

From: "Harold"
Subject: WBC – response to 3/4 podcast
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Hello, here's my response to the wbc discussion last week.

Nick >When else can they play it?

Dan >If the United States cared about this, they would do it in the model European soccer uses.

It's odd the two of you say this. The soccer world cup always takes place every four years between June and July. Notice they didn't switch it to December and January because it'll be held in South Africa. The entire Soccer world revolves around FIFA headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland. They have determined the off season is June and July. June and July is equivalent to Baseball's February and March.

Yes, most of MLS takes place in the summer. Japan and Korea play during the Summer. Australia holds its league during its summer in December. However in nations where soccer matters, it's a autumn, winter, and spring sport. Notice also that last year, the European championships (Euro 2008) took place in June and July. This summer break is another reason why MLS can get a big name European soccer club for its all star game. That European side is in Summer training.

I know you may rebut that southern hemisphere nations play during June, July, and August. South America's top talent goes to Europe for the big bucks.

Besides, the best way to get the World Baseball Classic players into shape is to let them start training in January. The reason soccer world cup has its players in top shape is that those national federations have their men start after their regular seasons ends.

Nick> Japan...Korea most of these guys have been playing together months and months...

False, http://web.worldbaseballclassic.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20090216&content_id=3834958 Japan started its training camp mid February. <http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/20090301/SPORTS07/903010383/1052> Korea started around the same time. The four asian teams start first, because they have to finish first. It's a long flight and there's the time zone change to deal with.

Dan> Sprinkle in two or three weeks of this world baseball classic stuff.

Bad idea, it would get lost in the news cycle. Instead of the highlight packages allocated now, it'd be banished to the ESPN Deportes segment. Champions League highlights would go before it.

There's another reason why World cup soccer qualifying takes 2 years. Only the host automatically qualifies 198 nations tried to qualify for the 2006 world cup.

Dan> Everyone gets into the World cup.

32 nations is not every nation. 198-32=166 I hate to be a pessimist, but 166 nations didn't make the cut. Entire populations of some nations would forfeit their limbs and first born to make the 32 team World cup. The 32 team limit was the main reason Australia moved to the Asian Football Confederation. Australia wanted to easily qualify for the World Cup.

Dan> They could only have a final four.

This goes back to the news cycle. Big things attract crowds and media attention. The idea is to hold all of this stuff at once. The reason the soccer world cup is succesful is because it's a soccer geek convention. 4 years allows a lot of people to save up and go to the host nation. Alcohol and sports in summer is a great thing. The World Baseball Classic should follow the world cup model and be a big bash for baseball fans.

I like what the World Baseball Classic has done with holding opening rounds around the world. Bringing the tournament to the nations of the world before the best arrive in America makes great buzz. I would guess the reason Soccer world cup is held in

one city, is because air travel was expensive when the world cup started. The first world cup was in 1930. Yeah, it would be unheard of for a national federation back then to charter an aircraft for a soccer team. For the last few decades, national soccer federations will foot the bill to rent out a Boeing 747

Nick > Get rid of the Australias

Yes, after Australia thumped Mexico 17 to 7. Oh and Netherlands beating Republica Dominicana twice. We should automatically kick out the Netherlands because they're European. Hello, WE PLAY TO WIN THE GAME! Speaking of the Netherlands, they get some talent from the Netherlands Antilles and Curacao. They have some caribbean talent. Also, those little league world series boys from Curacao may play for the Netherlands national team in the future.

Dan> The Caribbean series winner qualifies for the world baseball classic.

Not quite, that would be like having the Houston Astros, or the Texas Rangers play in the World Baseball classic. Caribbean series is limited to the league teams of the four nations.

Dan> Make an asian series...

SURPRISE! There is an Asian series similar to the Caribbean series. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia_Series (Sorry, I like my email plain text) but again, it'd be like having the Chiba Lotte Marines play in the World Baseball Classic. Chiba is a Japanese city, and Lotte is the name of a large Korean corporation. It'd be a team with mixed nationals and would defeat the purpose of having citizens of one nation on one team.

Dan> Make a North America series winner...

Bad idea, it's been proven that any US team with any level of talent could lose to its Canadian or Mexican counterparts. US lost to both Canada and Mexico in the 2006 world baseball classic. Another sad story of qualifying was what happened back in 2004. In the Athens 2004 Qualifying, Cuba and Canada won the berths for North America and the Caribbean. The United States was eliminated by Mexico. Also, the sad case of this year's Dominican Republic team losing twice to the Netherlands.

Automatic qualifiers of some type will be needed for at least the next 5 wbc tournaments (twenty years) until more nations get their baseball programs running. As the tournament field expands to 32, there should be less and less automatic qualifiers.

I have a feeling you two think that the current round of the world baseball classic is qualifying. Extending that train of thought, the NCAA should hold the first three rounds of the basketball tournament now, and then put the Elite eight in the MLB all star break in July. It's a dead zone and should fit nicely. I feel that the 16 team field is good for now, but I do think there needs to be a way to expand it to 32. Qualifications held out of the spotlight should be held, I'll agree with you there. But I feel it should include a lot more teams. I'll put my ideas on that in a separate e-mail.

Dan> You're not going to put in a team from the Netherlands just because geographically Europe should get a team...

I believe the Dominican Republic would agree with you heartily. Their bloated roster could advance more easily if it weren't for those uppity Dutch. More cheese with that wine, sir? However, the idea of this tournament is to include the world, Europe is part of the world. The more excited you get non traditional baseball nations involved, the more stuff they buy. It's not only about tickets and merchandising. The bigger objective is to get more people to play baseball. More people playing means more people buying equipment, something Rawlings, Mizuno, and Louisville Slugger wants.

Another reason the World Baseball Classic is held, I present to you the sad case of United Kingdom Baseball.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/olympics/baseball/7279476.stm> To sum up this sad tale, they needed \$55,000 to travel to Taiwan so they could attempt to qualify for Beijing 2008. UK Sport, a government agency refused funding, and team UK forfeited. Again, if and when the world baseball classic is expanded, UK baseball will get its chance to shine, and expand baseball. More people take up baseball, more people buy equipment.

I'll end this e-mail, but first three more things. I'm wary of the Soapbox. I think it should be toned down a bit and limited to things said on the podcast. What you're essentially asking us listeners for is we need to have a take and not suck. How cool is that. Dan Levy is asking the clones in the jungle for their take. Ridiculous and epic at the same time. Are you going to have the best soapbox clones compete next March in a badass smackdown? That's really ridiculous. I joke around, but you get my

drift.

You need to have Phil's mom for bracket picks. Let's put aside DCcap and your apprehension it's Kornheiser's thing.

1. Phil's mom is an established brand. You want to put your mom, and yet you rip Mike & Mike for having Liam's mom? Your podcast has a chance to have the real deal. Until Mr. Tony returns, your show is it.

2. Phil's mom is properly trained. This won't be her first rodeo. Your mom may just yell out you screaming how do I say this properly? Your mom may not like being made fun of, but Phil's mom know's what's up.

Merchandise idea! Using your search engine of choice, enter anime fan artist commission original. Find the artist of your choice and tell them to make a "Housekeeping" shirt. Send the artist a full body shot of your wife, clothed you pervert! Have them draw her anime style as a maid with the word "Housekeeping!" below it. I wouldn't go sexy, I suggest cute but not hello kitty cute.

Now to go download the next podcast. Thank's for reading.

Harold