

Paterno's legacy blemished by "Horseplay"

By Alex Milledge, Hornet Reporter

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409 wins. 3 Big Ten Championships. 2 National Titles. These are the accolades of Joe Paterno that he racked up in nearly a half-century as long-time collegiate head football coach of the Penn State Nittany Lions. It looked as if they would he would never leave his post as one of the most heralded coaches of one of the most prestigious football programs in college football.

But another number looks to splinter that legacy. 15 years. The span of years that Paterno's longtime Defensive Coordinator Jerry Sandusky, an alleged pedophile, committed 40 counts of molesting eight different young boys, with some counts said to have taken place on Penn State Facilities.

The fallout of the Penn State Scandal has still yet to subside. The fallout has grown in the following weeks as more victims have come out and we start to learn of how much did Penn State officials knew about Sandusky. The fallout will be felt for years as they take the allegations to court and find out about how much Paterno really knew about Sandusky's actions.

Paterno had to have known about it. He was told by Mike McQueary, a then-graduate assistant who witnessed Sandusky alleged rape a ten-year old boy in the showers of the Penn State Football facilities. Paterno told a source that recalled "vaguely" referencing "fondling" or "horsing around" by Sandusky and a youth, according to ESPN.COM.

He was just "horsing around. " He was "snapping towels. " It was "horseplay". Sandusky and other Penn State officials tossed these words around in Grand Jury statements about Sandusky. As reports about the nature of the counts begin to flow in, the reports become more heinous and more veil, words like "Rape" or "Sodomy".

Penn State did the right thing by firing Joe Paterno. In a statement released by Joe Paterno following his retirement, he told the board of trustees to "not spend a single minute discussing my [Paterno's] status. They have far more important matters to address. " The Board of Trustees did not waste a single minute by firing Paterno, along with the President of the University Graham Spanier and Athletic Director Tim Curley, who went on administrative leave after being indicted on perjury charges.

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Paterno failed to report acts of sexual abuse to the proper authorities involving young boys. These acts will blemish the long career and reputation he built throughout his career, though accomplishing to eke out a legacy of excellence and honor on the field, but failed to protect young lives off the field, cementing the fact that it's not what you do on the field, but what you do off the field that makes a true legacy.

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