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COMMENTARY

Baseball's major league error

Amid the controversy swirling around steroid use in baseball and an impending strike, major league baseball and commissioner Bud Selig slapped the nation in the face Tuesday night and handed America's Pastime the straw that should — and that I hope will — break the camel's back. By calling the 73rd All-Star Game in the 11th inning a 7-7 tie because both teams had exhausted their roster, both baseball players and officials destroyed all that is sacred in the game.



Brad Schmidt
Sports editor

Foremost, it is an honor to be selected to play in an All-Star Game, and players chosen to the squads should stick it out for the entire game,

not pack-up early and change to street clothes before the game ends.

Secondly, if a player chooses to participate in an All-Star Game, the player is taking a gamble. Injuries happen, and if a player were unlucky enough to be seriously hurt during the annual game, that's a damn shame. Sometimes, that's just the way the ball bounces.

But Selig, American League manager Joe Torre and National League manager Bob Brenly decided to suspend play in the second extra-inning because, as they said, it wouldn't be fair to force some athletes to continue playing. Doing so, they said, could potentially hurt their respective teams in the long run.

In response, some fans became outraged, and many of the 41,871 fans at Miller Park chanted "Let them play!"

MLB proved once again that it lacks the common sense needed to handle the simplest of situations and showed blatant disregard for the sport and sports in general.

In a game that could have proved

to be a memorable, perhaps even legendary All-Star Game, baseball erred in the worst of ways.

The whole concept behind athletics is competition, and to have competition, there must be a winner and a loser. Winning is the drive behind playing — the essence of sports.

Ordering the players to suit up again and play until there was a winner seemed rational Tuesday night, and in retrospect, doing so would have made all the sense in the world.

Tuesday's All-Star Game set a record, earning itself the lowest television rating since the event went primetime.

Even before the game, it appears fans of the sport realized what turmoil baseball is in.

I hope they won't soon forget.

In baseball, it's three strikes and you're out.

Let's hope fans hold the sport to its own rules.

Contact the sports editor at bradschmidt@dailymerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

Lon Mabon gets it all wrong

GUEST COMMENTARY

Scott Miksch

Lon Mabon's piece on the pledge of allegiance, like his previous pronouncements as head of the Oregon Citizen's Alliance, is full of half-truths, distortions and lies. The basic premise of his guest editorial, that the Constitution is a Christian document, can be checked against reality very easily.

If the Framers wanted the Constitution to be a Christian document, why is there no mention of Christianity anywhere in the Constitution, nor in all of the "Federalist Papers"? As stated in its opening line, under the U.S. Constitution all power of government is derived from "we the people," not from God or Jesus.

Speaking of the Constitution's Framers (and Mabon's lies), the quote Mabon attributes to James Madison has been exposed as a

hoax — the chief author of the Constitution never said that the 10 Commandments are the basis of our civil society (see James Madison University's Web site, www.jmu.edu).

Mabon goes on to quote Patrick Henry to "confirm" his assertion that the Constitution is a Christian document, but Henry so opposed the Constitution that he refused to attend the framing convention because, he said, "I smell a rat." Some argue that this opposition was rooted in part in his opposition to a secular constitution (see www.ismellarat.com).

As for Mabon saying that "for a long time ... the courts held that (the United States) was a Christian nation," the courts have held lots of other strange beliefs (the correctness of slavery, male superiority, etc.) in the past, but this did not make them true. And yet it is this same court system that developed the idea of separation of Church and State, which Mabon decries as a "liberal ACLU lie." You can't have it both ways, Lon.

One could go on and on about Mabon's further distortions of the historical record, but a quote from his own piece should suffice to wrap up: "This attempt to rewrite history does not alter the truth."

Finally, a note of reality in Mabon's otherwise unreal world!

Scott Miksch lives in Eugene.

Everyone should be armed

Article II. A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed. — Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

The government of this once great nation has strayed from the true path established by our Founding Fathers, and now we the people are paying the price: People are being killed by Islamic terrorists crashing airplanes into buildings; by disturbed young men who can't take the status of societal outcast that is thrust upon them with the humble good humor which they should and instead open fire on their classmates; and now by a damned foreigner who waltzed into one of the nation's largest airports and gunned down two people before he was killed by a guard.

And what do our elected officials do about it? They drone on about "improving airport security" and "due process," instead of doing what needs to be done — which is to repeal the insanely prohibitive gun laws that have been passed in this country in recent years and start arming the citizenry in a way consistent with the intentions of the Founding Fathers!

There has been talk of giving guns to pilots, but why stop there? The Second Amendment was writ-

ten so the people of this great nation could defend themselves from threats to their lives and property. If everyone was allowed to carry a gun anywhere, anytime, deadly situations could be prevented from becoming more deadly.

If more people at LAX had been armed on the Fourth of July, that lunatic would've been dead after he shot his first victim — probably — and if the passengers aboard those four hijacked planes 10 months ago had been armed, the Twin Towers might very well still be standing.

There are, of course, those who will raise questions such as, "What about all the people who almost assuredly would've been killed in the crossfire in a shoot-out between various armed yahoos and said lunatic in LAX?" or "What would have stopped the 9-11 hijackers from simply killing all the passengers on those flights and carrying out their missions anyway if they (like everyone else, remember) had been armed?" or "Do you know what would happen if a stray bullet punched through the wall of an airplane cabin while the plane was at 10,000 feet?"

To those people I have this to say: Shut up, pinkos!

Of course there will be "innocent" people killed in the crossfire of the aforementioned situations — but only the slow, the stupid and/or the inadequately armed. And that, my

friends, is called survival of the fittest.

As for the whole "stray bullet at 10,000 feet" thing, so what? The threat of death from asphyxiation or whatever because of a stray bullet punching through the skin of the aircraft would deter all but the craziest or most desperate people from loosing rounds in a plane — which is sort of the situation now, and isn't maintaining the status quo the most important thing to most of us, anyway?

But the argument for allowing people to carry guns on planes and in airports goes beyond mere safety issues. Allowing people to carry guns and provide their own security will save money.

Airlines and airports spend oodles of cash every year on things like metal detectors and security guards. If everyone were armed, that cost would be eliminated. And with the money saved by not having to pay the salaries of lazy, incompetent security personnel, the major airlines can line the cabins of planes with titanium plating to prevent the whole "stray round, depressurization" thing.

And maybe they would even have enough money left over to start serving complimentary meals on shorter flights again.

Leon Tovey is a freelance columnist. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.