

BLOHARDS

Benevolent Loyal Order of the Honorable Ancient Red Sox Diehard Sufferers of New York
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Thursday May 10 marked the 55th consecutive (more or less) vernal congregation of BLOHARDS for the purpose of drinking, dining and reveling in our shared passion for the Boston Red Sox. Highlights are summarized below:

Cosgriff Opens...

BLOHARDS VP – Condiments Joe Cosgriff peppered the proceedings with poignant remarks that touched on the unwarranted gloom surrounding the Sox after a pair of hard-fought losses to the Yankees. Joe noted that the Sox had played well, while the local, small-market Mets, in stark contrast, had lost the previous evening's game due to batting out of order. Joe mused: "Try having a luncheon after *that* game."

Also: "And please, stop with all the talk of 'exit velocity'. Forget Stanton and Judge -- the best exit velocity I have ever seen at Yankee Stadium was their fans after Damon hit the grand slam in the 2004 ALCS."

In the sage advice department, Joe opined that one should, under no circumstances, ever, ever, watch "*Yankee Classics*" on the YES network. Not even when the Sox are playing and up 9-0. "Check that - especially when the Sox are the opponent and up 9-0." An acute observer of these things, Joe has noted that games which the Yankees lose seem never to be included among the "Classics".

In closing his opening, Joe promised a luncheon program so "tightly scheduled, intellectually stimulating, and borderline entertaining" that were it not for the Ed Randall segment, "Attendees would have qualified for four credits from the University of Phoenix."

Lockwood Lights It Up

Possibly the highlight of the lunch was Ed Randall's interview with polymath Skip Lockwood. Lockwood, who played one season for the Sox during the Don Zimmer era, recently authored a book titled "[Insight Pitch: My Life as a Major League Closer](#)" and gave a highly-entertaining account of his life in baseball.

Skip seemed to have had a good relationship with Charlie Finley, despite, as a 17-year-old in 1964, altering his original contract to provide for a signing bonus of \$135,000 (a lot of money at the time) instead of the more Finley-friendly \$35,000.

Another story also involved Charlie Finley, who called one morning at 7:30, offering Skip the choice of joining either the Cubs, Mets or Phillies. Suffering from the prior evening's overconsumption of Black Russians, Skip was insensible, leaving it to his wife to negotiate what proved to be a highly-successful signing with the Mets. Upon his mid-game arrival in New York, Skip was not-so-mistakenly driven via underground tunnel by a prankster/clubhouse worker to the visiting Expos' bullpen, where he commenced to introduce himself to a dozen or so Montreal players before being redirected to his actual new team.

Skip also recounted the experience playing for the one-year wonders, the Seattle Pilots who, in the final week of their second spring training, suddenly turned into the Milwaukee Brewers. Fortunately, their equipment truck was summoned while in the Rocky Mountains en route to Seattle, creating a considerable rush alternations business for the Milwaukee tailoring community. Surprisingly, replacing "Seattle" with the name of the team's new home produced more challenges than you'd think – first, because the font size wrapped "Milwaukee" around the jersey almost to the back of the uniform and secondly, because the first batch of jerseys eluded the proofreading staff and came out as "Milwauke."

A couple of years later, having been released but not formally waived by the Yankees, Skip took Finley's suggestion and hid in a motel room for a week until the waiver period expired, thereby exposing the Yanks to a significant fine. Finley then signed Skip to a minor league contract and assigned him to the A's triple-A affiliate in Phoenix where he pitched well, leading to his wife's aforementioned early-morning negotiations, and Skip's late '70's resurgence with the Mets.

Other topics touched on included antics included and not in Jim Bouton's *Ball Four*, and the Kansas City A's assigning him a locker next to a player who was forty-two years his elder, the legendary Satchel Paige.

Slide show hits the high notes

The Henry Berry Memorial Slideshow afforded a comprehensive appraisal of the states of the Red Sox and of the world at large. After commencing with a greeting to "Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished authors, official Red Sox historian, Groupon discount hunters, dues-paying members, their guests, and those identifying as 'none of the above'", narrator Ray Duffy gave a brief recap of [our opening day trip to Boston](#), noting with approval that the number of riders returning on the bus was, statistically speaking, within the margin of error for the number leaving Westport in the morning.

After a highly satisfactory summary of a highly satisfactory start to the 2018 baseball season, Ray noted that the average age of the US Supreme Court was younger than the average age of the Rolling Stones. Ray concluded this digression by noting that at "an average age of just under 74, the Stones are no match for [the BLOHARDS](#), whose average age, according to Elias, technically qualifies as 'deceased'"

Other highlights:

“The Mets, who started the season by going 11-1, are almost back to .500. Which is about how many people showed up to watch them play the Braves the other night.”

Yankee thug Tyler Austin won the 2018 Horse’s Ass award for “taking a chunk out of Brock Holt’s leg” with a spikes high “slide”. Ray commented: “Good for you, Tyler – your dirty play will probably get you a gold invitation to the Yankees’ 2029 Oldtimer’s Day.”

Ray concluded by mentioning that the BLOHARDS’ “brain trust” was hard at work on a possible field trip to watch the Sox battle the Yanks in the Bronx in September, and that developments in that regard would be forthcoming.

And More...

Other items on the agenda included Producer/Director Nick Davis updating us on the status of his now-completed [PBS documentary on Ted Williams](#), Sox Historian Gordon Edes regaling us with tales of Skip Lockwood, Bob Stanley, Rich Gedman, and the state of our favorite team, and John Quinn effortlessly handling the trivia assignment. Having lasted a manageable 2:15, lunch concluded precisely at 2:15.