

Jason Whitlock

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Jason Lee Whitlock (b. 27 April 1967 in Indianapolis, Indiana) is a sportswriter for The Kansas City Star, Foxsports.com, a former writer for AOL Sports, a former contributor to ESPN and a former radio personality for WHB and KCSP sports stations in the Kansas City area.

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[edit] College and sports

Whitlock was an all-state offensive tackle at Warren Central High School in Warren Township in the eastern part of Indianapolis, and he blocked for quarterback Jeff George, who later became the first overall pick in the 1990 NFL Draft. He earned a scholarship to play football at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, lettering as an offensive tackle in 1987 and 1988. He graduated in 1990 with a degree in journalism.

[edit] Journalism career

Whitlock previously worked for the Bloomington Herald Times, The Charlotte Observer and the Ann Arbor News. He has also been published in Vibe Magazine and The Sporting News. In the June 2008 issue of Playboy Magazine, Whitlock wrote a 5,000-word column questioning American's incarceration and drug-war policies. Playboy headlined the column "The Black KKK," which provoked Whitlock into writing two columns -- one in the Kansas City Star and another on Foxsports.com -- criticizing Playboy editorial director Chris Napolitano for the misleading and inflammatory headline.

Whitlock was the celebrity spokesman for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Kansas City. Whitlock had guest-hosted several ESPN shows, including Jim Rome Is Burning, and Pardon the Interruption. He also appeared regularly on ESPN's The Sports Reporters until he was fired from ESPN in September 2006. He is a regular fill-in host on the Jim Rome Radio Show.

The Scripps Howard Foundation awarded Whitlock its National Journalism Award for commentary on March 7, 2008. Whitlock was the first sports writer to win the award and \$10,000 prize. His Kansas City Star columns garnered the trophy for their "ability to seamlessly integrate sports commentary with social commentary and to challenge

widely held assumptions along the racial divide."

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Whitlock announced the departure of his on-line column from ESPN.com's Page 2 in favor of AOL Sports, but initially expected to continue his television work for ESPN. However, after the announcement, Whitlock was interviewed by sports blog The Big Lead, and in that interview, he disparaged two of his ESPN colleagues. Whitlock labeled Mike Lupica "an insecure, mean-spirited busybody", and referred to Robert "Scoop" Jackson as a "clown", saying that "the publishing of [Jackson's] fake ghetto posturing is an insult to black intelligence." Jackson, like Whitlock, is African-American.

After those comments were made public, Whitlock went noticeably absent from any ESPN television work. He soon announced to The Kansas City Star readers in September 2006 that he was fired altogether from ESPN as a result of his remarks; he wrote that the company doesn't tolerate criticism and acted as they saw fit.[1]

Whitlock's first AOL Sports column was published September 29, 2006. Whitlock's first Fox Sports on MSN column was published August 16, 2007.

[edit] Don Imus incident

On April 11, 2007, Jason wrote a column in the Kansas City Star, in which he weighed in on the Don Imus/Rutgers Women's Basketball controversy. He expressed his belief that while Imus's comments were deplorable, the real focus for the black community should be to minimize the negative impact of pop culture elements such as gangsta rap. Jason expressed a mainly negative opinion of the actions taken against Imus by the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rev. Al Sharpton, saying "It's an opportunity for Stringer, Jackson and Sharpton to step on victim platforms and elevate themselves and their agenda." [2] His comments were also featured on several television networks, including CNN, where he was featured alongside Sharpton and accused Jackson and Sharpton of "exploiting these young people, making [...] the problems much bigger than what they should be." [3]

[edit] References

1. ^ Whitlock, Jason. Freedom to speak has price Kansas City Star, 24 September 2006 (Retrieved 27 November 2006).
2. ^ Imus isn't the real bad guy. Kansas City Star. 11 April 2007.
3. ^ CNN. Aired 13 April 2007. Video available online at CNN.com.

[edit] External links

- * National Journalism Award Winners 2008
- * Jason Whitlock on The Oprah Winfrey Show
- * Kansas City Star Column Archive
- * ESPN.com Column Archive

- * RyanMcBain.com - Jason Whitlock is at it again
- * Interview with TheBigLead.com
- * Second Interview with TheBigLead.com
- * Jason Whitlock's Articles from Fox Sports on MSN
- * Jason Whitlock's First Article on Fox Sports on MSN
- * Interview with Tucker Carlson
- * Interview with Michael Tillery of Blacksportsnetwork.com

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