

High payroll does not equal excitement or winning for that matter



Caught in the Grasp
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sports editor

I'm sure you would like to know what this editorial is about instead of me going into a few paragraphs of obscure background until unveiling the real purpose of writing it. Well I will just tell you flat out that I am asking a question with many different answers. Can money buy excitement or success in the world of professional sports? Let's discuss.

Recently the Washington Redskins have been in the spotlight, as they seemed to buy a team that looked good on paper and was supposed to prove successful on the field. So far they are hanging right with the New York Giants for the lead in the National Football Conference Eastern Division. About three weeks ago questions were being raised as to whether their big gamble with money would pay off despite it still being early in the season. The Redskins would go on to beat a good Tampa Bay team, and it looks as if they were still an above average football team.

The Redskins went out and got veterans Bruce Smith and Deion Sanders to stabilize their defense. Washington also managed to draft LaVar Arrington from Penn State. Obviously this meant an abundance of money had to be spilled out. What remains in the season for Washington is uncertain. However, looking at the circumstances, the large sum of money dished out may not pay off in the long run.

First of all, the Redskins are tied for the conference lead with the Giants. This is a team that has a supposed dead quarterback taking snaps from the center. Even some

avid football fans have trouble naming players on the Giants squad with Jason Sehorn being the most famous, possibly from his proposal to Angie Harmon on Jay Leno a few months back. Now a tandem of running backs not being paid that much are stacking up to Mike Alstott and Warrick Dunn of Tampa Bay. Ron Dayne, Thunder, and Tiki Barber, Lightning, are helping their squad find ways to win.

Second, if the Redskins fail to make the Super Bowl, then it is a disappointment to their fans. All the money dished out usually corresponds to Super Bowl in the mind of true fans, as expectations go through the roof. Consider the disappointment if a team like Detroit were to beat Washington in the playoffs.

Third, the level of excitement seems to be down at times. For the ultimate fan, it is always fun to watch an exciting game, even if you are not a fan of the two teams playing. Close games are good, but the Tampa Bay—Washington game earlier this year that ended in a 20-17 victory for the Redskins was definitely not pretty.

This question can be placed on all leagues in professional sports. Baseball is a very good example. Baseball constantly tries to find ways to balance the level of power through money in the markets. Teams like the Yankees dominate free agency, while a team like the Pirates fight to stay alive. However, this is the game outside the playing field. Let us investigate inside the stadiums.

The World Series is closing in on us, and the Yankees were the only big-spending team (for baseball) in the final four. The Seattle Mariners got rid of a bulk of their

salary when they traded away Ken Griffey Jr. They still have Alex Rodriguez, but his payroll puts them in the middle of baseball's spending list. The St. Louis Cardinals have Mark McGwire, but he has been injured and the not-so big name players have dominated. McGwire's contract isn't that big compared to the rest of today's salaries. The New York Mets have basically no "brand name" players.

The Mets are

Championship Series. It was a wild game that the Mets won 6-5 on a single in the ninth inning. The man who delivered the hit was Jay Payton, possibly the best centerfielder in the game today, according to some of the baseball analysts. Most people had never heard of Jay Payton until midway through this season. He has made a name for himself by playing gritty baseball. This game between the Mets and Cardinals featured a lot of aging veterans and some virtual unknowns, but may have been one of the best games of the postseason.

With the focus now turned to baseball there is one obvious team to discuss. The Cincinnati Reds went out and got Ken Griffey Jr. so he could be close to his dad and help the Reds close in on postseason play. That dream did not even come close to happening this year. Yes, the Reds were in first place or very close to it in the early going this year, but what exactly does that mean? Griffey Jr. moved from the Mariners who made it to the American League Championship Series. Once again, how much excitement came from Riverfront Stadium or whatever the corporate sponsorship name is now?

The next section may be a bit biased, but the Pittsburgh Steelers are fun to watch. Their payroll, is very small and this can be summed up by the fact that Kent Graham is the starting quarterback. One of the biggest signings Pittsburgh made this year was Richard Huntley who has been injured the majority of the year, so in fact the Steelers could find their way around some of the payments. Here are some of the names on the roster: Aaron Smith, Chris Sullivan, Larry Tharpe, and perhaps the best name in football, Chris Fuamatu-Ma'Afala. How

many of those names have football fans actually heard of?

