

Kansas State University; From Black Athlete to Black Student Union
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Introduction: Human nature is self centered and after that it has a tendency to draw near to those who are like ourselves. When I first came to Kansas State, from Texas, I came knowing only three people and had a hope of getting to know others. My first day on campus the Black Student Union (BSU) was proposed to me and I immediately joined, feeling it would help me find a place of belonging. It was an organization for black students, just like its name states, but they were there not only there to bring unity among the races but also awareness among the many races living in the state of Kansas itself.

Unfortunate for myself, I never attended any of the BSU events and meetings until this year. I never realized the effect that it had on blacks and other races. It was founded in 1968, a time of much upheaval for blacks especially in the South, by several athletes who like myself were looking for a place to belong. For future students coming to K-State, BSU could be their safe haven, so it is imperative that their stories and history are told. It is especially essential for athletes, since their membership numbers are falling in BSU, when they are the reason that it was founded. Black athletes have struggled for a long period of time, dating from the 1890's up until today, to make it in a "white" America. The athletes at Kansas State University saw that struggle and bonded together to help ease that pain.

Background: *Kansas State University:* K-State, KSU, Kansas State, Wildcats, Aggies, those are all names that Kansas State University has gone by. Kansas State Agricultural College was founded on July 2, 1862 with Lincoln signing the Morrill Act making it a land grant school and on September second opened with 52 students.¹ However many do not know that Kansas State was first named Bluemont Central College & Associates, and

¹ Kansas State University "University Archives & Manuscripts-Facts & Flyers."(July 2008). <http://www.lib.k-state.edu/depts/spec/flyers/ksu-history.html> (Accessed April 29, 2009).

was started in 1858, opening in 1862 before Manhattan proposed for it to become a university. The school's name was then changed from Bluemont Central College & Associates to Kansas State Agricultural College, and in 1931 Kansas State College of Agricultural & Supplied Science, and once again in 1959 to its standing name of Kansas State University (this illustrated better the growing number of graduate programs).²

The main campus sits on 668 acres of land in Manhattan, Kansas, roughly an hour outside of capitol, Topeka. According to the 2000 census Manhattan's population is estimated to be 44,831 and out of that 2,179 are black or of African descent, coming second only to whites.³ Kansas State enrollment for the 2008-2009 school years was 21,154 students with roughly 3.46% being black.⁴ The year after BSU was founded the city had a total estimated population of 27,575 people with 731 of them black.⁵ Kansas State had 16,992 undergraduates and roughly 60 blacks on campus.

The Athlete: The beginning of black athletes in a white domination started with jockeys racing horses, and not with basketball as most would expect. The 1875 Kentucky Derby had a total of 15 jockeys and out of that 15, 14 were black. Isaac Murphy was amongst those and was said to be one of the finest jockeys between 1880 and 1890. He was called "The Colored Archer," and worked hard to be as fair and honest as possible since he already had the color issue against him, but even still people talked bad and slandered his name. Whites would complain if he had won the race by the hair of a nose, but he went

²Wikipedia "Kansas State University." (April 23, 2009).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_State_University (Accessed April 29,2009).

³Epodunk "Manhattan Kansas." (2007). <http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/popInfo.php?locIndex=4827> (Accessed April 29,2009).

⁴The Princeton review. "Kansas State University: Student Body Profile" (2009)

<http://www.princetonreview.com/schools/college/collegestudents.a.....> (accessed May 5, 2009)

⁵ US Department of Commerce. *Characteristics of the population Kansas: 1970*. (Bureau of Census , 1973).

on to be one of the first blacks to stand out in a white sport. He won major titles several times in a row, accomplishing things that white jockeys never had.⁶

Around the 1890's black athletes were accepted in prestigious northern, predominately white, schools. There were schools such as: Amherst College, Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania and countless others, allowing black athletes like: William T. S. Jackson, Samuel Ransom, John Baxter "Doc" Taylor, and many others, to come into their generally white schools to participate in athletics before 1910.⁷ Oberlin College's baseball standout, Moses F. Walker, was probably the only black to participate in a prestigious white college sport before the 1880's and the later 1883's Supreme Court ruling of the 1875 Civil Rights Law being unconstitutional, which would only make it harder for athletes to do what Walker was doing.⁸

