

KOBRITZ: There's No Celebrating in Baseball

Written by Jordan Kobritz

Monday, 23 September 2013 15:31



“We gonna celebrate and have a good time.”
Celebration, Kool and the Gang 1980

“There’s no crying in baseball.” That line, uttered by Tom Hanks as manager Jimmy Dugan in the 1992 movie *A League of Their Own*, a tribute to the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, is rated 54th on the American Film Institute’s list of the greatest film quotes of all time. As we’ve learned in the past week, along with no crying in baseball you can add “no celebrating” to the list of prohibitions.

With the highest payroll in MLB, the Dodgers were in last place in their division on June 21 with a record of 30-42, 9 ½ games behind the first place Arizona Diamondbacks. Shortly thereafter the team caught fire, going 58-23, a streak of historic proportions. When the team clinched the National League West crown on September 19, the players understandably wanted to celebrate.

But as luck would have it, the Dodgers were denied an opportunity to celebrate with their

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hometown fans, finishing off their worst-to-first run on the road against the D'backs. After a brief celebration on the field, the Dodgers retired to their clubhouse to drench each other in champagne. When most of the fans at Chase Field had left the ballpark, about half the team emerged from the clubhouse - dressed in their championship t-shirts - and made a beeline for the swimming pool in right center field for an impromptu pool party.

The supposed slight infuriated most of the D'backs' players and front office staff. Arizona CEO Derrick Hall, a former Dodgers' executive, said in a statement, "I would call it disrespectful and classless..." D'backs' infielder Willie Bloomquist chimed in, "It's surprising, because they have a lot of veteran guys on that team that I thought were classier than that."

Even Arizona Senator John McCain, a rabid Diamondback's fan, got into the act, tweeting "No-class act by a bunch of overpaid, immature, arrogant spoiled brats!" If McCain hadn't referenced the Dodgers, one might have thought he was referring to his fellow Senators.

Poolgate wasn't the only celebratory antics of the past week that generated umbrage. After Miami Marlins' rookie pitcher Jose Fernandez hit his first Major League home run against the Atlanta Braves, he momentarily stood at home plate admiring the blast while it sailed out of the ballpark. Braves' players thought Fernandez was being disrespectful to their pitcher, Mike Minor. After he crossed home plate, Fernandez was confronted by Braves' catcher Brian McCann who proceeded to lecture him on baseball etiquette. Both benches emptied, but after some pushing and shoving the game resumed without further incident.

After a post-game lecture from his manager, Mike Redmond, Fernandez made his way to the Braves' locker room and apologized to the entire team. "I feel embarrassed," said Fernandez. "...this isn't high school. This is a professional game. I made a mistake." But did he? Fernandez is a 21-year-old rookie having a season for the ages. He hit the home run in his last start of the year after reaching the 170-inning limit set by the Marlins. He finished with a 12-6 record and an ERA of 2.19 for the worst team in the National League, stats that should win him Rookie of the Year honors. Why shouldn't he be celebrating?

I get it. The "unwritten rules" of baseball, which can be interpreted in as many different ways as there are big league players, say you shouldn't show up the other team. But can we please lighten up? Where does it say players can't have fun? Braves' manager Fredi Gonzalez, as classy an act as you'll find in the game, said of Fernandez, "...he likes to have fun..." Isn't that what playing sports is all about, at any level and at any age? Sure, professional players get

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paid, but should money take the fun out of the game?

If the D'backs didn't like the fact the Dodgers celebrated in their pool, they should have won the game. Better yet, they shouldn't have blown that 9 ½ game lead they held on June 21. If the Braves are upset at other players celebrating their achievements, their response should be to celebrate their own accomplishments. Kool and the Gang got it right. Let's not take the good times out of baseball.



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He looks forward to your comments and can be [contracted, here](#)