Looking back on the Steelers' past performances this year, it is easy to see why they are fun to watch. A last second game against Cleveland ends in a loss because of poor clock management, but held fans on the edge of their seats. The National Football League would then admit to messing up, saying the clock should have stopped under two minutes to go in the game, possibly giving the Steelers a shot at the tie.

In another game, Tennessee quarterback Steve McNair leads the Titans back on a 55-yard drive going 3-for-3 and finding their tight end in the corner of the endzone for the win. The comeback effort is stopped short on fourth down.

Three weeks ago the Steelers took down one of the last unbeaten in the New York Jets playing punishing defense that any football fan can appreciate. True, the Steelers could fall flat on their face the rest of the season, but they will still be fun to watch.

Hockey and basketball don't seem to show the same problem. Hockey is just dominated by the same teams year in and year out. Teams like the Dallas Stars and Colorado Avalanche just seem to find the right people to gel together. The National Basketball Association has no salary cap. The have stipulations that allow for free agency wars and such, but they don't seem to regulate financial matters. It is not an issue of teams with big payrolls in the NBA, but deals like Kevin Garnett's \$120 million deal a few years back are a bit excessive. Just as an added point, the Minnesota Timberwolves, Garnett's team, haven't sparked much interest lately to sports fans. When watching the hometown team is not possible, most sports fans would enjoy an exciting game. The key seems to be finding the team with lesser-known players and true in.

Smith's sports column appears every two weeks.



a prime example of pure excitement coming from a team with a lower payroll. We know these players will play through injury and give it all they have, so this could possibly be the reason the games are so fun to watch. Take a look at Game 2 of the National League

THE SCOREBOARD

Behrend Scores

Women's Soccer

Oct. 11 vs. Carnegie Mellon W 2-1
Oct. 14 at Frostburg W 3-1
Oct. 4 at Grove City W 3-0
Oct. 6 at Montana State-Billings L 3-2
Oct. 9 at Colorado College L 1-0
Oct. 14 at Frostburg L 5-4 (2OT)
Oct. 18 vs. Lake Erie W 4-0

Men's Soccer

Oct. 7 at Pomona- Pitzer L 3-1
at LaVerne L 3-1
Oct. 9 at Claremont-Mudd L 3-0
Oct. 12 vs. Lake Erie W 3-0
Oct. 14 at Pitt-Greensburg W 3-1
Oct. 18 vs. La Roche 3-0

Cross Country

Oct. 7 at Dickinson Invitational Men finished 24th
Women finished 28th
Oct. 14 at Rochester Invitational Men finished 7th
Women finished 8th

Women's Tennis

Oct. 7 vs. Pitt-Greensburg W 9-0
Oct. 10 vs. Westminster W 7-2
Oct. 11 vs. Theil W 9-0

Men's Golf

Finished 4th at AMCC Championship @ Hannantown CC

Men's Water Polo

Oct. 7 vs. Grove City L 21-5
Vs. Salem-Teikyo L 9-6
Oct. 8 vs. Slippery Rock L 17-10
vs. W & J L 17-2
Oct. 14-15 at Division III Eastern Championships
vs. MIT L 20-2
vs. Grove City L 12-2
vs. Connecticut College L 11-2

AMCC STANDINGS

(Standings as of October 16, 2000)

WOMEN'S SOCCER

School	Conference record	Overall
Penn State Behrend	4-0	12-2
Frostburg	3-1	9-4
La Roche	3-2	11-5
Lake Erie	1-2	4-11
Pitt-Bradford	1-3	4-10
Pitt-Greensburg	0-4	0-10

MEN'S SOCCER

School	Conference record	Overall
Frostburg	4-0	8-4
La Roche	4-1	6-8-1
Penn State Behrend	2-2	6-7-1
Pitt-Greensburg	1-3	5-6-2
Lake Erie	1-2	1-8
Pitt-Bradford	0-4	4-10

WOMEN'S TENNIS

School	Conference Record	Overall
Penn State Behrend	7-0	16-2
Penn State Altoona	5-2	8-3
Frostburg	3-4	5-7
La Roche	1-5	1-5
Pitt-Greensburg	1-6	1-11