Black athletes were making their way out into a "white" America, but there were still many mountains in their way. A great example is Peter Jackson, a heavyweight boxer from Australia, who traveled to the U.S. in 1888 with hopes of more opportunity. He carried the nick name of "Black Prince" and won over many blacks as fans, but never got the opportunity to fight for the world heavy weight title, because of his color. He was consistently denied fights with several different title holders such as, John Sullivan,

⁶ David K. Wiggins. *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

⁷ Arthur R. Ashe. *A Hard Road to Glory: A History of the African-American Athlete 1619-1918*. (New York, NY: Warner Books, Inc., 1988).

⁸ Civil Rights Act to enforce the 13th and 14th amendments. This law in particular gave penalties to private businesses that racial discriminated. The ruling declared that the act was unconstitutional and that amendment allows congress to deal with matters of racial discrimination in private businesses giving way for whites' only signs and more cases brought on civil rights.

James Corbett, and Bob Fitzsimmons. America had not proven to Jackson that it was the land of opportunity, since he was treated no better than when he was in Australia.⁹

As time went on it was the same, no real care for black athletes amongst white America unless it was college football and even that started to fade out over time. It wasn't until 1935 that blacks would regain their sense of hope when Joe Louis defeated the Italian Carnera. Black leaders would use his name for popularity with whites and to rally up other blacks in an effort to make a change in black treatment. Louis picked blacks up from the bottom and placed them almost halfway to the top and put a gleam back into their eyes. He inspired songs singing;

“Black eye peas ask cornbread, what make you so strong? Cornbread says I come from where Joe Louis Born. Rabbit say to the bee, what make you sting so deep? He say I sting like Joe an' rock 'em all to sleep.”¹⁰

But even though 1935 brought hope back to blacks with Joe, 1936 would shatter it all with the Nazi Olympics.¹¹ Figure 1 shows the symbol for 1936's games in Berlin, Germany. Should the U.S. send their black athletes to Berlin, where they would not allow a Jew or Gypsy to participate? Whites and AAU members thought little of not sending their blacks since their success would prove and hopefully break Hitler's theory of superiority of the Aryan race. But black news papers and Jews in the U.S. felt differently, along with many black citizens. The U.S. and other major world leaders were fighting for equal rights and opportunity for Jews to compete in the Games without a hassle, but there was no real fight to help secure that blacks would be treated fairly as well. In the previous

⁹ David K. Wiggins. *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

¹⁰ Count Basie, Paul Robeson and Richard Wright “King Joe (Joe Louis Blues)”

¹¹ The 1936 Olympics Games held in Berlin, Germany during the rise of hatred towards Jews and the launching of WWII. The U.S. and Western democracies disregarded the proposal of boycotting these games, where Hitler and Germans hide their racist character.

1932 Los Angeles Games, Jimmy Johnson was dismissed because of his color, and there was no fight to help reinstate him.¹² Who was to say that these blacks athletes that they send, wouldn't have that same treatment again while in Germany, the place where the Aryan race is superior and they were torturing those not of that "perfect" race.



Figure 1: 1963's Olympic Rings with Nazi symbol in background. SOURCE: http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/brainiac/c hina-olympics-nazi-pic-3.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/brainiac/2008/04/friends_of_chin.html&usg=__rg1cPTD_Y_MA6vLjz6-QEweIU6M=&h=329&w=504&sz=91&hl=en&start=4&um=1&tbnid=24e4pf0WJMq7_M:&tbnh=85&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3D nazi%2Bolympics%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26um%3D1

