

Editorial

Salesmanship

Saturday's Clarion-Ledger article (USM coach: 'Kids want to be here') by John Talty began with the statement that "[Recruiting is...salesmanship.](#)"

What do you think of when you hear the word "salesmanship"?

Hyperbole?

Caveat Emptor (Let the buyer beware)?

Half truths?

Deception?

Bulls**t?

Is anyone naïve enough to believe salesmanship means the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? Anyone over the age of 10? Remember what Ralphie said in "A Christmas Story" when he learned he'd been hoodwinked by a commercial come-on by Ovaltine?: "A crummy advertisement." Granted, Ralphie is a fictional character, but ask a ten year old to see what s/he says about the truthfulness of advertisements, aka, salesmanship.

The "salesmanship" in question is directed at "kids," as the title of the *Clarion-Ledger* article makes clear. But Universities, USM included, are not pitching a simple product like Ovaltine to ten year olds. The "salesmanship" is geared to seventeen and eighteen year olds and is quite a bit different from the pitch by Ovaltine to Ralphie. How sophisticated are the "kids," i.e., football prospects, to assess an adult version of "salesmanship"? What advantage does a coach and his/her entourage of assistants have over the "kids?"

And who gives a d*mn? Coaches? Administrators? Faculty?

How equipped are parents who may never have been on a college campus to assess the truthfulness of "salesmanship"?

Remember, for coaches, administrators, and fans, winning is everything. Their use of athletes—let me repeat, their use of athletes—and student/taxpayer resources is wasted if winning is not the outcome of big money sports.