

Editorial

Umpires need support, not criticism

Something strange is happening in baseball.

The umpires, the perennial working stiff in this glamorous entertainment business, are on strike. And Joe Public is falling for management's pitch.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, Major League Baseball, the ruling organization of the American and National leagues, chose umpires for the play-offs and the World Series on a rotating basis. Thus, each of the 52 men in the Major League Umpires Association could umpire the play-offs every four or five years and the World Series every eight or nine years.

MLB began to choose umpires for those prime assignments on a "merit" basis in 1982. Thus, the money set aside for umpire pay for post-season play could be distributed only among those umpires in the play-offs and World Series.

The umpires' association thinks umpires should be paid more and that money should be divided evenly among all association members.

Umpires now earn \$10,000 each for working the play-offs and \$15,000 each for the World Series. The association is asking for a 100 percent increase in those salaries.

Because of the distribution of the money, each umpire would earn less.

Richie Phillips, attorney for the umpires' union, said the extra \$150,000 paid to the umpires would not be missed MLB. MLB received \$15 million in extra revenue from television this year. Phillips contends that \$150,000 is only the umpires' fair share.

MLB doesn't think the demands are legitimate and it has not granted any concessions. The umpires had no choice but

to strike.

Still, Joe Public wants to criticize the umpires for the timing of their strike. The Lincoln Journal-Star sports editor says he has no sympathy for the umpires because they chose to strike during the "most important" part of the season.

But if the issue of the strike is play-off and World Series pay, wouldn't it make sense to strike during the play-offs and the World Series?

Peter Ueberroth, the new baseball commissioner, said the whole thing sounds communistic to him. His comment about the Puritan work ethic on national television had to tug at many American hearts.

"It's my understanding that if you work you get paid," he said. "And if you don't work, you don't get paid."

If that's the case, how can Ueberroth support MLB's policy of paying play-off

money to second- and third-place teams. They don't participate in the play-offs, yet they reap the financial benefits of them.

Dr. Robert Brown, American League president, isn't worried about the quality of umpiring in the play-offs. He has hired a bunch of rank amateurs and says they can do as good a job as the professionals.

Umpiring is a difficult profession to enter. Hundreds of prospective umpires enroll in umpire camps across the country. Only a select few of those many hundred are considered good enough for entry into professional baseball. An umpire can take more than a decade to work his way from the minors to the major leagues.

No amateurs can possibly take the place of these experienced professionals.

Jeff Browne

Daily Nebraskan Staff Editor

Brazen diet approaches keep registers ringing

I've been seeing a lot of concern about fat lately in the letters department. Since a letter responding to one of my columns spurred the ensuing fat flurry, I feel partially responsible.

Briefly stated, my views on fat are as follows: if you're fat and comfortable, stay fat; if you're fat and miserable, lose weight; if you're mortally concerned about fat people, you've got a fat hang-up; if you like to tease fat people, you're a jerk.

That out of the way, I'd like to turn my attention to the more interesting billion-dollar dieting industry. A 1983 Health Department study concluded that more

eat at all, if we learn to "tune our systems to a vibrational code." Says the book, we absorb pure life energy through breathing and create new tissue as a direct process of thought. What a novel idea. The ultimate diet — don't eat — ever.

Which brings me to another one of my favorites — the water diet. It's simple enough. Just drink anywhere from 10 to 20 full glasses of water a day. You're too busy going to the bathroom to eat.

And then there's this reducing place in Lincoln called K-Creeze, which bills itself as a body wrap boutique. Before I let anything called K-Creeze touch my body, I've got some real questions for these people. Do you have to get naked for this? Even if I was fat, I'm not about to strip to the buff just to let some bimbo make a gigantic eggroll out of me — unh, unh, no thanks, not me. But, apparently, it works for some people. Whatever floats your boat.

These diet centers are everywhere — I've counted 10 in the last week alone. But I'm realistic. If just half of these places have had the same success against fat, for say, 15 years, which is how long these places have been in vogue, you're looking at a total fat loss of 75 million pounds. That's a half-million, 150-pound people — more than the population of Omaha — gone.

Where is all this fat going? Can it be salvaged and recombined into something useful? It staggers the imagination.

And what about grocery stores? Safeway got out of town, Hinky Dinky has closed a couple of stores and tightened its budget. And why? It's all you dieters. This is a grave economic situation we've got here.

And if it's not hard enough for these stores to make a buck these days, the equivalent of a half a million people disappear before their eyes, and former fatties who once plunked down \$110 a week for groceries, now slink out of the store for only \$65 dollars. Whammo! Another store manager on unemployment.

But, hey, far be it from me to tell you what to do. What do I care about store managers? You wanna diet? Diet. I'll even lend you two new books — "Break Out of Your Fat Cell" and "Lower Your Fat Thermostat."

But, please, if you're going to diet, heed well the words of Mark Twain. "Be careful about reading health books," he said. "You may die of a misprint."



James A. Fussell

than half of America's 200 million citizens are at least a little overweight. A hundred million fat people. America leads the world in fat people.

So in America, what do we do about it? We make money off of it, that's what. Big money, and we call it the diet industry. It's all based on the hope that if you're 5 feet 4 and weigh 320 pounds, you might just drop a few bucks to drop a few pounds.

And step right up, America, have we got a diet for you: diets to keep you quiet; diets that make you riot; baked, broiled and fry-it diets; it-won't-work-but-try-it diets.

Really, have you seen some of these diet books lately? They're all striving for that fresh angle, that new approach that will keep the cash registers ringing.

Among your choices: the low-stress diet, the vitamin diet, the new enzyme-catalyst diet, the think-yourself-thin diet, the carbohydrate craver's diet, the rotation diet, the save your life diet, the grapefruit diet, the color diet and the Pritikan Program.

The freshest approach award goes to a little white book that can be found snuggled between Jane Fonda's and John Travolta's exercise books in the health section of your local bookstore. It's called, "The Only Diet There Is," which is an interesting title considering that it's being dwarfed by 50 other diet books.

I'm not endorsing the book, you understand, I just find it to be a brazen new approach. In the first chapter, the book talks about Zen monasteries and claims that a proper diet is all a state of mind — that, in fact, we don't have to

"CALLING THE SHOTS"



P R E S E N T S

"MONDALE'S ODDS"

1) SLIM MARGIN OF VICTORY =
GOOGLE TO ONE

2) DISCOURAGING LOSS = 13:1

3) LANDSLIDE LOSER = 2:1

4) TOTAL HUMILIATION AND AN
EMBARRASSMENT TO DEMO. PARTY = 1:1

HRUMPH!
(HE SAID)



SHAHER '84 DAILY NEBRASKAN

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the fall 1984 Daily Nebraskan. They are written by this semester's editor in chief, Chris Welsch.

Other staff members will write editorials throughout the semester. They will carry the author's name after the final sentence.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the newspaper.

According to the policy set by the regents, responsibility for the content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-090) is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and Tuesdays and Fridays in the summer sessions, except during vacations.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-2588 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, call Nick Foley, 475-0275 or Angela Nietfield, 475-4981.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

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