Sports leagues keep cashing, while athletes keep crashing

By ANTHONY ANGELILLO
Copy Editor

Every few weeks, the sports world delivers its latest "breaking news," and it's never about a buzzer-beater or a walk-off home run. It's an arrest, a charge or an apology delivered before the public even knows what happened.

Off-field scandals in pro sports have become so common that the real surprise would be a month without one. Across the NFL, NBA, MLB and NHL, the people we're supposed to look up to keep showing they can't handle the platform they've been given.

That's what makes it so frustrating as a fan. Someone's name trends, the ugly details come out, a slap-on-the-wrist punishment follows and before you know it, everyone's back to watching the next game.

No league does this dance like the NFL. Look at Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson, accused of sexual misconduct by over two dozen women, with the league's own arbitrator calling his behavior "predatory."

Watson sat out 11 games, settled lawsuits worth tens of millions and still gets his $230 million fully guaranteed contract. The NFL closed its investigation in late 2024, stating that there wasn't enough evidence, which felt more like them not caring enough than getting to the truth.

On March 30, 2024, Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver Rashee Rice sped down a Dallas highway at 119 mph, crashed into other cars and injured four people before fleeing the scene on foot.

By July 2025, Rice pleaded guilty to two felonies and walked away with five years' probation, a brief jail stint and a six-game suspension.

Meanwhile, Miami Dolphins wide receiver Tyreek Hill, who pleaded guilty to domestic assault while in college, was making headlines again when, on April 9, 2025, police were called to his South Florida condo after a domestic dispute with his wife, Keeta Vaccaro.

No charges were filed, but the incident once again put Hill in the national spotlight for something non-football related, and his wife filed for divorce the next day.

However, even though these incidents are wrong in their own way, they still remain active players in the NFL. Players keep finding new ways to destroy what they have built, yet the response practically invites the next incident.

The NBA's scandals look different, but the league's response is just as empty. In October 2025, the FBI arrested 34 people, including Miami Heat guard Terry Rozier, Portland Trail Blazers Coach Chauncey Billups, and Damon Jones, for illegal sports betting and Mafia-backed poker games.

Prosecutors say Rozier told friends when he'd sit out, letting them cash in on prop bets, while Director of the FBI Kash Patel compared the scheme to insider trading.

Billups and Jones allegedly got wealthy victims into rigged Mafia poker games run by four New York crime families. However, after all of this, Rozier and Billups were put on leave, not fired, even when the Mafia was involved; protecting assets came first.

Let's be real. Sports betting made scandals like this inevitable. The NBA was first to jump on board after the Supreme Court's 2018 ruling, plastering DraftKings and FanDuel across broadcasts. The league sold betting as part of the fun, then acted shocked when players joined in.

MLB wasn't far behind. In November 2025, Cleveland Guardians closer Emmanuel Clase and pitcher Luis Ortiz were charged with accepting bribes to throw balls rather than strikes so gamblers could cash in on prop bets.