So there was an urgency to boycott the Nazi Olympics, but only amongst black newspapers like the Baltimore Afro-American, and black and Jewish citizens. For athletes, this was their chance that they'd been training for years to have, and many of those black athletes weren't going to have it taken away. The United States sent 18 African-American Athletes to compete. Black athletes such as Jessie Owens, Archie Williams, and Cornelius Jackson took gold in track and field events while Jack Wilson took second in bantamweight boxing (the only medal outside of track).¹³

The support for the Nazi Olympics might have benefit Germany a little, but for America it brought light to the acceleration of their blacks. For black Americans the

¹² David K. Wiggins *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

¹³ The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. "The Nazi Olympics." 2009 <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Holocaust/olympics.html> (Accessed April 27,2009)

success of their black athletes showed promise of easing racial tensions, but Wiggins stated it best: “[It] should never be forgotten that no racial minority has ever solved it’s problems solely through the athletic powers of its members.”¹⁴

The years after the Berlin games weren’t an automatic breeze for blacks, and didn’t ease racial tensions as much as blacks had hoped. It did however open the door for civil rights to take place. After the end of WWII colleges and professional sports were integrated and the Civil Rights Movement was trying to make its first steps, while black athletes were still showing they were a force to be reckoned with. Jackie Robinson was running bases and catching balls for the Montreal Royals in 1946 while William “Pop” Gates and William “Dolly” King were fighting on the basketball courts.¹⁵ In the following Olympics blacks were still producing athletes such as Robert Boozer, a KSU graduate and 1960 basketball gold medalist, along with Mitch Richmond, also a KSU graduate and 1988 basketball bronze medalist, and Patricia Roberts on the 1976 silver medalist team, a graduate from KSU at Emporia.¹⁶

“Doc” Young stated in his 1963 published book Negro First in Sports:

“For Negro Athletes in America, this is the golden era, the halcyon day. Today, more Negro Athletes are playing Americas games as Americans and Athletes first, and as Negroes second, than ever before in the history of sports. They are setting records, making more money, calling more plays, enjoying louder applause; they are more in demand than they were during any previous era.”¹⁷

¹⁴ David K. Wiggins *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

¹⁵ Arthur R. Ashe. *A Hard Road to Glory: A History of the African-American Athlete Since 1946*. (New York, NY: Amistad Press, Inc., 1988).

¹⁶ James Page. *Black Olympians*. (Englewood, Co: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1991).

¹⁷ A.S. “Doc” Young. *Negro Firsts in Sports*. (Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., 1963).

This was a statement made before the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. There were athletes who felt that the U.S. still need to work on their racial policies, and they took the

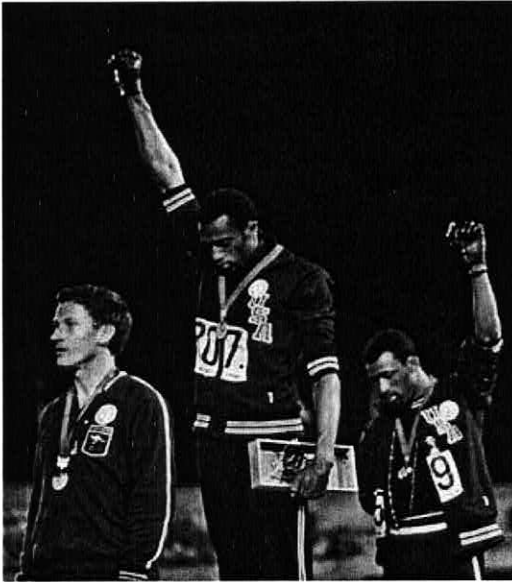


Figure 2: John Carlos and Tommy Smith on the 200 m dash award stand at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics. SOURCE: <http://www.iolani.org/upload/image.jpg>

liberty of bringing it the eye of the world. As shown in Figure 2, John Carlos and Tommy Smith stood barefooted on the awards stance after placing first and third in the 200 m dash, and raised a black gloved fist into the air as the star spangled banner played in the background. They sent the message of black power and screeched for the world to pay

attention to treatment of blacks in the U.S. They were both expelled from the Games because their gestures went against the Olympic principles.¹⁸ A small sacrifice was made to bring light on the issues black athletes were facing in “white” America.

