

Phillipe and Jorge's Cool, Cool World: PoorSox, Talking Heads and Soccer Names That Kick Butt

Truth to Power

House Speaker Nick Mattiello recently got his knickers in a twist over remarks made about the Little Rhody budget and sausage-making process by Governor Gina Raimondo at Politico's State Solutions Conference in Washington, part of the National Governor's Association confab.

Here's what Our Gina had to say that got Nicky's careful coif mussed. Please identify the errors:

"For too long, what's happened in Rhode Island ... is the governor proposes a budget and then the General Assembly takes the budget — often in the dark of night, in a quiet room — the lobbyists and the General Assembly get together and they hack it up every which way and out pops a budget."

Mistakes? None. The budget process, which becomes part of the final day cluster-fuck that is a hallmark at Halitosis Hall, is one of the worst sins against good governance in the state. Good on ya, Gina. You won't lose any support by telling the truth, especially from P&J. Keep it coming.

PoorSox

The Pawtucket Red Sox have long been near and dear to Phillippe and Jorge's hearts, and we have always been treated like princes at McCoy Stadium. Jorge, a native of The Bucket and member of its city's Hall of Fame, once sang the national anthem before a game. And Phillippe threw out the first pitch one memorable Memorial Day. (Split fastball on the inside corner for a strike.)

The sale of the PawSox to a team of high rollers, including Tom Ryan of CVS fame and Terry Murray of banking and investment notoriety, is a huge disappointment to your superior correspondents. The only upside is that two of the best executives in American professional baseball -- major, minor or Little League — over the past 30 years, Mike Tamburro and Lou Schwechheimer, will retain active roles with the club.

The plans for a new stadium to house the team in Providence raise many troubling questions. First is that they want to locate it on the old I-195 land already being planned for development as a massive economic booster for Our Little Towne. Aren't there about a million better uses for this property? (Think giving of \$75 million of the state's \$125M in state economic development funding to one entity, the infamous 38 Studios, when sharing the wealth seemed the no-brainer choice. How did that work out, geniuses?) P&J love the argument by the new owners that it could help boost the prospects of a new hotel being proposed nearby the park, which will no doubt be filled with fans from outside the state rushing into town to watch the visiting Toledo Mud Hens take on the Capital City's team.

Is this the best use of the I-195 land? No way in hell. Ask the officials at Brown University, which has a substantial plan/stake in the future of the area as a Knowledge District, about this canard if they can be persuaded to tell the truth. And the fact that the new owners have broadly hinted at gaining some

support from the city, which is just staggering to its financial feet after taking an eight-count after the great economic collapse of 2008, is not only arrogant, but offensive. Hey, Mayor Elorza, if you do something like gift them the land or ask taxpayers for one cent for this rich-white-boy toy-department project, you aren't as smart as we thought you were.

Know one thing well in advance: The PawSox franchise will be held hostage for money and crass deals from the city and state for a stadium by its new ownership, with the threat of losing the beloved franchise to Massachusetts at the heart of the eventual ransom note(s).

Buy us some peanuts and Cracker Jack, even if we puke them back up. And that whirring sound you hear is Ben Mondor spinning like an industrial lathe in his grave.

Big Heads

Phillipe and Jorge have long pointed out that NBC News anchor Lyin' Brian Williams was possibly the biggest phony in the news business, surpassed only possibly by Scott Pelley, the Niles Crane lookalike on CBS who appears to spend two hours a day in front of a mirror honing his empathetic reaction shots.

So it is no surprise Williams has finally been exposed as full of self-glorifying shit, and it's doubtful he will have anything other than a Fox News or cable career in his future. What P&J are now looking forward to is the infighting at NBC News to see who becomes his permanent replacement. Lester Holt, doubtless delighted about his decision to sport horn-rimmed glasses on air a while back to give the illusion of a high IQ, is the obvious frontrunner. But if you think Savannah Guthrie and others at The Peacock Network aren't going to turn this into a catfight worthy of the girls' bathroom at a junior high school, you underestimate the desperation of egotistical, "love me, love me" red carpet wannabes that populate television. There will be more backstabbing going on at NBC in the next few months than 100 productions of *Julius Caesar*.

An Institute for Casual Research poll recently conducted by P&J on Facebook asked the question, "Who's the bigger douchebag, Brian Williams or Kanye West?" Lyin' Brian won hands down. So keep a low profile, Lester, and make sure you get a food taster anytime Savannah has visited your dressing room.

What's In a Name?

Phillipe and Jorge have always been intrigued by bizarre names in the sports world. Way back when, Phillipe used to publish an annual list of the most inspired *cum* weirdest names in college basketball. This produced the likes of Baskerville Holmes, Elvis Old Bull, Napoleon Lightning (preceding Hollywood's fictional Napoleon Dynamite) and the ultimate brother act from the University of Virginia, Majestic Mapp and Scientific Mapp (truth).

The international soccer world has always been a treasure trove of strange names, starting with teams near and dear to P&J's hearts like Young Boys Bern and Ghana's Eleven Golden Boys. And on the individual level, you just can't top Brazil's Kaka when it comes to getting a cheap laugh.

Now the high-end English soccer mag, *Four-Four-Two*, has presented a list of current African players who will not soon be forgotten, including Tonic Chabalala (Bombay or Beefeater's, sir?), Surprise Moriri and Naughty Makoena. But they single out one player who ought to have his own PBS "Masterpiece Mystery" detective series: Danger Fourpence. Yes, he plays in Zimbabwe, and it would be worth having

him in the starting lineup just to give the announcers a kick, so to speak.