

Colin Kaepernick Is No Victim

by Gary Fouse



Listening to some of the silly comments coming out of Wednesday's Colin Kaepernick protest in front of the NFL offices in New York made me laugh. One would have thought that the out of work quarterback was Joan of Arc, Jackie Robinson and Jesus Christ all wrapped into one. He is none of the above.

Kaepernick, you will recall was the second string quarterback who decided to kneel rather than stand during the National Anthem because of his sympathy for the Black Lives Matter movement. To hear Kaepernick describe it, you would think America was still mired in the days of the 1950s South. His antics caused many fans to switch to other sports like lacrosse or Chinese checkers rather than put up with this drama.

I recall back in 1968 when US Olympians John Carlos and Tommie Smith raised their fists in the black power salute while on the winners' stand in Mexico City. It caused a furor and they were sent back home. Over time, however, most of us (me

anyway) have been able to put their gesture in perspective. They had a right to be indignant over the way blacks were being treated in certain parts of America in 1968. Now is a different day. That is why I take issue with Kaepernick's actions, which are spreading and threaten to cause real discord within the NFL.

After last season, Kaepernick made the decision to opt out of his 49ers contract and become a free agent. However, to date, no NFL team has signed him, which has led to charges by some that the NFL and its owners have conspired to keep him out of the game.

I doubt that very seriously because a conspiracy between that many people (over 30) doesn't stay a secret very long. More likely that most or possibly all of the owners have decided that the majority of their fans don't want this character smokin' into town, wearing their team's colors, and playing his games with the National Anthem. If Kaepernick were so good that he could take their team to the Super Bowl, they would be in a rush to sign him. However, we are talking about a backup quarterback here-at least on most of the league's teams.

Here is something else that Kaepernick (and most other observers) have overlooked. As one who has lived in three other countries, I became used to standing when their anthem was played. It didn't mean I owed my allegiance to that country; it was just proper respect and it was expected. Now that the NFL is playing games in England and soon in Mexico, it would be the custom to play the two respective national anthems. Would Kaepernick take a knee in London while "God Save the Queen" was being played? Of course not. Then why can't he stand for his own anthem?

Colin Kaepernick has put himself in this situation. He should man up and tell people to knock off the protests and the signs of solidarity from other players who are starting to emulate him. The last thing any team needs is division within the

locker room over this issue. If some team chooses to sign him, that is their business. If not, he should take the consequences of his actions like a man.