BSU: The Black Student Union was founded in January 1968 By Darnell Hawkinson, Lodis Rodes, and a radical, David Hall, all of whom are said to have been athletes here at Kansas State.¹⁹ They started with the simple goal of trying to get to know more blacks and become aware of campus activities.²⁰ Quoted in the Collegian, Hawkinson stated,

¹⁸ James Page. *Black Olympians*. (Englewood, Co : Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1991).

¹⁹ Fifth Floor Library Newspaper Notes. Ti’Ara N. Walpool. Kansas State University. March 2009

²⁰ “An article discussing BSU’s formed identity (Kansas State Collegian, 1977) Liz Smith talks to board members about the purpose and goals for BSU on campus.

“Although there were only 60 black students on campus at that time, BSU worked collectively to achieve their goals which they hoped would strengthen the educational experience of African-American students at K-State in the years to come.”²¹

They also immediately jumped head first into activities and meetings on campus. David Hall lead a protest and black speak out at the football game,²² but wanting their voices heard still, the BSU proposed a list of grievances to President McCain touching on racial activities and tension from as far as the dorms to academics and to pig harassment.²³

At one time there was a thought of removing blacks from the union, thanks to “‘Black’ table gone”, an article written in the school newspaper: “I want to congratulate the administration on the skills and discretion in removing one of the University’s eyesores. I refer to the ‘black’ table in the Union.”²⁴ This incident occurring in January of 1970 is most likely one of the reasons BSU has worked hard to have black history known, getting their members involved with other activities outside of theirs, and being a place where students can come and feel welcome. What I love about that incident is that even now in this day there’s a ‘black’ cluster of tables and majority of the students who sit at those table are black athletes.

Four black student-athletes having read this article wrote back expressing their feelings on the “black” table situation, stating:

“Because we (blacks) are such eye-sores, something definitely should be done about those six eye-sores on K-State’s basketball team, those larger eye-sores that just happened to come to K-State to participate in football and all the black men and women attending K-State. There must be some way of getting rid of them.”²⁵

²¹ “In an article over BSU’s Alumni written in the Kansas State Collegian, Jason Tyler stated the facts and opinions the BSU alumni had about the effects and goals they had hoped to achieve.”

²² “In an article over Kansas State basketball standout David Hall they discuss his activities with the BSU along with his remembrance of athletics at KSU.”

²³ “In an article over BSU (Kansas State Collegian, October 16, 1970), the author explains some of the points listed to bring to President McCain’s attention.”

²⁴ James Livermore. “‘Black’ table gone” Kansas State Collegian (1970)

²⁵ Weeler Hughes, Mike Hicks, Ira Gordon, and John Acker. “Black athletes seek answers” Kansas State Collegian (1970)

After BSU had formed their identity and made a foundation for themselves, they keep making their purpose known and worked harder to educate the majority of the campus. Ernest Downs felt strong about whites not knowing how blacks on campus felt being the minority, even though they acted as if they understood. He tried to explain what it was like to the collegian:

“Being a minority means getting singled out in the classroom. It means always standing as a representative for an entire race not as an individual. And it means being looked at as something really different- more like an oddity. That’s why we have a BSU.”²⁶

Fellow BSU member Camilla Pace felt the same as Downs stating that blacks on campus needed to come together and become involved on campus. “This is our school as well as the majority’s school”²⁷

Every year BSU host a welcome back barbeque and party to introduce new comers to their organization, shown in Figure 3.

They participate in homecoming week and have activities for Kwanzaa and Black History month.²⁸ The organization is there to help blacks adjust to being on a predominately white campus, and to get students involved. They also try to provide a better environment for educating not only blacks, but other races.²⁹ Since their SGA funding in 1969, BSU’s mission has been to expanded the majority student’s view on humanity and educate the university accurately on the contribution blacks have had on America and its heritage.³⁰

²⁶ Quote from an article in the school newspaper (Kansas State Collegian, 1977) explaining why blacks came together to form BSU.

