

The Cavs & (Yes) The Steelers

Written by {ga=samamico}

Friday, October 09 2009 7:00 PM -

Our Cavs writer Sam Amico has a confession to make. He has a deep rooted hatred for the Pittsburgh Steelers. He hates them more than any team in any sport ever. He hates the Steelers more than he loves the Browns. He may hate the Steelers even more than he loves the Cavs. And Sam has noticed that there is a growing sector of Steelers fans that root for the Cavs. That rubs Sam the wrong way. And he writes about it in his latest column for us.



Someone posed the question to me the other day, and I'm going to be as honest as humanly possible.

The question was this:

Should fans of the Pittsburgh Steelers be allowed to root for the Cavaliers?

There are two accurate answers to this query.

1. Yes. Of course they should. It's a free country. You can cheer for any team in any sport that you want.

2. Absolutely not. They can go root for Pittsburgh's basketball team.

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Now, let's be clear about one thing -- the Cavs, as an organization, will accept support from anywhere. They want all the fans they can get.

Now, let's be clear about another thing -- every Steelers fan not from Pittsburgh or the surrounding areas is a jump-on-the-bandwagon wimp who bolts at the first sign of trouble. (Or as the case may be with the Browns, a decade of trouble.)

Anyway, more honesty from me. I hate the Steelers. I hate them more than any team in any sport ever. I could have a fever of 105 degrees and it would still be considered an awesome Sunday if the Steelers lost.

I hate the Steelers more than I love the Browns. I may hate the Steelers even more than I love the Cavs. Heck, I may rather see the Steelers finish 0-16 than see the Browns win their first Super Bowl.

Or how about this: Compared to the Steelers, my ex-wife doesn't really seem all that bad.

I admit, it's not healthy for me to hate something so much. Especially something that, in all honesty, I forget about an hour after the game is over.

But it is a hatred that has accumulated over 40 years of life. And it will never go away.

When I was a kid, the Browns regularly whooped on the Steelers. The Steelers never had an answer for Bernie Kosar, Reggie Langhorne, Ozzie Newsome or Clay Matthews. And I hated the Steelers then, too. It didn't matter to me that the Browns owned them.

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OK, I'll admit that I respect Dan Rooney, the Steelers owner. I actually met once him while covering a Steelers game. Nice guy -- great guy, in fact. I met Bill Cowher once too. Couldn't stand him.

I walked past Ben Roethlisberger last year at a Cavs game. It took everything I had not to kick him in the shin. When he was shown on the scoreboard above the court during the second quarter, he was practically booed out of the arena. I don't think I've ever felt so proud of Cleveland fans.

Don't misunderstand. I don't dislike Steelers fans from Pennsylvania (or the surrounding areas). I have friends in Wheeling, W.Va., not far from Pittsburgh, who live and breathe Steelers football. And I love them. I am OK with their choice of teams, and I even support them and sometimes console them during losses. Usually, I don't say anything because I'm afraid it would destroy our friendship.

But Steelers fans in Cleveland? Who also root for the Cavs?

You make me sick.

And don't tell me about "Steelers Nation." Oh, please. What a joke. As soon as that team goes 1-15, and it will someday, those Steelers fans from Northeast Ohio will be wearing Browns jerseys again. And we won't want them then, either.

Most of you know I write about the Cavs for a living. I've been covering pro basketball for the larger part of a decade. I have no business hating an NFL team as much as I do the Steelers. But too bad. I've decided to come out of the closet. I hate the Steelers and I always will, and if I ever get a hold of a Terrible Towel, you can only guess which part of my body I'll be wiping with it (read: not my nose).

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People from Pittsburgh (my parents included), call their city "The Burgh." How very trendy. But they should know that in Cleveland, we call it "The Pitts."

So the question remains.

Can you really be a fan of both Big Ben and King James? Can you really love Black and Gold and Wine and Gold at the same time? Can Steelers fans really expect to be granted the right to root for the Cavs?

My final answer is yes. But again, only if those fans are from Pittsburgh or its surrounding areas.

But if you're a Steelers fan from Cleveland, you really have no right to root for OUR basketball team. We might let you live if you do, but I honestly don't feel the need to be much nicer than that.

Sam Amico covers the Cavaliers for NBA.com and is a regular contributor to SportsTime Ohio and The Cleveland Fan.