

## Say it ain't so

### Proposed advertising on uniforms spells disaster for national pastime

Major League Baseball does not know when to quit. Many people thought that baseball was forever doomed in 1994 when players decided to go on strike during the middle of the season.



DOUG SHILLING

Consequently, the owners decided the season was not salvageable and canceled the remaining games in the season. This meant the World Series was not played for the first time since it began in 1901.

Some people viewed this as a mortal wound to the sport and said it would never be the same.

However, in 1995 Cal Ripken Jr. restored some of the fan hopes when he broke former Yankee great Lou Gehrig's record for consecutive games played.

Then came 1998, quite possibly the greatest year in baseball's illustrious history. There was the duel between Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa to see who would break one of the most sought after records in all of professional sports — Roger Maris' record for home runs in a single season — a battle McGwire ultimately won.

However, in 1999, Major League Baseball owners and officials are set to undo everything the sport has done to further its image since the strike in one giant, fell swoop.

Well, it is not really giant, it is small in fact; one inch by one inch to be exact.

According to an article published on ESPN.com, the men who run baseball are considering a proposal to add advertisements to the baseball uniform in way to bring financial parity to the sport and offset the rising costs of player salaries.

The fans of baseball out there have just one thing to say to the men who are considering that proposal: For the love of all that is sacred, do not do it.

A move such as that would show that owners care nothing about the sport and competition of baseball but just about one thing: money. That is the bottom line.

Fans have already been forced to swallow corporate sponsors of pro stadiums. No longer do names such as Jack Murphy Stadium and Candlestick Park grace baseball parks, but now fans are forced to swallow names such as

Qualcomm Stadium and 3Com Park. Originally slated to be named The Ballpark at Union Station, the Houston Astros new stadium now will be called Enron Park after the Enron Corporation, who shelled over 100 million dollars for that right.

With all that money being handed out just to have a company's name on a field, regular fans have trouble believing teams are in financial trouble.

Baseball has always been a traditionalist sport and slow to change. Only recently have the owners been brave to change parks' names and move ads to the outfield and behind the plate and so forth. To try and move ads to the baseball uniform would be unacceptable.

The uniform is a sacred thing and should not be tarnished. It should be used as a way to distinguish one team from another. As of now, the only things that are on a baseball player's uniform is the team name, the player's number and the logo of the manufacturer of the uniform. That's it.

Commissioner Bud Selig said on an interview with Jim Rome on "The Last Word" that baseball wants to keep the ads small on the uniform. However, with something like this, fans have to worry about the snowball effect.

If the decision is made and is "successful," who is to say that they would not try to add another ad. Then another, then another, then another until eventually, a baseball player will look more like a NASCAR vehicle than a ballplayer. Who is to say that they would stop at ads on uniforms? Why not sell off team names to corporations? If this trend continues, the Texas Rangers will soon become the Texas Instruments Rangers while the Houston Astros will become the Shell Oil Astros.

Selig also said that the owners want to use the ads to offset rising player salaries and the financial disparity between major league clubs.

One solution to rising players' salaries is very simple: Quit overpaying players and paying them outrageous salaries. Do not give an aging pitcher with a mediocre career record a 100 million dollar salary because he has two good years in a row. There are only a few people in the history of sports that should be able to command that much money, and even then that would be pushing it.

As far as bring the clubs together in terms of competitiveness, there are ways such as revenue sharing and im-



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

plementing a salary cap that would be much more effective in getting teams from smaller cities up to par with teams from the larger cities.

There is also a question that arises: Wouldn't advertisers rather have their ads shown on a big market teams uniforms rather than a smaller market team? Wouldn't an ad on a Yankee uniform get more exposure than an ad on an Expos' uniform.

Unless a plan was drawn up, the advertisers would stick to the bigger market teams and send the small market teams back to square one.

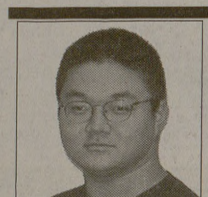
In Little League, the teams always have some kind of sponsorships from local businesses' displayed on their uniforms. One famous example is the Bad News Bears being sponsored by Chico's Bail Bonds. The difference is those teams need the sponsors to actually

field a team and buy equipment. The only reason for major league teams would be to facilitate the owners' greed. The ads would in no way help out the team. But hey, at least fans could look forward to that World Series between the Texas Instruments Rangers and Shell Oil Astros.

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## Internet, network games addicts should seek help, need support

Without a doubt, one of the major factors of Texas A&M's reputation as a top-tier university is its dedication towards maintaining a high speed computer network on campus to serve all Aggies.



DAVID LEE

Whether it is a Resnet-wired dorm room or a computer lab, computers are available in large numbers all across campus.

With the integration of e-mail and the Internet into the daily lives of all students, it is hard to imagine life at A&M without computers.

In this month's issue of Yahoo! Internet Life, Texas A&M is rated among the "100 Most Wired Colleges" in America, reinforcing this point.

However, as with all great things, this technology is open to abuse. In extreme cases, it turns students into mouse-happy, bleary-eyed computer addicts who dis-

regard their commitment to class and friends in lieu of their computer. These students, with the urging of their friends, need to seek help in order to break this addiction.

