

Play Ball



It was a long, cold, hard winter.

But now near-record snowfall accumulations and counting inches of precipitation are about to be replaced by counting hits, errors, runs, wins and losses. And warm summer nights spent on the deck, at the pool or down by the pond with the dulcet tones of Tom Hamilton as the back drop or evenings spent watching the Tribe and falling asleep to a west coast telecast on ESPN are right around the corner.

Baseball is that best friend you don't have to see or talk to for months at a time but still know intimately. You pick up with baseball right where you left off like it never left and the season is the time you put away the discussions of salaries and market differences and get down to brass tacks.

The Tribe kicks off their 2010 campaign in Chicago against the team that has to be considered the favorite to take down the AL Central. Mark Buehrle gets the ball for the White Sox against Jake Westbrook and a re-made Tribe lineup led by a new manager, Manny Acta.

Message Received

Part of me was hoping the Celtics, once they got out to a 20 point lead, would just roll up the Cavaliers into a miserable little ball and send them home to Cleveland whining and crying and talking about poor officiating and getting the C's the next time.

The Cavs were content to jack up quick shots, let Rajon Rondo penetrate and distribute at will and play like a team battling to make the playoffs more so than a team with the best record in the NBA.

It truly pissed me off.

I get irritated with this team at times because they appear to believe they can just turn their effort on and off and still skate by most opponents. So when they rallied from a 20+ point deficit to actually take a lead late in the fourth quarter I was alternately ecstatic and mortified. Ecstatic in that I hate Boston and their faux-toughness and 'bad ass-ness'. I can't stand Kevin Garnett, I dislike Paul Pierce and Glenn Davis is everything that annoys me about the NBA. But I was mortified in that the Cavs were seemingly on the precipice of having their methods of flipping that switch vindicated with another ridiculous win.

After the Cavs ultimately lost by just four points (due in no small part to their continued masonry from the free throw line) I was actually satisfied with Sunday's game. The Cavs got beat because of their early play and willingness to hoist up jump shots. Their patented late game spurt offensively and buckling down defensively wasn't good enough. And it won't be good enough if and when they get deeper into the playoffs.

Lesson learned; you can't play lazily and like crap and get out of a decent opponent's building with a 'W' every damn night.

But they also sent a message to Boston Sunday that pretty much said:

Dear Celtics,

We can pretty much get you whenever the hell we want. Enjoy the Easter gift but don't rest those old, weary bones too easily if and when we see you again.

Love,

The Cavs

It's not too often that you win by losing. But I'm hoping to God that the Cavaliers look back at Sunday's game as a reminder of what kind of effort it's going to take to get through the playoffs this season if they want to win the last game they play.

Flakes on a Plane

I travel regularly for business purposes. I hate the hassle of security checks and I hate that flying seems to bring out the very worst in people.

There have been countless times when I wanted to snap the neck of the first tool who stood up to grab his gear and get off a plane before someone else in front of him, despite him sitting in seat 22C. There have been plenty of times when I've also wanted to punch the self-important prick who is immediately dialing the Blackberry once the wheels of the plane hit the runway, annoying those around him with calls that apparently can't wait another ninety seconds.

Yeah, I understand that flying sucks, people suck and that combining those two truths may very well make for the most annoying set of circumstances known to man.

But I have never, ever (not once) forgotten to remove my loaded handgun from my carry-on bag. In fact, despite the inclination to arm myself to the teeth to deal with the flying jackasses around me, I've never included a loaded handgun in my travel possessions.

Not that I had a mind to carry loaded weapons on a plane before September 11, 2001, but that date pretty much raised the ante for those folks inclined to include weapons in their air travel plans.

So what does that say about Browns' nose tackle Shaun Rogers who was arrested and faces felony concealed weapon charges (to which he plead 'not guilty' on Saturday) after allegedly trying to board a plane with a loaded .45 caliber handgun in his carry on.

The legal system will mete out justice as the facts dictate, but the fact that Rogers had a loaded gun in his bag isn't being disputed.

Whether or not he forgot it was there or if he's just ignorant regarding matters of the real world doesn't really matter.

Either of those options paints him in a poor light.