

King Among Students

Sports Illustrated's Peter King visits Deflategate class at UNH

Friday, October 9, 2015

•
•
•



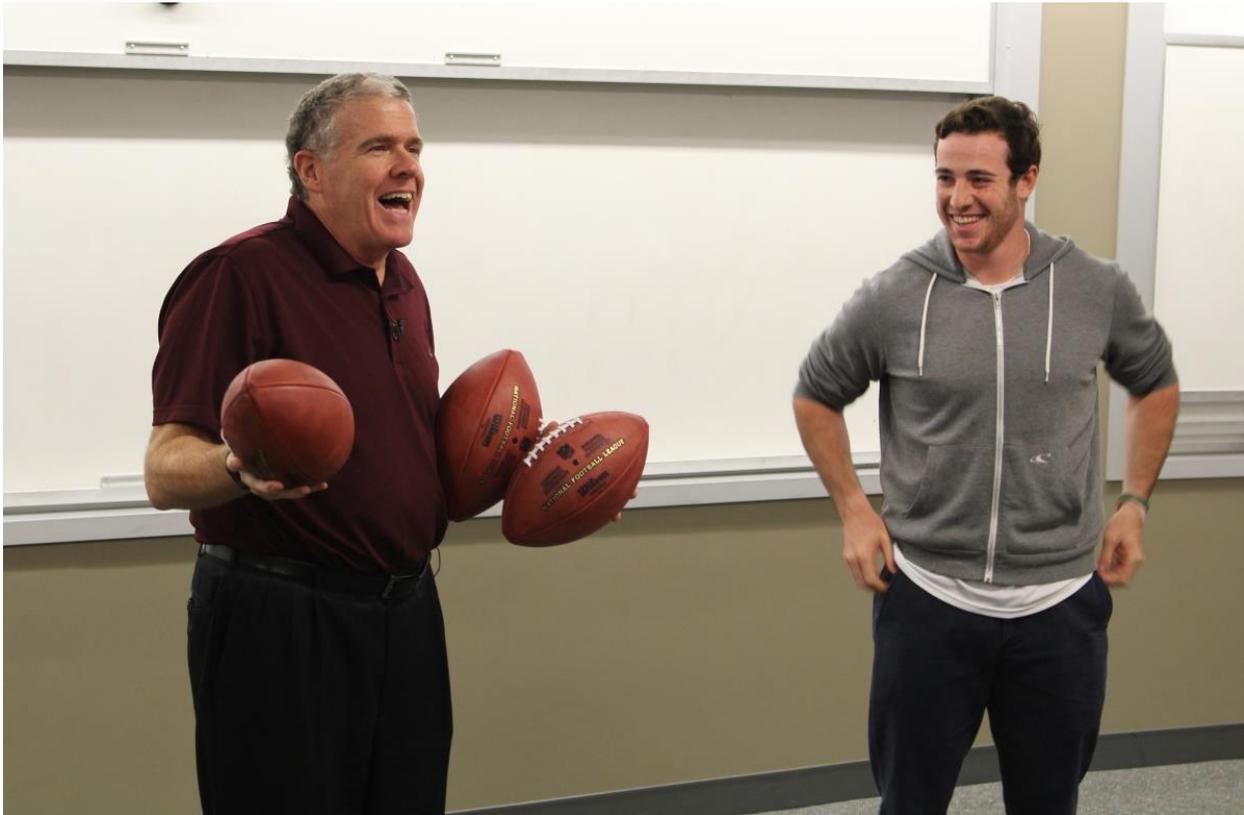
Sports Illustrated national football writer Peter King — described by professor Michael McCann of the [UNH School of Law](#) as perhaps the most influential football writer in the country — is used to being the one asking the tough questions.

Wednesday night he found himself answering them. Not from his 1.5 million Twitter followers, either — these questions came from about 70 students enrolled in McCann's Deflategate class being taught at UNH this semester.

McCann developed the class as part of [UNH's Discovery Program](#) to use the Deflategate controversy as the basis to illustrate how sports, law, journalism and business intersect. So who better to speak to the students than someone who has been writing about the NFL for decades and who had in-depth discussions with many of the key players in Deflategate?

But King — who founded [The MMQB](#), an SI football reporting website — didn't want to be the only one doing the talking. He told the students at the beginning of class that every question they had would be answered, and he held a back-and-forth discussion covering all angles of the Deflategate controversy for most of the three-hour session.

He also proved adept at making sure attention spans never waned. The night included a rapid-fire question round toward the end — all queries had to be asked in 10 seconds or less and King's answers had to be delivered in 20 seconds or less, with offenders answering to a buzzer — and was highlighted by an appearance from UNH quarterback Adam Riese, who was asked to feel and throw three footballs and select which of them was properly inflated, which was underinflated and which was overinflated.



PETER KING WITH UNH FOOTBALL QUARTERBACK ADAM RIESE

Despite the fact that the difference between each of the balls was one PSI — and that his own coach, Sean McDonnell '78, wasn't optimistic about his chances — Riese nailed the assignment, prompting King to give him “an A” for his performance.

The meat of the class, though, was the discussion, and students didn't let King off easily. They asked him whether the controversy changed the way he would approach

reporting in the future, whether he “would rather be first or rather be right” when breaking a story and whether he thought the NFL had an agenda in its investigation of the Patriots.

King tackled each inquiry, admitting that he does have some regrets about his early reporting on the controversy. Students were particularly engaged in discussion surrounding social media — and, for what it’s worth, King said, “it’s absolutely better to be correct” than first when breaking news on Twitter.

He also addressed what it can be like interacting with 1.5 million people on Twitter, many of whom can occasionally get riled up — and personal.

“Don’t go down in the gutter,” King said in describing his approach — and his recommended approach for the students — toward Twitter trolls.

But King was quick to point out the benefits of Twitter, as well. It’s not just about breaking news first; it can also be a tremendous outlet for sharing important stories. He pointed to an article published earlier that day on MMQB that detailed the emotional rollercoaster ESPN football reporter Ed Werder has navigated while his daughter and his son-in-law have battled cancer.

“It helps you promote your brand,” King said of Twitter, noting that brand promotion was more important now than ever due to the saturation of the media market.

Members of the MMQB staff were on hand for the class, shooting photos and video, and a piece on King’s visit to the class will be published soon at mmqb.si.com.

- WRITTEN BY:
[Keith Testa](#) | Communications and Public Affairs

PHOTOGRAPHER:
[Keith Testa](#) | Communications and Public Affairs

SPORTS



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.
The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#).
Email us: unhtoday.editor@unh.edu.

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#) [CONTACT US](#)

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter

Follow us on YouTube

Follow us on Instagram

Find us on LinkIn

UNH Today RSS feeds

UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234

Copyright © 2022 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)

[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)