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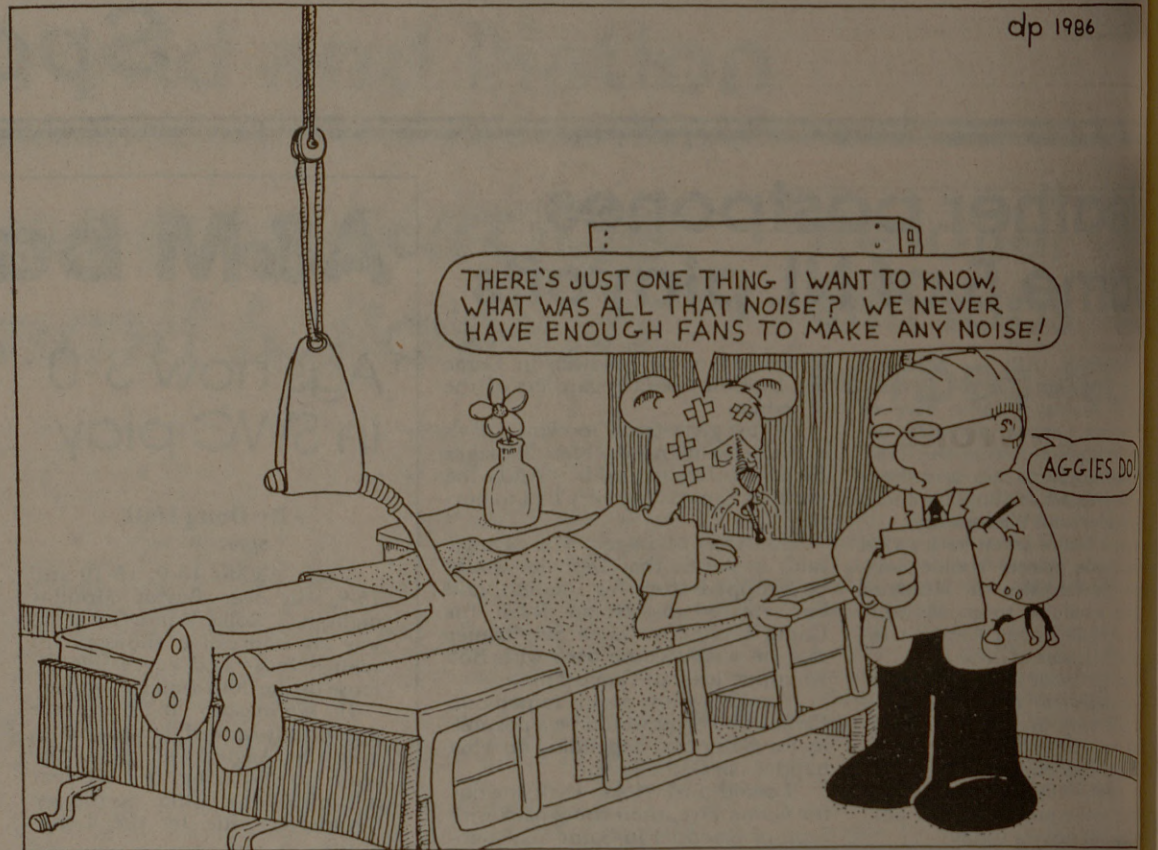
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Date: October 15-17

Time: 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Place: MSC





Mets say they are victims of Astro ace's 'right scuff'

NEW YORK (AP) — National League President Chub Feeney agreed Monday to examine the baseballs himself and decide whether Houston Astros pitcher Mike Scott has been illegally scuffing them in the NL playoffs.

The Mets said they saved 15 balls

"Because we're ticked and we're not going to take this lying down. I don't care if he scuffs 400 balls. I don't care if they're scuffed before the game. I don't think any pitcher can beat us three times in a row."

— Mets second baseman Wally Backman.

from Sunday night's 3-1 loss, which evened the best-of-seven series at two victories apiece, and all of them had been scuffed.

Scott, who relies on a split-fingered fastball that breaks down, has denied defacing the ball, and the home-plate umpire in each of his playoff starts has supported him.

Scott's next start in the playoffs will depend on the weather. Game 5

was rained out Monday and Astros Manager Hal Lanier said Scott's next start would depend on when play resumes.

Scott suggested that the balls might have been scuffed after the game.

"They checked them all during the game and found nothing. Don't forget those balls were in the clubhouse, not in the game, and I don't know what they did to them," he said. "I don't care what they do. I could bring in a ton of baseballs tomorrow and do what I want to them and hand them to Chub Feeney."

Mets second baseman Wally Backman said there was no doubt Scott was doctoring the balls Sunday.

"Every foul ball that came back to us was scuffed up," Backman said. "We brought 15 of them into the clubhouse. Some of them were scuffed twice."

Scott said all the balls the Mets retrieved had been in the dirt or had been fouled back to the screen.

"There was nothing wrong with them when I threw them," he said. "This went on last year, too," Scott said. "It's just that we're in the playoffs now and more people are talking about it. If it bothers them, then it works to my advantage."

Mets Manager Dave Johnson has a theory on how, he claims, Scott doctors the ball.

"Whenever he gets a new ball he takes his glove off and walks toward the outfield and he's rubbing the ball up," Johnson said. "It (sandpaper) is

in his palm. He doesn't rotate the ball. He just makes a grinding motion."

Sunday's home-plate umpire Dutch Rennert said, "I never saw a scuffed ball and the Mets never asked me to examine the ball. It was scuffed, maybe it was from where they hit it."

Scott is the first pitcher in the

"This went on last year too. It's just that we're in the playoffs now and more people are talking about it. If it bothers them, then it works to my advantage."

— Astros pitcher Mike Scott

league to throw two complete-game victories in one playoff, and his consecutive scoreless innings is another playoff record.

Scuffing or not, the Mets said they were confident of beating him they see him again in the series.

"Because we're ticked and we're not going to take this lying down," Backman said. "I don't care if he scuffs 400 balls. I don't care if they're scuffed before the game. I don't think any pitcher can beat us three times in a row."

AL teams hope to end ineptitude

BOSTON (AP) — Whenever California Manager Gene Mauch listens, he hears the words. Wherever the Boston Red Sox look, they see them. Choke. Curse. Collapse.

Ugly sounding. But labels that whichever one loses the American League playoffs this week will have to live with for another winter. Is either one meant to win?

No Mauch-led team has reached the World Series in his 25 years of major league managing, the longest such streak ever. His 1964 Philadelphia Phillies blew it in the final week. His 1982 Angels fell apart in the playoffs.

California was within one strike of making the trip this October when it

squandered a three-run lead in the ninth inning Sunday and eventually lost a chance to win the team's first pennant.

Mauch and the Angels, still leading the best-of-seven series 3-2, get another try to break the jinx tonight in Game Six at Fenway Park. Kirk McCaskill, the Game Two loser, will be opposed by Boston's Dennis "Oil Can" Boyd, the Game Three loser.

California rookie first baseman Wally Joyner, who hit .455 in the first three games but missed the next two when hospitalized by a bacterial infection in his lower right leg, made the trip to Boston and is expected to play.

Boston again will be trying to

avoid elimination, having started off in Sunday's 7-6 victory in the

World Series championship in 1918, spent the entire regular season fighting off AL East challengers

past, before narrowly escaping a repeat along the California coast.

Sunday, Anaheim Stadium adorned with more than a dozen banners recalling Boston's march to win big games in previous seasons.

"Actually, there must have been 15 signs like that around the park," Red Sox designated hitter Don Baylor said. "I saw them, but anyone who knows this club knows we're not choking."

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