

Opinion: Stop playing the national anthem at games

By Chris Murray, Reno Gazette-Journal

I have a solution for the national anthem debate that has gripped the sports world – and to some degree the entire country – over the last year: stop playing “The Star-Spangled Banner” before sports events.

There was a time when the anthem wasn’t played prior to games. It was actually rare prior to World War II.

During the Vietnam War, all teams started playing it before games and the tradition that stuck. But why? At its soul, the anthem is a war song. The teams on the field aren’t going to war. They’re playing a game, one U.S. city against another.

There aren’t any “bombs bursting in air” or “rockets red glare” on the diamond, hardwood or gridiron. There’s no reason for the anthem to be played beforehand.

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