²⁷ Article on BSU (Kansas State Collegian, 1977) “BSU formed for identity, education.

²⁸ Blacks Student Union “Kansas State Black Student Union: I.M.P.A.C.T.” Kansas State University (2008-2009)

²⁹ Kansas State BSU Officials “BSU: The Diversified Black Culture” Kansas State University (1981)

³⁰ Veryl Switzer. “Funding vs. races?” UHURU (1973)



Figure 3: 2008 Back to school BSU barbeque. SOURCE:
<http://www.k-state.edu/bsu/08bsubbq/>

Kansas State University's BSU has won the Big 12 Most Outstanding Black Student Government honor three times in four years. Kristen Wilkes was quoted by the collegian saying, "I think our biggest [Challenge] is getting more students to be a part of the BSU- all students on campus, not just black and minority students."³¹ K-States BSU concurrently has an estimated 40 paid members and roughly 60 students that show up every now and again, but only 30 major active students.³² They however have not let the numbers distract them from their overall goal and are still working hard. "[The] future of BSU is only going to get stronger," says Wilkes.³³

The Link: What stands out to me, which most probably would not notice, even though it carries a great weight in the history of BSU: its founding athlete basis is slowly deserting

³¹ In an article discussing the accomplishments of Kansas State's BSU (Kansas State Collegian March 24, 2009) Elise Podhajsky describes the emotions and feelings of BSU office holders after receiving a Big 12 honor for the third time in the past four years.

³² A rough estimate gathered while talking to former BSU president, Bryon Williams.

³³ In an article over Kansas State's BSU (Kansas State Collegian, March 21, 2009) Podhajsky quotes senior Kristen Wilkes, a BSU delegate, about the future of BSU.

as years pass. What was once an organization not limited to athletes but made mostly because of, and of athletes no longer carries a majority. What was it that changed over time to where blacks felt there wasn't as much of a need to come together? Is it the fact that black athletes feel that they are better than everyone else and "walk around like they are gods?"³⁴ Could it be that blacks are being accepted into the fabric of "white" America? What changed between 1969 and today, 2009, to make not only black athletes, but black students in general not as active in BSU?

Before the start of the Black Student Union, the Civil Rights Movement was having a major impact on the states of the South. But the triggering of events, in my opinion, started only an hour away from Kansas State in 1948 when the Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools was unconstitutional in the case of *Brown V. Board of Education in Topeka*. Then there was the Little Rock Nine in Arkansas who had to be escorted to school by the National Guard in 1957. After that in 1964, President Johnson's signed the Civil Rights Act while three civil rights volunteers' bodies were found after several months of being missed.³⁵ The madness would continue on for blacks, giving them a reason to bond together even more. Malcolm X was shot to death early in 1965 and "Bloody Sunday"³⁶ would leave more to mourn only a month later. The Black Panthers were found in Oakland, California and tried in 1966 and Martin Luther King Jr.,

³⁴ The opinion many students on campus share about athletes they see walking around campus. Quoted from my neighbor, Jessica Smith, when we were just generally speaking of things going on around campus.

³⁵ James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner were volunteers in Freedom Summer, where both blacks and whites came from all over to help register blacks to vote in Mississippi the summer of 1964. Two of the boys were white and the other black. They had been pulled over for speeding by cops, who were members of the Klu Klux Klan.

³⁶ March 7, 1965, civil rights leaders lead roughly 500 blacks on a march from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery to show their support for the voting rights and disapproval of Jimmie Lee Jackson's death. The marcher were stopped only 6 blacks away from their start by state troopers who used clubs and whips to beat them and sprayed tear gas through the crowd. There were 50 people hospitalized and the cruelty was televised leading to a second march headed by Dr. King himself.

the leader of the movement, would be shot to death in April of 1967 after Detroit and Newark underwent major race riots and fires the year before.³⁷

