

Of presidents, Peavy, Lovie and Rose

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT...

Dear President Barack Obama,

Let me first say how happy I was on election night. I can still feel the chills of excitement that my body experienced when I listened to your speech from Grant Park. It was a historic night that I'll never forget. Your Inauguration Day celebration was awesome. Thank you, by the way, for asking Aretha Franklin to sing that day. She was very memorable. Your speech was powerful, simple and honest about where our great country rests and is headed under your leadership. You have inspired hope to all Americans at one of our nation's darkest economic times. I am proud to call you my President.

With that being said, please do me a huge favor and stop wearing that White Sox baseball cap. I mean, it's bad enough that the Cubs (who I love) haven't won the World Series in 100 years and were swept again in the playoffs for the second consecutive season, but now the leader of the free world is a White Sox fan.

I can take my fair share of abuse from White Sox fans. I've learned to deal with them and grow a thick skin. I was there in 2005 when the South Siders won it all. I sat alone in the corner of the bar at a Houston hotel, watching co-workers celebrate the sweep of the Astros. I watched grown men cry tears of joy. I even mustered the strength to congratulate them with a sincere smile.

When faced with insults over my Cubs, I was always able to fire back despite my team's shortcomings. Now, I have nothing. I have no defense... no comebacks... no witty verbal jabs. It's over for me. Mr. President, you are a White Sox fan and proud of it.

I'm not saying you shouldn't cheer for your team. I hope you are able to throw out the first pitch at U.S. Cellular Field on Opening Day this upcoming season. It would be another great memory for the White Sox and their fans. All I ask is that you stop wearing that hat. Please.

OTHER RANDOM THOUGHTS

Speaking of the White Sox... Bartolo Colon? Hmm, that should be enough to wrap up a second consecutive AL Central Title.

No one should be surprised when the Cleveland Indians' new closer, Kerry Wood, stays healthy all season long and earns eight saves against the White Sox in 2009. It's called Cubs karma.

The Cubs are going to get Jake Peavy. The Peavy deal is dead. Oh wait, the Peavy deal is alive again. The Peavy deal is dead AGAIN. The Cubs just traded Felix Pie, their five-tool outfielder (or so they told us) to the Baltimore Orioles to get the pitchers needed to get Peavy. Oh, the Cubs traded those Oriole prospects to the Seattle Mariners? I guess the Peavy deal really is dead.

Perhaps years from now, there may be a tombstone that reads: Here lies Jake Peavy, the greatest Cubs pitcher to never pitch for the Cubs.

ONE on ONE

with **Matt Abbatacola**
of *WSCR 670 AM*
The Score



“ I have no defense...
no comebacks...
no witty verbal jabs.
It's over for me.
Mr. President, you are
a White Sox fan and
proud of it. I'm not
saying you shouldn't
cheer for your team.
I hope you are able
to throw out the first
pitch at U.S. Cellular
Field on Opening Day
this upcoming season.
It would be another
great memory for the
White Sox and their
fans. All I ask is that
you stop wearing that
White Sox hat.
Please. ”

Thanks for letting Cubs fans relive the Brian Roberts no-deal of 2008.

THAT MARK DEROSA TRADE

I know many Cubs fans were very upset over the Mark DeRosa trade. I'm not sure I agree with people saying that DeRosa shouldn't have been traded because he was the Cubs MVP in 2008. The Cubs finally traded a player when he was at his highest trade value. DeRosa had a great season last year. If he's your team's MVP,

then you're not going to win a championship. Your best player can't be a utility guy and DeRosa is a solid utility player, not the most valuable player on any team.

BLACKHAWKS AND RED WINGS

I was at Wrigley Field on New Year's Day for the Blackhawks and Red Wings game. It was cold. I like hockey better when it's played indoors. As I walked around Wrigleyville after the game, I noticed it was an unusual crowd from what I am used to seeing in that area after a sporting event. I felt like I was in the middle of the South Side Irish Parade. I saw too many over-served grown men with their faces painted with the Blackhawks' logo. It was truly odd.

LOVIE'S NEW FRIEND

It was good to see the Bears fire three of their defensive coaches after their 9-7 season and failure to make the playoffs for a second consecutive year. The problem had nothing to do with overpaid underachieving defensive players, right?. Don't get me wrong, though—those coaches had to go. The players didn't like the defensive line coach and the linebackers and secondary needed a change at those positions. The only problem I have now is that Lovie Smith hired Rod Marinelli, another of his buddies and an even closer friend than Bob Babich ever was to the head coach. Marinelli will be fine as the line coach and will eventually take over the defensive play-calling from Smith, who took that responsibility away from Babich after the season ended.

KYLE ORTON, WHERE ART THOU?

Can the Kyle Orton from the first half of the season come to training camp this summer?

THE BULL WITH THE BULLS

Bulls General Manager John Paxson said recently that he wouldn't evaluate the coaching staff led by first year coach Vinny Del Negro. I will. The season is over and some players have stopped listening to their rookie coach. Paxson said that he would only evaluate his job as GM.

As the GM of the Bulls, he took over a team full of bad players with big contracts. He did a wonderful job in cleaning up the mess left by Jerry Krause. I believe though that it is time for Paxson to go. The failures of first round picks and large undesired contracts with a poor hiring at head coach will be Paxson's demise. He hired Cartwright and let him go. He brought in Skiles and fired him on Christmas Eve in 2007. He tried to hire Mike D'Antoni, then Doug Collins, and ended up with Vinny Del Negro this past off-season. The only positive thing about this current season is the play and development of Derrick Rose. The Bulls shouldn't have even gotten Rose in the draft. It was pure luck and had nothing to do with Paxson.

Former first round pick Tyrus Thomas learned this year that when he does his "own thing" on the court, he doesn't help the team. Gee, and to think it only took him two and a half seasons to come to that grand conclusion.

CHICAGO SPORTS SCHEDULES*

*HOME GAMES ONLY

BLACKHAWKS HOCKEY

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME (PM)
Feb 14	Dallas	7:30
Feb 22	Minnesota	6:00
Feb 27	Pittsburgh	7:30

BULLS BASKETBALL

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME (PM)
Feb 10	Detroit	7:30
Feb 12	Miami	6:00
Feb 20	Denver	7:30
Feb 24	Orlando	7:00
Feb 28	Houston	7:30

STORM SOCCER

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME (PM)
Feb 28	Milwaukee	1:00
March 1	Detroit	3:00



WOLVES HOCKEY

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME (PM)
Feb 4	Peoria	7:00
Feb 7	Milwaukee	7:00
Feb 8	Houston	5:00
Feb 11	Rochester	7:00
Feb 18	Iowa	7:00
Feb 20	Milwaukee	7:30
Feb 22	Manitoba	3:00

STEEL HOCKEY

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME (PM)
Feb 18	Indiana	7:30
Feb 20	Waterloo	7:30
Feb 21	Cedar Rapids	7:30
Feb 27	Cedar Rapids	7:30
Feb 28	Lincoln	7:30

SHAMROX LACROSSE

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME (PM)
Feb 12	Minnesota	7:00
Feb 28	Colorado	7:00