

IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD Baseball Season



BY HOWARD ARKIN

In June the Major League Players Association and the club owners came to an agreement on a 60 game schedule with an opening date set for July 23. Baseball was to have its third shortened season since the inception of the World Series in 1903.

As the negotiations dragged on, it seemed that they would not come to any agreement at all. I wondered how long could the players with annual salaries of a little over \$4.5 million and team owners, whose wealth can only be imagined, not agree on a settlement.

The North Shore Towers Men's Club will not be going to any games this year unless they attend as cardboard cutouts. For \$86, the Mets will sell you a cutout of yourself with the money going to COVID-19 relief fund. Watching a Met-Yankee exhibition game on July 18, I noticed that these cutouts were placed in great seats. Getting to see 30 games for around \$2.86 per game was a bargain too good to pass by and I considered buying one. Another feature that the Mets and Yankees are giving us is canned sound. A home run hit by Aaron Judge or Peter Alonso would feel more

authentic with cheering in the background.

Throwing out the first ball on opening day could also be addressed. Both teams could invite Mayor de Blasio [cardboard of course] to do the honors. Cutouts have been known never to boo. If any de Blasio fans are taking offense, let me explain: It is baseball lore to boo all politicians who are seen at games.

I hope that we can get the season in, but it started out pretty shaky. The Toronto Blue Jays had to cancel their home game in the Sky Dome and 12 Miami Marlin players tested positive for the virus forcing the cancellation of two games. Due to Buffy's not being open for breakfast, the Men's Club is being denied an other baseball related scene. Of course I'm referring to Jack Sevetta proudly arriving for breakfast wearing his 1998 Yankee sweatshirt after another Yankees victory.

I must confess that after watching a few innings of the opening Mets and Yankee games I found myself losing interest. As the season goes on I'm sure that I'll get into it. But until that happens, it's back to Netflix, HBO and Turner Classic Movies.

As the season entered its third week, both the



Cardboard cutouts will have to do for now

Mets and Yankees looked to be heading in their usual directions. The Yankees look to another division title and the Mets are on a downward spiral.

While watching the Yankees-Phillies game on August 6, I noticed that the former Philadelphia A's manager Connie Mack was seated behind the Phillies dugout. The TV camera panned in his direction towards the end of the game and I was surprised to see that Connie was still there. Quite an accomplishment for a man who will be celebrating his 158th birthday in December.

Baseball hopefully will make it to the end of its schedule, and then it will be on to football.

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