

Fox guarding the hen house

It's only getting worse out there on the plains, folks. It's only getting worse.

Your Laramie County Community College board of trustees made a show of going outside their blue-arch-entry building to hire some inexperienced "consultants" to do a survey to determine just how far morale has sunk at the Cowboy College.

Rather than listen to the LCCC faculty and staff that has been warning about the depth of the sinkhole Darrel Hammon has taken the once proud community college, another attempt has been made to control the results by hiring former insiders to do what an outsider would have trouble accomplishing.

With a board of trustees that is either living in the 1960's or serving simply for the line on their resume, an out-of-control and out-of-touch president has free rein over a public education institution that deserves both better management and better board oversight.

If that likely to happen in the near term?

The only way conditions will change - improve - at LCCC is if the current president is offered a job elsewhere and he accepts. The board is simply not strong enough to control a rogue president. We saw that with a CEO at the local hospital who pushed for the needless, ruthless

and pointless confiscation of a number of properties at Nob Hill. Without an approved plan for a new hospital, a witless real estate broker was given free rein to terrorize, torment and tempt property owners to sell and vacate homes they'd occupied all their lives. A family compound was destroyed. Now, the land sits bare.

It will never reach the level at LCCC wherein the college will fail and close. There is too much public money invested to allow that to happen. The damage any one president can inflict will always be reversible. But the longer the disease goes untreated, the harder bringing the school back to health will be.

If the insider "consultants" who are being paid chump change to offer some kind of tepid advice to the president and board actually completes such a "survey" or study, what will come of it? Nothing. It will be like the lengthy and costly study done about surface water drainage after the 1985 flood. The five thick volumes were presented to the mayor at the time and they languished on the shelf. The results were never considered. At a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It may take the University of Wyoming to bring change to LCCC. When that president starts to complain to the Legislature that grads of LCCC cannot read a menu or make change for a five, maybe then.

Should the aging QB finally retire?

In the most important game of the season, he made a huge mistake. A mistake that many thought cost his team a chance to win.

How long will he stick around?

Can't he see that the other quarterbacks in the league were born in a latter decade than he was? They're younger?

Even the other quarterbacks who have seemingly been around for along time were born early in the decade of the 80's. Tony Romo, Ben Roethlisberger, Jay Cutler, Aaron Rodgers, Vince Young, Kyle Orton, Jason Campbell, Matt Schaub, Philip Rivers, Eli Manning, and Matt Cassell were born early in the 1980's.

Many up and coming QBs were born in mid-decade or later: Matt Ryan, Joe Flacco, Mark Sanchez, Alex Smith, Matt Moore, Josh Freeman, Chad Henne, Brady Quinn and JaMarcus Russell.

The new guys coming into the league next year were born in 1986 and 1987 - well after the aged quarterback who may have cost his team the most important game they played this past season.

Why does he keep playing?

He has proven he's one of the best QB's to ever play the game. He's won a Super Bowl and has multiple Most Valuable Player awards. He has more endorsements than almost any other professional athlete. Now, with Tiger Woods on the sideline and endorsements withdrawn from him, this QB may have the most.

So, why does he keep playing?

Granted, in the final game of his season, he wasn't the only one to make a mistake. But his was so much in the open and came at such a critical time of the game, the world saw it. The world saw him cost his team a chance to win.

Does he keep playing just to keep his consecutive start streak going? Does he want to put it so far out of reach that no quarterback who comes into the NFL and is older than 22 and plays fewer than 20 seasons, can touch it?

Is that why he keeps playing when some "experts" think he should call it a day?

In that final game of the 2009-2010 season, he and his team outplayed New Orleans but did not win the only place that's important - on the scoreboard.

And that incredibly bad play near the end.

No one will forget that play. How could he make that throw? Didn't he see the defender right there? Didn't he see his receiver was behind the defender when he threw the ball toward him?

Is it his age? After all, his opposing QB, Drew Brees, is younger than him and he didn't make any boneheaded plays.

Even Tom Brady, another quarterback of similar success, is younger.

Hell, his brother is nearly five years younger.

What, you thought I was writing about Brett Favre?

No, it was Peyton Manning who threw away his team's last chance to win the final game of the season - in this case, that final game was the 2010 Super Bowl.

You may be one of those who question whether Brett Favre should play another season. Or more. All because he threw an interception that forced his NFC championship game against New Orleans into overtime, which the Vikings lost on a field goal by an unlikely hero. The real hero of the Super Bowl was that kicker - a guy who never kicked 'em that long or that true in his short NFL career. Not Brees.

Brett Favre's Vikings dominated the Saints. Peyton Manning's Colts did okay.

Yet, sportswriters and broadcasters across the land question whether Favre should hang up his cleats. But, no one has asked the same question about Peyton Manning.

So, the truth comes down to age - not competence. Not success of failure.

For the season, Brett Favre had 33 touchdown passes, 7 interceptions, completed 68.4% of his passes for 4202 yards and had a QB rating of 107.2.

For the season, Peyton Manning had 33 TD passes, 16 interceptions, completed 68.8% of his passes for 4500 yards and had a QB rating of 99.9.

Manning had proven 100 catch receivers Dallas Clark and Reggie Wayne, along with Pierre Garcon and Austin Collie to throw to. Favre had unknown tight end Visanthe Scianchoe, unsung wide receiver Sidney Rice, rookie Percy Harvin and underachieving Bernard Berrian.

So, why should Brett Favre even consider retiring at age 40 unless Peyton Manning is held to the same lofty demand?

When you watch the guys play, which one do you prefer - as a spectator? One who seems to be manic behind the line of scrimmage or one who loves the game and plays it with youthful exuberance?

If you have to ponder which is which, you do not know anything about NFL football.

Both of these talented quarterbacks ended their seasons on a very low note. Both, however, are immensely talented and should continue to play the game. Manning for several more years, Favre for at least one more. If Adrian Peterson has a typical year and the defense stays in place, the Vikings can go even further than their 12-4 record took them in '09-'10. Favre honors contracts. He'll be back.

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