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

School	Conference Record	Overall
Frostburg	7-0	23-3
Penn State Behrend	6-1	10-11
Pitt-Bradford	4-2	12-8
Penn State Altoona	3-4	10-9
Pitt-Greensburg	3-5	3-14
La Roche	1-6	1-18
Lake Erie	0-6	0-6

Major League Baseball Playoffs

AL Championship Series

Seattle Mariners vs. New York Yankees
Game 1: Mariners 2, Yankees 0
Game 2: Yankees 7, Mariners 1
Game 3: Yankees 8, Mariners 2
Game 4: Yankees 5, Mariners 0
Game 5: Mariners 6, Yankees 2
Game 6: Yankees 9, Mariners 7

NL Championship Series

New York Mets vs. St. Louis Cardinals
Game 1: Mets 6, Cardinals 2
Game 2: Mets 6, Cardinals 5
Game 3: Cardinals 8, Mets 2
Game 4: Mets 10, Cardinals 6
Game 5: Mets 7, Cardinals 0

World Series

Game 1: Oct. 21, N.Y. Mets at N.Y. Yankees, 8 pm.
Game 2: Oct. 22, N.Y. Mets at N.Y. Yankees, 8 pm.
Game 3: Oct. 24, N.Y. Yankees at N.Y. Mets, 8 pm.
Game 4: Oct. 25, N.Y. Yankees at N.Y. Mets, 8pm.
Game 5: Oct. 26, N.Y. Yankees at N.Y. Mets, 8pm (if necessary).
Game 6: Oct. 28, N.Y. Mets at N.Y. Yankees, 8pm (if necessary).
Game 7: Oct. 29, N.Y. Mets at N.Y. Yankees, 8 pm (if necessary).

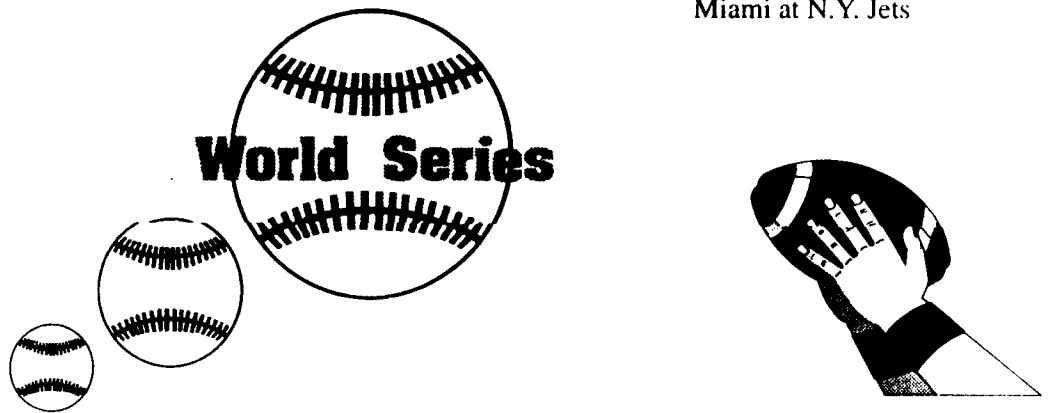
National Football League

Games for Week 6

Thursday, October 19, 2000
Detroit at Tampa Bay
Sunday, October 22, 2000
New England at Indianapolis
Buffalo at Minnesota
Arizona at Dallas
Chicago at Philadelphia
Denver at Cincinnati
New Orleans at Atlanta
St. Louis at Kansas City
San Francisco at Carolina
Tennessee at Baltimore
Seattle at Oakland
Cleveland at Pittsburgh
Washington at Jacksonville

Monday, October 23, 2000
9:00 PM
Miami at N.Y. Jets

World Series



NASCAR WINSTON CUP

Leaders as of 10/15

1. Bobby Labonte, 4537
2. Dale Earnhardt, 4327
3. Jeff Burton, 4229
4. Dale Jarrett, 4135
5. Ricky Rudd, 4102
6. Tony Stewart, 4064
7. Mark Martin, 3999
8. Rusty Wallace, 3955
9. Jeff Gordon, 3729
10. Ward Burton, 3667
11. Mike Skinner, 3393
12. Steve Park, 3357
13. Matt Kenseth, 3348
14. Johnny Benson, 3259
15. Dale Earnhardt, Jr. 3146

Classifieds

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