

THOUGHTS & VIEWS ON A FRIDAY

By DINO COSTA
November 2, 2018
New York, New York

Local talk radio, or, in my case, local sports radio, can be a pleasant way to spend a few hours on the radio.

This is probably true when you're on the air in any town or city.

Talking the local landscape can be invigorating and interesting depending on the skill level of the individual behind the microphone.

For sure, the overall scope of content is much more narrow and more repetitive than if you are talking issues and items on a national scale, but then again, there is something to be said for the ability to tap into a passionate base of listeners who are so singularly consumed with their individual teams and rooting interests on that local level.

Having fashioned shows on both the local and national level during my career I'm sometimes asked which of the two orientations I enjoy more, and in fact, I sometimes will ask myself this same question from time to time.

The answer for me is; it depends on the day and it depends on the news cycle.

Both formats can lend themselves to compelling on-air segments – and for a talk show host – I guess it can depend on where their own passions can be found. Is the articulation of sports with issues almost exclusive to a local level enough to satisfy a host who is content to stay within the confining parameters of news, information, and commentary dispatched to a local listening audience not necessarily attuned to topics outside their own geographic area – will this allow that host enough opportunities to create thoughtful and engaging content on a regular and consistent basis?

Certainly, when doing talk radio on a national level it allows the host many advantages that a local host isn't necessarily in possession of, namely, the opportunities to spread out and to opine on myriad topical points of interest to an audience not nearly as interested in local content as those who prefer to listen to locally geared shows.

I'm of the opinion that there are talk show hosts who are better suited to the areas of local talk content who should never even think about doing a national show – and on the flip side – hosts who are naturally inclined to deliver a better national sports radio vehicle while being limited in their ability to resonate on the local level.

Then, of course, there is the rarity. The individual who may seamlessly rotate between the two worlds with the capacity to deliver on both levels successfully.

For me, in the end, if I had to choose one over the other I guess I would go with...stay tuned.



Speaking of local news, if I may be permitted to add a few more thoughts to the Mets situation what with their most recent announcement of naming an ex-agent to the post of general manager.

I think some people may be confused with the story I posted here on the website a few days ago. It's not that I'm not willing to give Brodie Van Wagenen a chance, I mean, as a Mets fan, what other choice do we have?

Along with the thoughts I have already written about the Van Wagenen hire, I guess another thought will be the following; did the Mets hire the best person available for the position? In my opinion, if you answer yes to such a question you are one of two people:

1-A Mets fan who never sees or thinks any evil with your favorite ballclub.

2-Jeff Wilpon's relative.

Was this hire one that brought in the person with the most credentials, the person most immediately equipped to run a baseball operations department in the biggest city in America, or, was this a hire that made Jeff Wilpon feel more comfortable than any other candidate who may have been under consideration?

So in the end, I implore any Mets fan to ask themselves this simple question: Did your ownership go out and hire the best and most capable baseball person possible to make the franchise a consistent winner, or did ownership settle on a person they feel most comfortable with who will allow ownership to keep their hands very close to the cookie jar?

I had lunch yesterday with a prominent individual very close to both New York baseball teams who told me point blank that Jeff Wilpon hired his golfing buddy to be the Mets next GM.

Perhaps this is true, but one thing I am absolutely sure of is that the Mets did not hire the most qualified and capable candidate available for the position.

I maintain that the press conference to introduce Van Wagenen was an utter mess. Both Jeff Wilpon and Van Wagenen were all over the place with their comments and there was never a clear vision articulated. The presentation reeked of amateur-hour, absent was any semblance of a professional presentation with specifics, with a plan, with direction.

But give Brodie Van Wagenen a chance? Sure, what other alternative is there now that he has the job?



Looking forward to heading over to West Point tomorrow afternoon for the Army-Air Force game at Michie Stadium.

With a victory, Army will retain the Commander In Chief trophy for a second consecutive year.

It is truly amazing the job that Army head coach Jeff Monken has done over the last few years in reinvigorating an Army program that had lost every ounce of life prior to his arrival back in 2014. Through dogged recruiting efforts by Monken and his staff, the Black Knights have once again become an exciting football product worthy of the attention they've been in receipt of the last few years.

Army has a chance to not only keep the CIC Trophy with a win tomorrow – but in addition – they have an opportunity to beat Navy in a few weeks for a second consecutive year, and they'll most likely play in a bowl game for the third year in a row, something no other Army program has ever done previously.

Army came close last year to finishing in the Top-25, so don't be surprised if they win out the rest of the way this season if they don't find themselves in that lofty position at season's close.



