

ESPN's Bill Simmons Accuses Phoenix Suns Trainers of Administering PED's

Written by

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While not a huge fan of the spate of hoops commentators over at the "flagship", one of their brethren I actually enjoy reading is Bill Simmons. His humorous approach to making a point comes across like one of your funny buddies that manage to say things in a way that incite laughter without taking the jab too much to heart, even if it is at your own expense. That is hard to do, and I know because I usually inject humor into my writing only to find that I have insulted many a reader.

However, sometimes when you are trying to be funny, you forget that things you say as jokes may be taken as an implication of fact. Case in point is [Simmons' latest article](#) regarding the worst contracts in the NBA. In it, he refers to the Andrew Bynum deal [which is expiring] and suggests that someone will indubitably offer Bynum a deal this summer despite the fact that he spends more time at the bank cashing his huge checks than he does actually playing basketball.

In his article, Simmons writes

"Watching Bynum hit the open market this summer is going to be riveting. I'm feeling a two-year, \$30 million deal with a team option for year three from Phoenix, a team that is the odds-on favorite to be involved in basketball's first major PED scandal had phenomenal success rehabbing injury risks over the years."

Now, while I get the irony he is putting forth, and can appreciate that Robert Sarver would indeed be dumb enough to lock Bynum up for that deal [or more scary - a max deal], his implication made about the Suns training staff leads me to believe that Simmons has forgotten one of the cardinal rules of writing - thou shalt not make a joke slyly suggesting someone is cheating through the use of PED's without having a single shred of evidence.

While it is true that in the world of sports [and I mean ALL of team sports], no group of trainers

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have ever eclipsed the popularity and production of the people that actually participate in the sport. It used to be that the Phoenix Suns were a destination for free agents because we had the weather, the women, the wins, and great ownership. Now we have the trainers, and I'm done. The Suns training staff has resurrected more careers than - ugh, where is Dennis Miller when you need a great analogous reference!!!

Yet, to basically accuse the trainers of something illegal goes a little too far. Is it simply a joke that is funny? Is it a jab at them because they have been successful where no one else has been? Does the fact that more injured players seem to be able to perform after working with the Suns staff than statistically should be able to mean that something fishy is going on? Who knows? Saying the Suns training staff are the NBA's version of Viagra is funny. But to suggest that illegal substances are the root of their success isn't funny and I am shocked that Simmons would write that in his column.

I am sure Aaron Nelson has better things to do than sue Bill Simmons for libel. And I am no attorney, but I think he might have a case here. Simmons crossed the line; he should retract what he wrote and issue an apology. Either that, or produce compelling evidence of the accusation and stop hiding behind humor as your scapegoat.