



john harris

Edwards spoke; who listened?

On the tenth anniversary of the raised fist protest by Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the Mexico City Olympics, Harry Edwards, who initiated the Olympic Project for Human Rights of which Smith and Carlos were a part, reviewed the project's impact for a crowd of approximately 100 persons last night in the EMU.

Edwards's assessment was not encouraging. To a certain degree the movement has been successful, he said, because it shattered many people's traditional attitudes that sport and politics are

not related. Yet, the theme of Edwards's presentation reflected an attitude on his part that many people, especially blacks, mistakenly view sport as a way of elevating one's status in society.

"The blueprint of the traditional American Dream is becoming less and less viable," he said. "The blacks who are wasted in the white sports structure come back into the black community as non-contributors, under contributors and mal-contributors."

Edwards noted that the majority of black youth is more concerned

with perfecting a hook shot than spending time in the library. The blacks are funneled into a "brutal" process in which they are used by a white sports structure and are then discarded when they don't beat the overwhelming odds of filling one of the 1,500 positions blacks hold in American sport.

"We must realize that black success (in sport) is the result of white manipulation, and that overall black society contributes to its own oppression by following sport's traditional myths," Edwards explained.

Much of the manipulation, according to Edwards, goes on in collegiate athletics. He stated that many universities sign black athletes to athletic scholarships, hand them over to physical education departments which protect the athletes by giving them grades for their four years of athletic eligibility and then discard them, usually without a degree.

Much of what Edwards said is obviously true with white athletes as well, but the most valid aspect of his point was that when the black athlete, whether in grade

school, high school or college, reaches the end of his athletic career, there are not as many opportunities for branching out to other fields.

"It's one thing to tell blacks to turn away from sport, but it's another thing to tell them to work for something that doesn't provide viable opportunities," he said.

Clearly, Edwards's speech was directed to the black athlete. At least that is who could most benefit from his ideology. Yet, there was not one Oregon black athlete in the audience.

Unfortunately, this is a situation to which Edwards has become accustomed. Usually he is invited to speak by a school's sociology department, which is not overly concerned with promoting the event. (Last night's speech was sponsored by the EMU Cultural Forum.) As a result, black athletes often never even hear about Edwards's appearance on their campus.

But Edwards claims that often there is more to it than a simple lack of communication. "There is a deliberate effort by white athletic departments to keep black athletes from knowing about my



Harry Edwards

coming and to discourage them from coming to see me," Edwards said. "There's fear, lack of encouragement, plus the factor of ignorance; the word doesn't get around."

"The only thing I can do is hope the information is disseminated in some other way."

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Spikers lose for fourth time to PSU

Portland State spiked the University women's volleyball team in three straight sets last night in Portland, 15-5, 15-5, 15-8.

"Their quick offense really dominated," says Oregon coach Chris Voelz following the Ducks fourth straight loss to Portland State this season, a loss that dropped Oregon's season mark to 8-14-2.

"They had 22 offensive credits and we only had six," points out Voelz. "They just have a lot of beautifully controlled players who complement each other."

Two Oregon starters — Christie McFarlane and Sue Stadler — sat out last night's match with ankle injuries, forcing Voelz to promote a pair of junior varsity players — Katie Bishop and Mary Schnabel — to the varsity team.

"We played a stable game, but we're still not attacking the ball enough," says Voelz.

Once Oregon fell behind Portland State, they ran into problems with execution and mental errors, according to Voelz. "You kill yourself if you don't take it (the set) one point at a time."

The Ducks have been beaten twice in head-to-head matches with Portland State and twice in tournament play. They haven't won even a single set against Portland State in those four matches.



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