There were so many different events taking toll on the lives of blacks across the country. Mass confusion, and chaos, that had no answer to it. There was no reason as to why the blacks on campus shouldn't bond together to try and make it through the harsh times the nation's blacks were going through. Sylvia Robinson felt that it was necessary because there were a lot of racial and social actions taking place around the nation and that Kansas State was not immune to it.³⁸ And even though majority of the chaos wasn't happening in Kansas it still affected the lives of those 60 black students. Frank Marshall Davis's words were put best by John Tidwell to explain Kansas's race relations:

“Kansas prided itself on being a liberal state and flaunted its tolerance over the neighboring south. They could have pointed out that Negroes voted, attended mixed schools, were not jim crowed on transportation, and not required to address whites as Mr. or Mrs. while in turn being called by their first names. What more could a nigger want? And had you answered, dignity and respect as a human being, they would not have understood.”³⁹

Kansas was better off than the other southern states, giving blacks at least half the opportunity. They had let thousands of blacks traveling from the south take up living on their home frontiers during the Kansas Fever Exodus back in 1879.⁴⁰ And Kansas State was always open to all races and in the 1940's open for black athletes. Harold Robinson,

³⁷ Borgna Brunner and Elissa Haney. “Civil Rights Timeline: Milestones in the modern civil rights movement.”(2007) <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html> (accessed March 31, 2009)

³⁸ An article over BSU alumni coming to talk to current (1995) BSU members and black students. (K-Stater, April 1995).

³⁹ John Edgar Tidwell *Living' The Blues: Memoirs of a Black Journalist and Poet*. (Madison, WI, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992). The book is the life of Frank Marshall Davis, a black journalist and poet who left a trail at Kansas State during the 20's. The quote comes after he was discussing how, his grandmother had come from the South to Kansas, and that even though it was better, Kansas was not paradise.

⁴⁰ Black Migration from Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and other southern states to Kansas, that occurred in merely a few months. Blacks were told there was free transportation and free land, so they packed all their belongings and left the bulldozing South.

shown in figure 4, was on a football scholarship in 1949, and had broken the color barrier in the Big Seven Conference.⁴¹ And Tiger Woods father, Earl Woods, seen in figure 4, would break Kansas State and the conference's baseball color barrier in 1951.. But he and the team would face racial problems forfeiting a game because the other school didn't want to play unless he sat on the bus. 1951 through 1952 Gene Wilson and the University of Kansas' LaVannes Aquires would break the conference color barrier in basketball.⁴²



Figure 4: Left side, KSU's first black baseball player, Earl Woods. Right side, Harold Robinson, First black scholarship at Kansas State for football. SOURCE: <http://www.k-state.com/%7Bdyn.img%7D/d4a0565cb9554f6895a768ea346e73be/Earl%20Woods.jpg>, <http://www.k-state.com/%7Bdyn.img%7D/6eb8583e66d64094a3959ef6314053ab/Harold%20Robinson.jpg>

Is it the stereotype; that basketball and football players walk around like they are gods thinking they are better than everyone else, that BSU no longer has their membership? No. I surveyed six athletes to uncover their knowledge and opinion on the

⁴¹Formed in 1907 including University of Missouri, University of Kansas, Iowa State University, University of Colorado, University of Nebraska, University of Oklahoma and Kansas State University. Kansas State however didn't join until 1913. Is now called the Big 12 Conference with the addition of Texas A&M, Baylor University, Texas University and Texas Tech in 1996.

⁴² Wikipedia. "Kansas State Wildcats" (March 2009) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_State_Wildcats (accessed March 31, 2009) Contains all the information for racial intergration of Kansas State and gave information on Coach Ray Wauthier leaving a baseball game against a team from Mississippi who said they would play them only if they left Earl Woods on the bus.

BSU.⁴³ When asked if they'd ever attended an event or meeting, one football player said no, simply because he'd never heard about them. The others stated that they were either in practice, study table, or just too busy. There weren't many different answers for what would interest them into becoming a member, only one stated, "If I was ever approached about it"⁴⁴ while the others said they didn't have the time even if they wanted to attend. The purpose of BSU to unite black students was clear, but only two out of the six guessed that BSU was founded by athletes and the rest thought it was faculty trying to help black students adjust.

