

Sevens ways to break the TSN habit

The National Hockey League is in the middle of a lockout, and Major League Baseball players are on strike. It's been so long now without the two major sports, that the situation begs the question - does anyone really care anymore?

The bad news is: no Wayne, Sergei, Pavel, Cecil, Junior, or Bonds. The Big Hurt has more to do with the wallets of players and owners than with tape measure blasts from Frank Thomas.

The good news is: I've had time to do some things with



LINE SHOTS

Jim Swanson

evenings that TSN demanded before. Since we're nearing the holidays and the annual time for the fat guy to check lists, I'm

going to give you a list of what I've done to fill in the time.

- I've been working like a dog, accomplishing something and hearing positive feedback. The only high more intoxicating was hitting a home run off my brother in Little League. It was my only home run - I'm forced to remember it like yesterday, because I'll never hit another one.

- I finally made that call to the Hair Club For Men. They suggested I cut a swatch out of the living room carpet - my case was too severe to benefit from their help.

- The car is clean - the problem with that is, I decided to wash it when it was minus 30 degrees, freezing the doors in a predictable manner. Nothing

like aiding the economy with a nice, long taxi ride.

- I've sat back with a smug little grin and watched as a few fellow sports types in Prince George take shots at each other over coverage of the Cougars. Too soft, too hard, less filling, tastes great.

The real angle guys, not the bad angle or the politically correct angle. If the team plays poorly, say so, but don't make more of a production of it than if the team plays well.

- Our intrepid news reporter, David Heyman, and I decided to avoid the weekend rush at Purden, taking off for a ski trip on a Thursday at 7 a.m. Driving up to the hill, I proudly proclaimed that we should have the slopes to ourselves - very true.

Little did I know that Purden only opens on the weekend. So much for that tank of gas.

- I've started a major project, trying to mark a map with all the places visited by our esteemed publisher, Bob McKenzie. The problem is, the number of dots makes it hard to discern where Canada's major bodies of water are located. I distinctly recall

the Atlantic Ocean lying on the east coast - next time I'll use a globe.

Our editor has grand travel plans as well, but that sewing machine he calls a car has trouble getting to Hixon.

- I found more reasons why fastball and slo-pitch are inferior versions of baseball. The dimensions alone say that you have to be a better athlete to play baseball than the other two.

I read Jim Bouton's Ball Four again, rediscovering what I consider the best line ever written about the game.

"You spend a good piece of your life gripping a baseball and in the end it turns out it was the other way around all the time."

Bottom line - I hope both sports have the soothers extracted and get back to playing games. I'm having a hard time imagining a sunny, snow-melting April without the Stanley Cup Playoffs and a season opening game in Cincinnati.

Send Don Cherry and Harry Caray in to the respective rooms, they'll nauseate both sides into settling.

Horswell wins Premier award

Craig Horswell of Prince George has been recognized as one of the top athletes in the province.

Horswell, a four-year veteran of the National Baseball Institute, was one of 76 top B.C. athletes to be honoured by the province's top elected official in a ceremony at the Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel. The Premier's Athletic Awards, presented by Mike Harcourt and sports minister Robin Blencoe, recognize the top male and female athletes from each sport that participates in the B.C. Athlete Assistance Program. Special incentives are given to those who compete while continuing their education.

The 23-year-old Horswell, a catcher for the NBI Blues, is currently taking classes at University of Northern British Columbia and plans to return to the Lower Mainland following the current school semester. Horswell, who will continue working toward a psychology degree through UBC correspondence courses, returns for another year at NBI.

"It's an honour to get recognized as the top baseball player in B.C.," says the five-foot-eleven, 200 pound Horswell. "It was actually the first time I'd heard of it, because it's only been going for three years. The president of Baseball B.C., Rob Arnold, called me and said that I had been nomi-

nated."

Horswell has represented Canada at the World Baseball Championships and is the son of Jim Horswell, a well-known veteran curler from Prince George. The elder Horswell is very pleased with the accomplishments of his son.

"It was a surprise to him, actually," says Mr. Horswell, who is skipping a rink in the senior men's provincial curling playdowns next weekend.

"He got to sit at the table with Harcourt, I don't know how impressive that was for him," he joked, "but he talked a little basketball with him I guess."

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