

The players' association have filed with the National Labor Relations Board two unfair labor practice charges against the NBA over issues with the new introduced ball and the league's crackdown on player complaints.

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Dallas owner Mark Cuban considers that this move was highly necessary regarding the position of NBA. Cuban was already a sharp critic of the new ball and how the league handled the complaints from the players, and he has even been fined [\\$100,000](#) by the League for his criticisms. Numerous players repeatedly made public complaints after the introduction of the new ball incorporating a micro-fiber composite. The new ball is a major issue, but they are complaining much more the "zero-tolerance policy" implemented this season.

NBA commissioner David Stern explained that he introduced the policy in order to prevent players to react too strongly after calls. Since the season starts, the new policy resulted to an increase in technical fouls called this season. But players are fined for each technical they receive forcing union director Billy Hunter to threaten the League about legal action if the referees keep on applying too severely the policy.

As Mavericks' player representative, Jerry Stackhouse, he explained that calling a foul is part of basketball traditions and attempting to prevent it is vain.

In 255 games this season, referees called over 175 unsportsmanlike technicals. In comparison, there were one third less technicals called last season through the same number of games last season. But it is worth to notice that it is equivalent to the number with the amount from two years ago. Hunter explained that the role of the union is to defend its members and after consultation of their membership and player leadership, they decide it was the right action to take.

The players felt that they were entitled to have input on both changes before they were put into play. They argued that the League did not consult them about any of the two major changes which occurred this season.

Salt Lake City is the geographic home of the University of Utah Utes and to even casual college sports fans this seems like an unlikely place for the number one overall NBA and NFL draft picks to come from in the same year, but that was not the case in 2005.

Despite not having a reputation as a traditionally dominate football or basketball program the University of Utah made American sports history when it became the first college ever to have players from its teams be chosen with the number one draft picks in both the NBA and NFL Drafts in the same year. The NBA and NFL reign supreme in the world of professional American sports with Major League Baseball (MLB) and the National Hockey League (NHL) coming in very distant third and fourth places in terms of team sport popularity. While baseball has had its heyday in the past and still sees record attendance numbers (thanks in part to a season with more than ten times as many games as the NFL and twice as many games in ballparks four times as big as what the NBA offers) the consensus is that the NFL and then the NBA are the most popular professional sports in the United States.

The hiring of eventual uber successful college football coach Urban Meyer ushered in a new era of twenty-first century football success for the public university with about 28,000 students. Prior to the arrival of Coach Meyer the school had previously barely made a blip on the national college football radar. The 2004-2005 college football campaign under the direction of Meyer went 11-0 in the regular season before besting the University of Pittsburgh in the January, 2005 Fiesta Bowl to win a landmark BCS bowl game for the college out of Salt Lake. The perfect 12-0 season was good enough to position the Utes in the number four spot in the polls at the end of the season and propelled on field signal caller Alex Smith to be taken by the San Francisco 49ers as the number one overall pick in the 2005 NFL draft.

The University of Utah has had less recent success on the hardwood than the gridiron. With the exception of a

1998 run to the Final Four the only other accomplishment of note on the basketball Utes resume is a 1944 NCAA title. Despite not having a standout year record wise during the 2004-2005 basketball season the University of Utah Utes did send Australian born sophomore Andrew Bogut to the Milwaukee Bucks who selected him with the first overall pick in the NBA Draft that summer. Coming off of a serviceable freshmen season where Bogut won Freshman of the Year honors in the subpar Mountain West Conference the seven foot Australian had a breakout season in his second year that resulted winning numerous college player of the year honors.

At this point in their relatively young careers both quarterback Alex Smith and forward Andrew Bogut are consensus disappointments. While both players will likely go on to have meaningful role player type careers in their respective sports the expectations for number one draft picks are so high that anything short of single handedly turning around a long failing franchise is commonly considered a colossal disappointment.