The college athlete is now put before the student. We are still called student-athletes, but in many cases treated like athlete-students. From experience I can say there are days when we're lucky to get an hour or two for ourselves. NCAA requires study hours for incoming freshman and Kansas State requires hours according to GPA.⁴⁵ So not only is an athlete required to attend all their practices, classes but then there are study sessions and times. When BSU was started the work outs and requirements weren't as much as they are now. Athletes were all in the same dorm and had quite hours in which tutors were brought to the dorms if they were needed to study. It was basically up to the

⁴³ Survey questioned asked: "Have you ever attended a BSU meeting or event? Why or Why not? What would make you interest you to become a member of the BSU or attended their events? What do you think the purpose of BSU is? Which fact do you think is correct about BSU? a. was founded in the 40's by rebellious blacks b. was founded by athletes in the 60's c. founded by black faculty trying to help black students." There were four football players, one basketball player and one track runner given the survey according to the masses (more football players asked since they have more numbers).

⁴⁴ Answer from a Football player who has chosen to stay nameless.

⁴⁵ Football requires the minimum of two hours of study table a week. There are three different groups according to GPA. The first group is the red, consisting of players with a GPA of 2.2 and lower requiring them to get 8 hours of study table. The second is the yellow group with GPAs between 2.2 and 2.5, and they are required 6 hours of study table while the green group has a GPD of 2.5 and above requiring the minimum of 2 hours a week. This is Kansas State footballs requirements (different requirements for different schools). Basketball has day time study hours while sports such as track and field, volleyball, golf, rowing, equestrian, and baseball have day time and night hours required by class and GPA. (each sports is different)

athlete to get their own work done and athletics provide help if it was desired,⁴⁶ unlike today when we're put in the library or certain building and supervised with a number of hours required a week.

In my opinion I think the change has come simply from the fact that blacks had become accepted more into America's fold. It became natural for blacks to dominate on the basketball court, run fast and jump far on the track, and hit hard with fast force on the football field. Now there isn't as much racial tension as there was when the Lodus Rodes and Darnell Hawkinson thought of uniting the 60 black students on campus. There was no Cosby show in the 70's that could cushion the view of blacks, like it started to do when introduced in the 80's.⁴⁷

I think BSU has done its job superbly in teaching the majority about black history and its contributions to America, to which whites have more of an understanding for what minority students deal with. And because of that, racial tensions have shrunk on campus, making blacks more welcome in activities and organizations at Kansas State.

Unfortunately for BSU, their hard work of getting their goal accomplished is the reason their membership is going down. Blacks aren't having a hard time fitting in as before, leading them away from an all black organization since majority white ones are open to the race.

To get there athletic numbers back, I think it will take BSU stepping out of their comfort zone, of Greek and regular black students, and organize a small branch targeted

⁴⁶ Information gather in general conversation with the librarian, Patricia Patton (former name Fadrow) who lived in athletic dorm with husband and two sons during the 60's. We sparked an interesting conversation to help me further understand exactly what was going on when the BSU was formed, and I was made to understand the events and atmosphere of that time. Was not interviewed or notes taken on what was said, but information noted in my head.

⁴⁷ Robert Entman and Andrew Rojecki. *The Black Mind in the White Media: Media and Race in America*. (University of Chicago Press, 2000).

specifically to black athletes, since they hold over half the black population. Not only that, but black athletes are going to have to look outside their sports and see the history that has gotten them where they are today, and want to become a part of it. So much has changed over the last 40 years, and we have to remember that: things were not always the way they are today.

Conclusion: The Black Student Union has always been a place for black students to come together, but over the years since their numbers have dwindled. This organization was founded during a time of soul searching and confusion amongst the nation's blacks, and black athletes took heed to that deciding to come together and create a place of belonging. BSU has completely lost its athlete membership but shouldn't be forgotten for helping black athletes at Kansas State University get where they are today.

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