

Catharsis

Written by {ga=paulcousineau}

Tuesday, October 23 2007 7:00 PM -

Finally able to type again after the heartbreaking ending to the Indians 2007 season, Paulie Cous gets back into the mix and says that while he's disappointed, by no means does he consider this season a failure. Paulie does a little reflecting, and also notes that he'll finally be able to catch up on some things that were set aside during the Indians run. Also, Paul going heads up with Curt Schilling in Strat-O-Matic online? What? Details inside ...



Many thoughts have entered and exited my head since Coco squeezed the 27th out in the deep recesses of Fenway early Monday morning, setting into motion the Cleveland "Doom and Gloom Machine"; in print and on the airwaves...

...Finally, I'll get to start watching Ken Burns' "The War";, which currently occupies 80% of my DVR space.

...Perhaps I'll throw myself, full force, into the Sporting [News#39; Strat-O-Matic game that will replay the 1986 season with me managing the 1986 Indians](#)

(I'll keep a link on the sidebar so you can all blast my managerial style throughout the season) against other "celebrity managers"; (me...a celebrity?) like Curt Schilling,

[Will Leitch of Deadspin](#)

, [Dan Shanoff of "Daily Quickie"; fame](#)

, former MLB player Doug Glanville, and

[Ba Ba Boey from "The Howard Stern Show";](#)

....Maybe I'll get back on track with my quest to re-read the "Great American Novel List"; that I still have from High School, when I wasn't fully appreciative of what I was reading.

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...Or do I watch the video of [my buddy getting Rally Pied over and over again](#) to remember the good times?

...I'll certainly find out what a normal night's sleep feels like without waking up in cold sweats about what happened to The Scarecrow's slider (OK, that's a stretch, but I worried about it).

[Plenty of questions and scenarios abound for the Tribe off-season](#) to keep me busy here, but it's far too early for all of that or to even think about a season recap.

First things first, as it's time for some catharsis for the last 5 days of our lives:

Coming to grips with the events of the past few days, I've run the gamut of emotions - pride in a tremendously successful season, fear in a young team tightening up at the wrong time, paranoia that Senator Mitchell and Dana DeMuth were working in concert to sabotage the season, irrational hatred of particular players of either team, and even optimism that the best is yet to come.

No matter how hard I try, though, it seems that frustration and disappointment are causing this empty feeling that has replaced the cauldron of stomach acid that I've grown so accustomed to. Frustrated and disappointed because the World Series was there, in the Indians' laps. It was theirs for the taking, as the manner in which they lost that ultimately hurts the most - up 3-1, with C.C. on the mound in Game 5 at the Jake, with the city ready to explode.

Frustration...

Disappointment...

The two are intertwined despite the Indians taking us through a fantastic year and on a phenomenal playoff run, abbreviated by the team tightening up and lacking the "killer instinct" that a team has to develop to put their foot on the throat of an opponent.

But how far can frustration and disappointment go when the Tribe went toe-to-toe into Game 7 in the ALCS with the Red Sox, who are a supremely talented team with strong pitching, few glaring holes, and a consistently dangerous offense?

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It hurts for sure, but would a sweep be the preferred method of exit?

Would the skeptics then just have the argument that the Tribe "didn't belong there" as opposed to "they choked" or have the media (in their undying efforts to categorize everything in a nice little package) put some sort of generic moniker on losing the ALCS?

Would you have preferred the Indians got caught by the Tigers to "collapse" before the playoffs started?

Perhaps a "choke job" in Yankee Stadium would have felt better.

The Indians didn't do that and wouldn't allow the "I told you so crowd" to surface as they kept grinding forward, with more bandwagon fans jumping on at every juncture and the diehards growing more in-step with the young group of players congealing before our very eyes.

Obviously, some people still sat there and said, "they'll blow it" or "they'll find a way to lose it", trying not to get too emotionally invested in the team for fear of having their hopes dashed and actually putting themselves out there for public ridicule in the chance that the unfortunate happened. The "fans" acted as if they were from Missouri and that the mediocrity and heartbreak that defines Cleveland sports were all suddenly Grady Sizemore's fault or Fausto Carmona's fault.

Simply by being in an Indians uniform, this team was unfairly lumped in with generations of disappointment and broken dreams. And, at the end of the day, is that really fair? Are the Indians, because they got close and weren't able to make that one final push to nudge the Red Sox off the ledge, losers despite a 96-win season and being a win away from the franchise's 6th World Series appearance?

Absolutely not.

But those feelings of frustration and disappointment won't go away, perhaps fueled by the knowledge that nothing in baseball is ever guaranteed, regardless of talent, promise, or stability. When the moment presents itself, it must be seized. And therein lies the ultimate frustration and disappointment with this team - not that the season was a failure or that the team is full of "choke artists";

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and losers - it is that the Indians had put the Yankees away and were close to doing so to the Red Sox. It seemed that the Colorado Rockies were the only thing standing in the way of the first World Series trophy since 1948.

Anybody who says to you that the season was a failure or that this (the final 3 games of the series) was expected either wasn't paying attention to the season or has trouble simply "living in the moment", preferring instead to live their lives in a perpetual state of dread and unhappiness, simply waiting for the other shoe to drop.

I won't let that thinking sabotage what has been a magical season for the Indians for me, taking my son to his first Indians' game as I saw the 2nd renaissance of baseball in Cleveland in my lifetime from my perch in the mezzanine, and for many other like-minded Indians' fans.

To me, the events of the past 5 days don't make me lose my appetite for the ring or denounce my love for the Indians, it only makes me hungrier and hardens my hopes that the Indians are on the right path.

Regardless of what inane moniker the fatalistic Cleveland media finally choose to put on this ALCS, the Indians' season was an unquestioned success, with brighter days ahead...no matter how hard that is to see today.