

## Happy Valley is a sad place today

Written by Bob Brooks

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The sadness of Happy Valley, and the story that goes with that sadness, brings down Joe Paterno as a man who built a dynasty and saw it crumble in a 24-hour period.

Penn State had to clean house after the Sandusky allegations were brought to the light of the judiciary. Yes, it is a sad story when a man who spends his life as a leader, philanthropist and record-setting football coach goes down this path.

The Big Ten has had to deal with other unpleasant situations in the past. Remember the Woody Hayes slugging episode in the bowl game, where the legendary Ohio State coach slugged a Clemson player and was fired at the end of the game? Woody had built a similar dynasty and all of a sudden it came crashing down.

Then there was the long argument with Bob Knight at Indiana and his ultimate firing. Coach Knight has rebuilt his image somewhat, but the institution still hasn't recovered from that deal.

No school in the Big Ten is immune from trouble, and that includes Iowa in the Evashevski days and his argument with the Board in Control of Athletics and Paul Brechler, the athletic director. That, too, was a messy situation, and I would add it was the toughest story I ever had to cover.

It was in the day of not-instant communication, so the fallout was less. But between the time of Evy later resigning as athletic director until the hiring of Hayden Fry, the Hawks went through 20 non-winning football seasons in a row.

So we can add to this line of not throwing stones at somebody else's mistakes, because the next one might be aimed at you. The Big Ten, in all of this - through the Michigan suspension, the Tressel mess and now Paterno - will have some choices to make, too.

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That football trophy that has been on display around the conference this season, heralding the league's first-ever championship game, is called the Paterno-Stagg Trophy. And the Amos Alonzo Stagg relatives are interested in keeping Stagg's name out of the Paterno mess.

The conference, like the NCAA, has a lot of things to do to make college football what it should be. And Penn State is doing the right thing by cleaning the deck and starting anew. I'll tell our friends in Happy Valley, it will be an arduous proceeding.

NOTE: I can't let this column go by without a mention of the passing of former heavyweight champion Joe Frazier.

In the golden age of sports, the three fights between Muhammad Ali and Frazier are ring classics. And with the state of boxing these days, especially the heavyweight division, there's nobody around that can even approach the ferocity of the Ali-Frazier bouts, which ended with two wins for Ali and one for Frazier.

It made the late Howard Cosell a multi-millionaire and it gave the public great theater, even though Frazier had to be the butt of Ali's taunts. Frazier will go down as one of the great body-punchers of all time. He was a credit to boxing that will never be equalled.

*(Bob Brooks is sports director at KMRY and has been one of the leading voices of college and prep sports in Eastern Iowa for more than 65 years. He is a 10-time winner of the Iowa Sportscaster of the Year Award, and was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana in 2004. His sports reports can be heard weekday afternoons at 4:30 and 5:30, and Saturdays at 6:40 for the Hawkeye football wrap-up.)*