

# Hayes paints a halo of hypocrisy

It's understandable, I suppose, that Monday night's Woody Hayes crowd was mesmerized by his charisma. After all, it was his charisma that made him the successful coach he was at Ohio State.

But, I have to wonder how many of the 1,500 people attending Hayes' speech would have attended if Hayes was known only for being a former Big Ten coach. It's obvious that Hayes wouldn't be half the drawing card if controversy didn't surround him.

shelley smith

Despite that controversy, however, by the end of his speech, Hayes had the crowd in his back pocket, loving everything he said, and loving him.

He prophetically expounded on his loathe of violence and corruption and all things evil. He glowingly exclaimed that no Ohio State football player, under his regime, was

ever critically injured, and how his team prayed—not to win—but for "the man up yonder" to keep the players from harm.

Hayes painted a sparkling, golden halo around himself, and the crowd ate it up.

Everyone seemed to forget, or wanted to forget, exactly what it was that made Hayes so famous.

Hayes was quite the coach, and is quite the storyteller. But Hayes is also quite the hypocrite.

By breaking sideline markers and shoving a television reporter lader with a heavy camera, it's hard to believe that has a loathe of violence. And when he intentionally hit that Clemson player in 1979, had he really prayed for an injury-free game?

But now he is invited to speak across the country, and encouraged to paint that golden halo.

If anyone has illustrated violence in sports, it is Woody Hayes, and if anyone deserves to be questioned about his role as that illustrator, it is him.

Yet he refused to discuss the incidents, claiming that mistakes happen, and that he has paid for his. But, more importantly, the audience was so easily swept in by his charisma, by his candor and by his hypocrisy, that it can't even see how he hurt the game of football.

I realize that a person should not be haunted by his mistakes throughout his life, but the mistakes Hayes made deserve to be discussed—not ignored.

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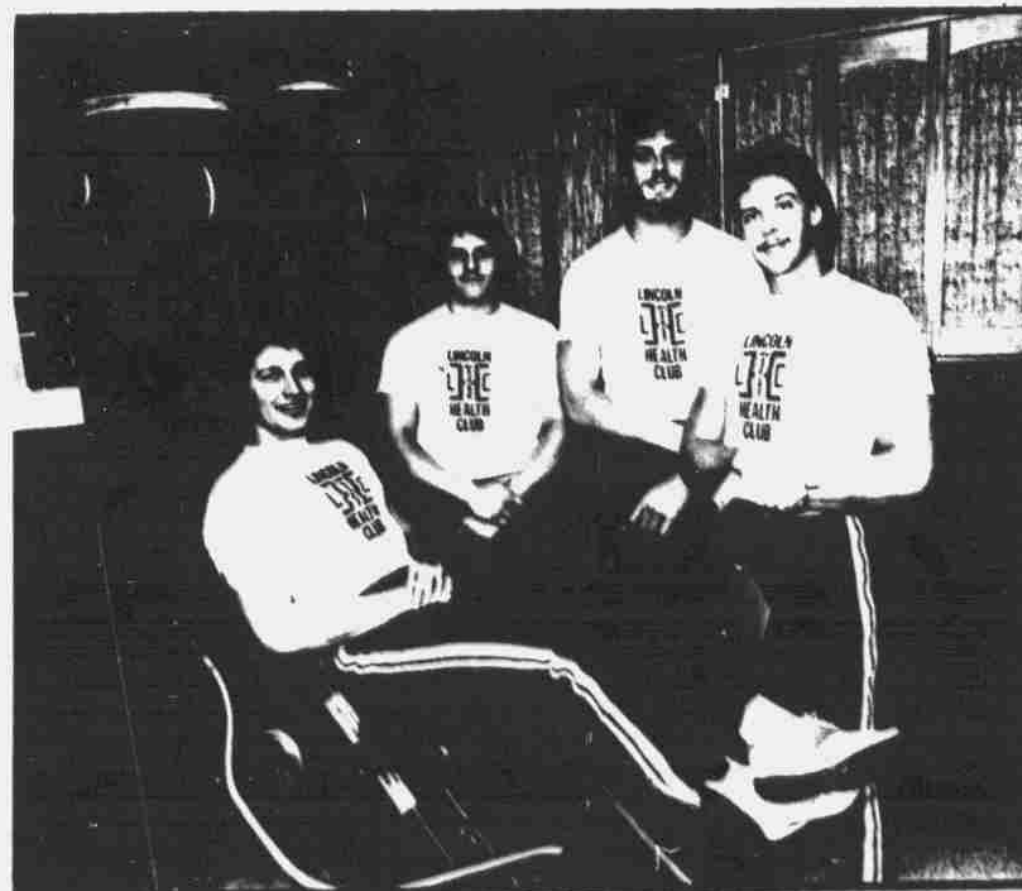
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