The Red Sox were baseball's best team this season, however, lost in their ride to becoming 2018 world champions is that Boston was able to accomplish this with one of the most inconsistent bullpens in recent memory for a championship ballclub.

There have now been 19 world series played this century and the American League has a 10-9 advantage over the National League. Interestingly, the Red Sox have won 4 of those 10 titles for the AL while the Giants have won 3 of the 9 titles the National League has garnered. Of course, not a single team has repeated since the Yankees were able to do so while in the midst of winning three straight titles from 1998-2000.



It was sad to see mob rule win the day down in College Park, Maryland the other day. After two investigations that cleared him of any negligence or wrong-doing, Maryland fired their football coach, DJ Durkin, this after reinstating him following said investigations.

One of Durkin's players, Jordan McNair, tragically died this past summer running wind sprints. As tragic and as unfortunate as this was it wasn't something unprecedented, and placing the full blame of something like that at the feet of the head coach is just wrong in my opinion.

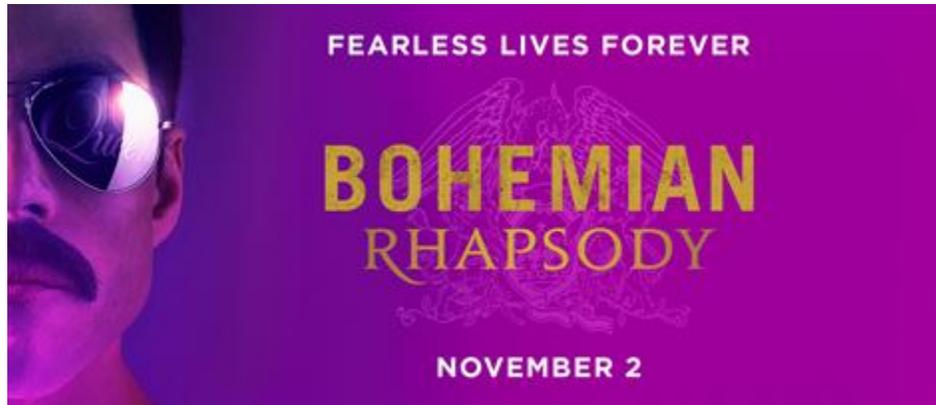
Once Durkin was cleared by two separate investigations he was given his job back, but unfortunately for him, the pitchfork-wielding crowd raised their voices and the university crumbled immediately. Such is life these days. No matter that Durkin was found not responsible for the player's tragic death, for a long time now we have been living in a culture where people's feelings matter more and so Durkin became more than expendable.

While ultimately any coach is responsible for their program from top to bottom, this appears to be a situation where a rare, albeit, not unprecedented situation occurred where a young man, unfortunately, lost his life while in the midst of training.

On August 1, 2001, the Minnesota Vikings lost offensive lineman Kory Stringer in a very similar way. The Vikings head coach at the time, Dennis Green, was not fired.

This past July 24, University of Maine football player Darius Minor, collapsed and died during training. These are horrible things that sometimes happen, but happen they do, and often

times it is not specifically anyone's fault that these things occur. At the time Minor passed away on the football field this past summer, his coach was Joe Harasymiak. Today, the head football coach at Maine is still, Joe Harasymiak.



Despite some reviews I've read that the movie is a train wreck, I'm still going out tonight to see the movie on the life and times of former Queen singer, Freddie Mercury. I'm hoping for the best, although if you have read anything about this movie, you've seen that it was afflicted with turmoil and constant changes almost from the outset.



Politics and sports, sports and politics, you know how this stuff works.

On Bill Simmons website (The Ringer) there is a current story by a writer named Bryan Curtis who wrote a story with the headline: Are NBA Players Political Enough? Just what the NBA and sports needs, right? Curtis mentions LeBron James and a few others in his story and the basic premise of the piece is if NBA players are doing enough politically or speaking out enough?

Of course, this piece, like the majority of pieces like this, is only interested in athletes being political if it fits within the narrative the writer themselves approves of. Issues and items important within the social and political construct of the writer's world that mirror a specific athlete's views are more than kosher.

On the flip side, if there are athletes in the world of sports who have the audacity to express their views that run contrary to what is socially acceptable in the authors mind, then that author will of course, admonish and castigate said athlete for having the temerity to voice their thoughts within the sports ecosystem, thereby claiming that such an athlete is making the world of sports less than what it should be.

Bottom line? If you espouse a liberal social and political view speak up. If you advance a conservative social and political view...kindly shut the fuck up.