Yes, it sounds silly but these students do exist in the dark corners of dormitories all across campus. Their neighbors see them rarely during the semester. They have erratic sleeping habits. They are virtual cave-dwellers in their own rooms, surfing pornography sites around the clock, searching for MP3's or playing hour after hour of network computer games such as Quake 2. Things such as frags, pings and clans are essential to these people, more so than air or water. Instead of utilizing their computer and the Internet as the educational tools they were meant to be, these students exploit them as 24-hour entertainment centers.

As with any addiction, these students have trouble admitting they have a problem. The Student Counseling Service ([www.scs.tamu.edu](http://www.scs.tamu.edu)) acknowl-

edges the problem does exist here at A&M, a problem serious enough to warrant the formation of support groups. Computer Addiction Services ([www.computeraddiction.com](http://www.computeraddiction.com)) documents the psychological signs of this addiction: "Having a sense of well-being or euphoria while at the computer, inability to stop the activity, craving more and more time at the computer and feeling empty and depressed when not at the computer."

Clifford Stoll, author of *Silicon Snake Oil: Second Thoughts on the Information Highway* sees this addiction as a result of a need to escape from the stresses of everyday life. This makes sense considering the typical Aggie faces a mountain of stress during the semester, whether it is cramming for midterm exams or staying up until dawn hitting redial on the phone in order to register for classes. However, when taken to the extreme, escaping reality on the computer has a disastrous effect on a student's productivity. Poor grades and neglect of friends follow soon after.

As with any other addiction, the person in question needs a close circle of friends who can urge them to seek help. This problem is no different than drug addiction or alcohol abuse. Friends of these students who see all the warning signs mentioned must have the courage to confront the person about his or her problem. Whether it results in seeking professional help or simply relying on the ear of a friend, these students must be able to defeat this problem. They must be able to prioritize their real lives over the false reality of their computer and the Internet. Once they are able to do that, these students will finally be able to shut down the computer with their own will power and get back to the important things in life.

Move with caution though, friends. Sabotaging a hard drive may drive your troubled friend to insanity. Quake does that to you.

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## Events in Kosovo frightening reflection of Holocaust's atrocities

An evil man implements a plan that will destroy an entire segment of his nation's people. He encourages murder of innocent children, rape of innocent women, death of innocent civilians and an atrocious dehumanization of those he targets. These people are made into animals by a systematic plan.



LISA FOOK

Sound familiar? The diabolical "final solution" for the Jewish people that Hitler engineered is being mirrored in today's society by a man named Slobodan Milosevich and it must be stopped. A few months after the Holocaust ended and the immensity of the sheer horror came to light, people began to say catch-phrases like "Don't let it hap-

pen again" and "Never forget."

They realized that close to 14 million people were killed for nothing more serious than the little skullcaps that they wore on their heads or their sexual leanings. Jews, Catholics, homosexuals, mentally handicapped and Gypsies were murdered in droves and the people of that time knew that an atrocity like that should never be allowed to happen again or be forgotten.

This is all ancient history, right? Nobody needs to worry about any of this anymore, because it could never happen again, right?

Unfortunately, since the Holocaust, people's memories have begun to dim and fade. As more and more Holocaust survivors die, fewer and fewer make an effort to remember what happened.

This is how the door opens to another mass genocide. . . . In fact, a segment of society (headed

by people called Negationists) deny that the Holocaust ever happened. They claim that the Jewish people fictionalized the whole issue for sympathy and that the U.S. government was in on the scam. Since this is obviously false due to the amount of documented proof and available evidence and testimonies, the idea is not widely held.

The question that must be answered is what does all of this have to do with Milosovich. The answer is clear.

Negationists who deny the Holocaust merely want to pretend it did not happen. Americans who claim that America should do nothing to stop the slaughter in Kosovo are unwittingly calling for the Holocaust to happen all over again.

In Kosovo right now, the same terror and ethnic hatred is being witnessed that was seen in Europe. People are being killed for something as fixed and random as who their parents are and

where they live.

Although people said, "Never let it happen again," it is happening and with a swift vengeance. This time, America is getting involved, they are helping, and for that society should be incredibly grateful.

Instead, there are people who insist that the United States is too interfering and that the slaughter is none of "our soldiers' business."

This argument was used in the early stages of the Holocaust to justify a variety of pretty nasty actions. One of these was the United States' decision not to accept the Jewish refugees who managed to escape to the U.S. in a boat. Not only did the U.S. send them away, but they shipped them back to Germany.

The common argument back in those times was, "It's none of our business to get involved. I'm sure its not as bad as they say it is."

Isolationism is akin to murder in these two instances. Isolationism is a cause for the death of many victims of the Holocaust and isolationism would be the cause of the murder of many more victims in Kosovo.

How high would the death count need to go before it became "America's business?"

The time for action is now. The invasion of ground troops into Kosovo is the only just, right and moral thing to do. Innocents do not need to die, so that American citizens can pride themselves on their uninvolvedness. Do not let Hitler live again through Milosovich. Do not let death be the ringing cry of isolationism. Rather, let America and NATO and all other nations of the world condemn the slaughter of innocents. Milosovich must be stopped.

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