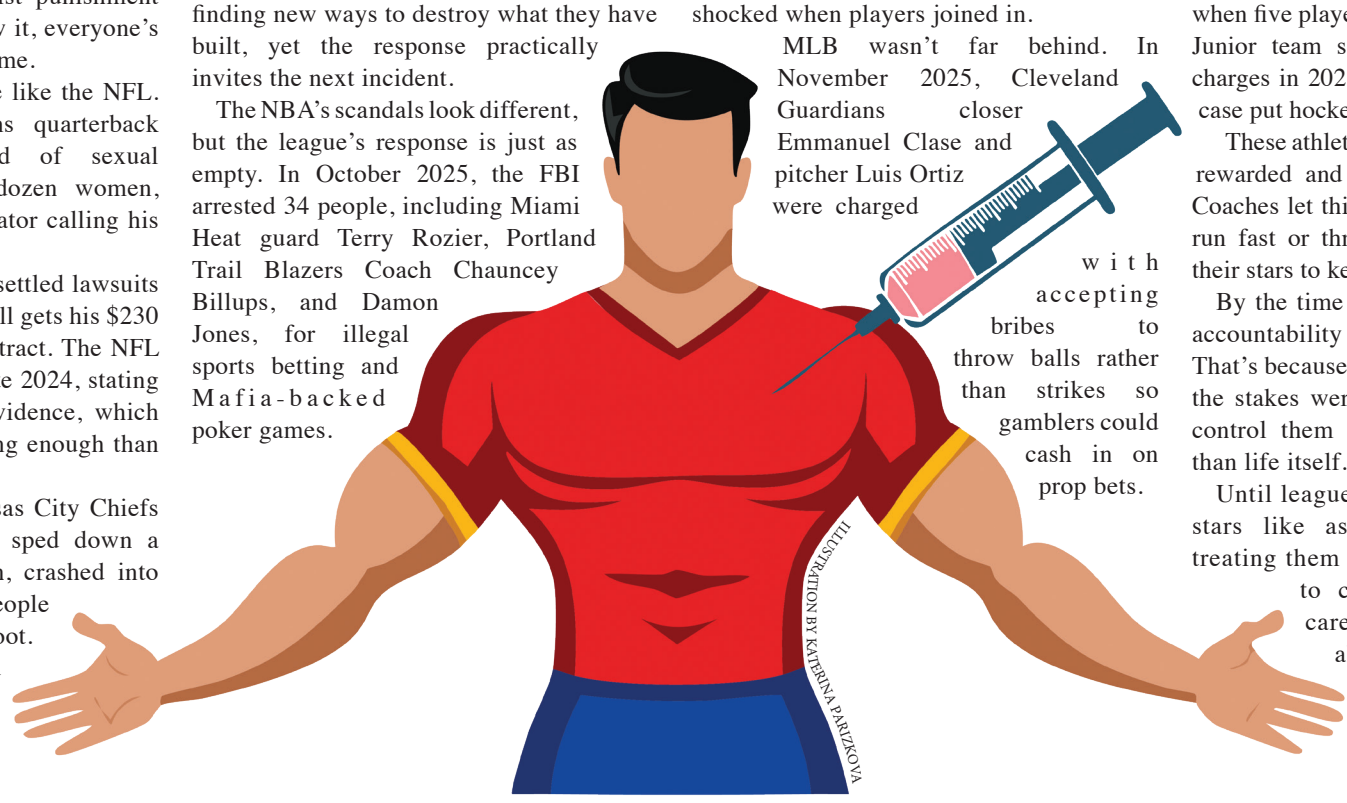

ILLUSTRATION BY KATERINA PARIZKOVA

The scheme made at least $450,000, with Clase allegedly texting gamblers during games. Both could spend decades in prison, proof that baseball's gambling problem isn't stuck in the Pete Rose era.

MLB's recurring Performance-enhancing drugs nightmare has also not gone away. PED have been at the forefront of baseball since the 1990s and Atlanta Braves outfielder Jurickson Profar, a 2024 All-Star who signed a three-year, $42 million contract, tested positive again and will miss the entire 2026 season. Philadelphia Phillies Johan Rojas received an 80-game ban in March, the team's second in two years.

Even the NHL couldn't avoid the spotlight when five players from Canada's 2018 World Junior team stood trial on sexual assault charges in 2025. All were acquitted, but the case put hockey's culture on trial as well.

These athletes have always had their talent rewarded and their bad behavior ignored. Coaches let things slide because a kid could run fast or throw hard. Colleges protected their stars to keep the money flowing.

By the time a player is making millions, accountability has gone out the window. That's because nobody told them "no" when the stakes were low, and now nobody can control them when the stakes are bigger than life itself.

Until leagues stop treating their biggest stars like assets to protect and start treating them like employees who answer to certain standards, the next carefully worded apology will already be prepared, with only the name changing.

'Inside the Manosphere' with Louis Theroux

By REX NAYLOR
Staff Writer

Louis Theroux, the highly respected documentarian, spent much of 2025 filming and interviewing some of the largest figures in social media for his documentary, "Inside the Manosphere."

The manosphere is something that has grown significantly in the last handful of years with social media personalities Tristan and Andrew Tate spearheading the movement.

The manosphere can be best described as a collection of blogs, podcasts, forums and websites promoting traditional masculine values, while disparaging feminist values as well as promoting hateful rhetoric towards minorities and opposition leaders.

Theroux's interviews include boxer Harrison Sullivan, internet personality Sneako, podcaster Myron Gaines and internet personality Justin Waller, as well as mentioning others in association while not doing a full on interview with them.

Each of them describe themselves as role models, or self-help influencers for young men through their online courses yet illegitimate business ventures. Gaines has his own podcast/talk show, Sullivan streams online and at the time Sneako was banned on platforms for hate speech.

The manosphere almost exclusively lives in the digital world on mainstream platforms like TikTok, Instagram, X and even YouTube. Alternate streaming platforms with less restrictions on speech like Rumble and Kick have become a popular hub for this content as well.

While Theroux spent time with Sullivan, who goes by "HSTikkyTokky" on social media, Theroux found himself being used more as a source of clout for Sullivan and his entourage rather than a participant in meaningful, developed conversations about the content being fed to the next generation of boys and the harm being caused to society at large.

Sullivan makes most of his money by managing OnlyFans models, which he himself finds "repulsive" and "sub-human."



ILLUSTRATION BY KATERINA PARIZKOVA

The contradiction is on full display and it tells someone all they need to know about these figures.

While Theroux was in New York City interviewing Sneako, clips of boys aged roughly between 12 to 16 showed them saying "F women" and "F the Jews," both messages Sneako and figures in the manosphere have promoted in the last handful of years.

The interviews all seemed to echo the same couple of messages. The first being "put your head down and work," then the second being "make money, get women."

Along with the men being interviewed, Theroux spent time interviewing Gaines' now ex-girlfriend Angelica Camacho, and Waller's long-term partner Kristen Waller for their insights on their own lives.

In each of the interviews Theroux mentioned the one-sided monogamous relationship structure Gaines and Waller promote where their partner is monogamous but they can have relations with whoever they want.

It was clearly a touchy subject for the women who both aren't involved in what their partners do, but it was obvious both Camacho and Waller were at a loss for words in some capacity for how they feel about it.

It's speculated Angie and Gaines broke up for this reason. On the other hand, Kristen had a different idea regarding their relationship structure. Kristen reasoned it makes her feel good knowing other women want her man.

In her point of view, having two daughters with him means she "won" in the end, and it doesn't make a difference to her knowing her partner is wanted and actively sought out by other women.

In my mind, this type of thinking can come from a place of low self-esteem, something each of the men interviewed lacked as well.

That is the place where this problem starts. As time goes on raising children will only become more difficult, while raising a boy right might be the thinnest line a parent can balance.

That's something the documentary didn't really cover and many wish it did. At the end of the day, it's the women who suffer from not having good men the most. There's a reason everyone says the dating pool is terrible no matter the age demographic, and this is a contributing factor to it.

Many boys are growing up right now and are unsure about where they stand, or what to do. So when a group spouts the message, "Make money, get women, nothing is your fault," comes along, of course someone who's confused will follow suit and fall into the trap.

The documentary does tell you what you need to know about these figures, but not how they are affecting and influencing millions of boys around the world. Everyone knows the manosphere will never go away, even if these figures do.