied the former twice-impeached president of the U.S. by refusing to curtail the ceremony that officially certified Joe Biden as president, in some circles Pence has been cited as the hero that saved American democracy for not giving into the threats by the former twice-impeached president of the U.S.'

What many of these "hail Mike Pence" commentators seem to have forgotten is that for four-years Pence stood side-by-side with the former twice-impeached president of the U.S. and never criticized his destructive actions.

Even after the November 2020 voting showed that Joe Biden won the presidency by more than 7-million popular votes, Pence was mute when the former twice-impeached president of the U.S. began his campaign of lying about the election, which culminated in the January 6 insurrection at the Capitol.

The sad similarity between sports and political commentators are evident: Forget the past evils of individuals and embellish the positives.

Thankfully, for the historical record, most respected print reporters, unlike broadcast commentators, put things in context.

There's an important PR lesson that sports-crazy practitioners

in our business should remember: When choosing an athlete for a publicity media campaign, make certain that the individual does not have a checkered past. Because you never know when a reporter will write about it.



About the Author: Arthur Solomon, a former journalist, was a senior VP/senior counselor at Burson-Marsteller, and was responsible for restructuring, managing and playing key roles in some of the most significant national and international sports and non-sports programs. He also traveled internationally as a media adviser to high-ranking government officials. He now is a frequent contributor to public relations publications, consults on public relations projects and was on the Seoul Peace Prize nominating committee.

He has been a key player on Olympic marketing programs and also has worked at high-level positions directly for Olympic organizations. He can be reached at [arthursolomon4pr \(at\) juno.com](mailto:arthursolomon4pr@juno.com).