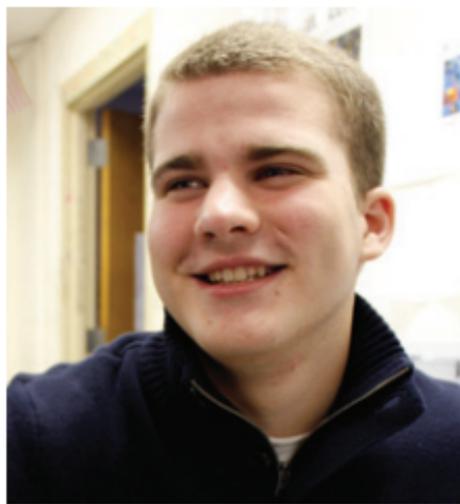


CONNOR'S CORNER

Domestic abuse major problem

by | Josh Conner

As the videos of Ray Rice knocking out his fiance surfaced on the Internet, I couldn't help but shudder as I remembered his jersey hanging just a few feet away in my closet.



I could not comprehend the situation as the man I knew as my hero, described as one of the nicest players in the NFL, was now being portrayed as a criminal.

What I could not foresee, as I watched the former Super Bowl champion drag the motionless body out of the elevator, was the truth. Professional athletes who are violent on the field sometimes take that violence home.

Major sports leagues have seen a substantial rise in domestic abuse cases. Severe punishments are necessary to stop domestic abuse. Many athletes don't understand the constant spotlight they are under as professionals.

Athletes such as Rice have large fan bases, and with the recent accusations of domestic abuse, younger fans have been negatively influenced by their role models. We should look within our own schools as domestic abuse cases among high schoolers have also increased.

If we are going to try to stop domestic abuse, we need to start early. Many high school athletes, just as professional athletes, believe they are above the law because of their status. We should never let something as serious as domestic abuse go unnoticed because the abuser is a "superstar."

Stricter guidelines are needed to show athletes their behavior counts on and off the playing field. The professional leagues' big name athletes can make a positive impact by bringing attention to the issue.

Many professional and collegiate sports have been very successful in raising awareness for causes such as breast cancer research and prevention. I believe campaigns for domestic abuse should be established to bring attention to the subject. The NFL has taken a step in the right direction with its recent "No more" advertising campaign, but more needs to be done.