



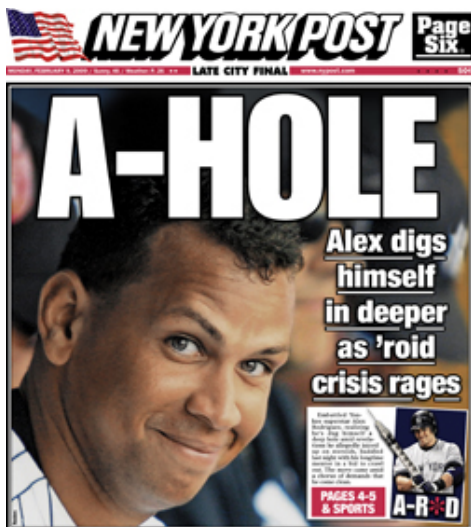
Standing on the Home Run Porch just prior to Jack Hannahan's walk-off single in the bottom of the 16th inning on Wednesday night, I was shocked at what I saw. No, it wasn't the fact that we were in the 16th inning. No, it wasn't that the Indians entered the 15th inning having an 8-inning bullpen-only perfect game thrown against them. No, it wasn't that there were still grade-school-aged children jumping around the ballpark (and props to you parents who kept them there; awesome job). No, it wasn't that Jack Hannahan had hit two home runs on the night.

It was that the Yankees-Red Sox game was actually over before the Indians game. Yes, I know we played 16 innings and more than five hours. However, there are nine inning games that take these insufferable pricks five hours to play. Naturally, every nightly sports highlight show took out its Jergens and got on its knees to celebrate the 975,000th meeting between these prestigious *gag* franchises while they showed highlights ranging from Derek Jeter scratching his right butt cheek to Dustin Pedroia, the Ralph S. Mouse doppelganger, wandering around during a conference at the mound. I'm sure there were baseball highlights in there, too, most likely Josh Beckett being his usual arrogant self. I wish he was still in the National League so he could get thrown at. It would happen on every five days.

Can someone please explain to me why the hell a nine inning baseball game would ever take four hours and 21 minutes? I'll try to explain it for myself. Maybe it was a 15-11 game. There could have been a lengthy injury delay. Lots of pitching changes in a crucial game. Any of these *could* push a nine inning game to slightly over three hours. But, no, the Thursday night Yankees-Red Sox game took a tidy 4:21 to play nine innings. The final score was 4-2. The first inning took 38 minutes and one run was scored.

Apparently, it's not enough that anybody who watches Sportscenter, MLB Network, or any other national sports outlet has to deal with highlights of these clowns no matter who they're playing, but when they are playing each other, the world stops. There's always some token bench clearing incident to feign that these two teams actually hate each other. The only hate really surrounding this rivalry is that 95% of the country hates it.

The Indians have played 56 games of three hours or longer. The Yankees have played 75. Boston has played an excruciating 89. No wonder people complain that baseball games are too long. The only ones regularly shoved down their throats include one of these two teams.



I'm really not sure what's more unbearable in this whole situation. The overdone, inflated build-up to one of the 18 games that these two teams play against each other in the regular season, the games themselves, the personalities of most of the egotistical d-bags in uniform, or the entitled, obnoxious fanbases of both organizations.

When either of these teams is in town, I avoid the Jake like I'll get cancer from simply walking in the gate. It annoys me enough to hear Detroit fans cheering for their hometown team when they make the three-hour trip down the turnpike. But, to me, there's nothing worse than enduring the "fans" of these two teams in my home ballpark. None of them know their ass from a hole in the ground when it comes to anything except the one name they recognize as their favorite player.

Then, I always have to hear the BS, fabricated story about how the clown behind me in the thrift-store purchased Yankees jacket is a fan because his father once took a piss in the urinal next to George Steinbrenner's brother's cousin's nephew and so his dad became a Yankees fan and passed it down. It's always some bogus story like that to try and sound like you aren't a

front running putz. Everybody knows the truth. Latch on to a winning team to attempt to feel better about your failures as a person and how it can be soothed by the fact that a team who is a good 12 hours away by car and plays in a ballpark you've never been to buys wins and championships. Somehow, you get to be a part of that. Congratulations.

Without fail, there's always the accompanying female who knows nothing about baseball and gets all excited when the Red Sox score points. She's decked out in her female Ortiz 34 jersey and wears a green (or pink) hat with a ponytail draped through the back. It seems like these women are created in some factory somewhere, all designed to look the same.

I can only imagine what it is like actually attending a game in one of these cesspools, either Bahstan (which sounds like a Middle East country we should invade and take over for oil) or New York. Quite frankly, it's probably what the third layer of hell is like. The second layer being a never-ending replay of every Yankees-Red Sox game ever played.

As the latest installment passed, I got treated to seeing EVERY single baseball person I follow on Twitter incessantly talking about every aspect of the game as if



more than 17 of the people following them give a damn. If I cared at all whatsoever about the game, I guarantee I can find it on the ESPN family of networks and watch for myself. If not, MLB Network will be doing live cut-ins for every pitch.

I have to address something here. Many people have this misconception that hatred of the Yankees and Red Sox is because of jealousy. This could not be further from the truth. Some people hate them because their blank check, free-spending ways are ruining baseball. Some people hate them because of reasons I've already outlined, their annoying fans and arrogant players. Some people simply hate them because they're the face of baseball and they hate baseball. Any number of these things is possible. Success from both of these teams isn't reacted to with jealousy. The consensus reaction is to roll one's eyes and say, "Well, they should win."

Yet, Major League Baseball allows this. Most of what Bud Selig has done I have hated. Interleague play sucks. The All-Star Game deciding World Series home field is a complete and utter embarrassment. Nothing he does will ever be as bad as the way he stood idly by and watched baseball economics get thrown more out of whack than a lightweight drinker pounding shots of Everclear for three hours straight. I'd give the fellow with alcohol poisoning a more promising future than Major League Baseball.

The Players Union will vote down a salary cap on every single ballot. Owners understand that there's a problem. Their hands are tied. A strike would do neither party any good. It's an irreparably broken system and the two teams I've ranted about are very much to blame. Not necessarily that it's their fault because baseball had nothing in place to stop it, but the standard that they set and continue to set new ones.

One standard will always remain the same, however. I loathe both of these teams.