



A Product Of O'side's Great Sports Melting Pot

by Dave Meyer

On August 26, Colin Kaepernick of the San Francisco 49ers, sat during the playing of the national anthem. I was offended.

Less than a week later, in San Diego, Kaepernick and teammate Eric Reid knelt during the anthem before their game against the Chargers. That night the Chargers celebrated the 28th year of their "Salute to the Military" night.

After a lengthy discussion with Nate Boyer, a former Army Green Beret and long-snapper, Kaepernick knelt next to Reid, while Boyer stood next to them.

"We were talking to him about how can we get the message back on track and not take away from the military, not take away from pride in our country but keep the focus on what the issues really are," Kaepernick said. "As we talked about it, we came up with taking a knee because there are issues that still need to be addressed and there was also a way to show more respect for the men and women that fight for this country."

Kaepernick applauded veterans and active military during a first-half break and stood during the singing of "God Bless America," applauding at the end of the song.

Kaepernick's message, oppression of African Americans in this country, racial injustice and police brutality, is important for all of us to think about.

In the past week, events in Tulsa and Charlotte remind us that the message needs to be discussed and addressed. Athletes can't let the protest method get in the way of the message.

Sports, for many people, is a welcome distraction from ev-



Colin Kaepernick

eryday life. For those of us who live or work in sports, it is part of life. For others, it is a way to unite with like-minded people to support our teams, our families and our friends.

A sports team is one of the few things that represents an entire city and each of its citizens regardless of race, age, gender, political views, or socioeconomic status.

Growing up in Oceanside, sports brought people of all backgrounds, races and religions together. We took great pride in our diversity and looked out for each other like family. Those strong friendships remain in place today.

Most people I talk with are not offended by the choice of

kneeling during the anthem. Kaepernick has the right to protest in any manner he desires. Some players kneel, some lock arms, others raise a fist. Let's be honest, Kaepernick's, and other player's, actions are not a threat to America.

But, the protest method cannot become a distraction that detracts from addressing the problem that needs to be discussed and addressed. Some athletes have recently stated that they are kneeling during the anthem as "a nod to Kaepernick." Talk about a lost message. The message isn't about Kaepernick and he doesn't want the focus on him.

Several players have presented calm, well thought out reasons for their support of Kaepernick's message. Former Seattle Seahawk Marshawn Lynch said "I just hope people open their eyes to see there's really a problem going on and something needs to be done for it to stop." Current Seahawk Richard Sherman was typically thoughtful as he addressed the topic when asked during his regular weekly meetings with the media the past month. Sherman's meetings (available on the Seattle Times website) are worth seeing or reading.

Let's hope athletes' protest methods don't overshadow their important message. I, for one, am hoping athletes can use sports as a vehicle to help pull people together.

Oceanside native David Meyer has 29 years of legal experience and over 35 years of business experience and has represented the Oakland Alameda

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