Red-Tailed Hawk to Generate Hysteria in Fans

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Chronicle Staff Writer

The University of Utah has given sporting fans the bird.
A red-tailed hawk to be exact.
Since 1992, U. students, alumni and administration have been crafting their feathered friend for Utah sporting events and finally let the hawk fly at the Jan. 3 Utah-Brighton High University basketball game.
“We feel the hawk was a consensus and natural choice,” Ted Capener, vice-president of university relations, says. “It’s a proud, strong, and beautiful bird. It represents the pride of the university.”
Both Capener and the U’s Athletic Marketing Director, Marc Amicoone, hope the bird will enhance the competitive spirit at all Utah games. The mascot will represent the university at sporting events, parades and campus activities.
Mascons have somewhat of a controversial past at the U. The U’s association with Native American names and symbols has been a cause for concern for many.
During the early 1970s, Native American students on campus protested the liberal use of exaggerated and Indian symbols.
In 1972, sportswriters and students were referring to the U’s athletes as “the Ute Redbirds.” The U’s administration and athletic department changed the name to “Utes” after getting permission from the Ute tribe.
Before the hawk showed its feathers, the Crimson Warrior made its path on the playing field.
From 1985 to 1992 a person dressed as a Native American rallied sporting spirit for the Utes, but due to political pressure, the mascot was dropped.
Even now, many argue that the U should respect the Native American culture. Others argue that the U’s choice of a hawk mascot shows bowing to political pressures.
“I would like to propose a difference,” said U. basketball player Ben Ratcliff, Hawk for the University of Utah, writes a recent U. graduate to the Salt Lake Tribune. “Considering the lack of backbone shown by the president and the important nature of the school to bow at the whim of change, I believe that we ought to be known as the University of Utah Utehawk.”

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What do you think of the Hawk?
Write the editor and let him know. Submit letters to The Daily Utah Chronicle, Student Media Center, 1450 S. Wilberforce, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

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