

Episode 85: I'm Very Excited To See How Spicy This Gets

w/ Tom Thakkar and Nate Fridson

MIKE = Mike Schubert
ADAM M. = Adam Mamawala
TOM = Tom Thakkar
NATE = Nate Fridson

If there is a mistake or mis-translation in this transcript please feel free to reach out for clarification! (horsehoospod@gmail.com)

MIKE

There is a new dot flit--da-dot, a new dot flix on netcumentary is what I was just trying to say. A new dot flix on netcumentary.

ADAM M.

That's basically what we're all gonna be saying in 10 years.

Music [0:10]

MIKE

Sup nerds, it's Basketball. Welcome to Horse a Basketball Podcast about everything except for the wins and losses. My name is Mike Schubert and I am joined by my trusted co-host the getting fined \$308,000 per day to Ben Simmons not showing up to play for the Philadelphia 76ers. It's Adam Mamawala, Adam, how's it going?

ADAM M.

Ahh, God man, if you could offer me \$308,000 every three years for the rest of my life and that was what I had to agree on my salary to be I would take it for sure.

MIKE

Yeah, pretty interesting to be in a situation where you could look at the prospect of I really don't want to do this thing, because we all have those things--

ADAM M.

Uhhh.

MIKE

--we all have those lazy moments where we're thinking uhh, I could take the subway here. Do I want to just catch a cab instead? Or do I want to cook dinner tonight? Or do I just want to order delivery? When we're talking about these things, It's like, ahh 10 bucks, five bucks, 20 bucks, whatever. \$308,000 is a little bit different.

ADAM M.

Man, that's a lot of money. My standard for myself in terms of like when I'll feel like I've made it is, when I can just order a lift without thinking twice about it.

MIKE
Yeah.

ADAM M.
I haven't gotten there.

MIKE
No, I haven't gotten there either. But you know maybe maybe one day, maybe you and I will get hired by an NBA team and then we can decide whether or not to make \$308,000 a day or not. Because we're we're grumpy and we don't like the the co-workers that we play basketball with.

ADAM M.
Ahhh, isn't that always the most frustrating thing with sports where they have these stats of like, you know A-Rod will make more money in one inning of Baseball than you'll--

MIKE
Uh-hmm.

ADAM M.
--ever make in your life.

MIKE
Yeah--

ADAM M.
But he still won't end up with J.Lo.

MIKE
Ohh-no. We got our Baseball reference in and our sadness reference in-

ADAM M.
Ding ding ding ding ding.

MIKE
But before we go more into the Ben Simmons' discussion as well as other things happening around in the Basketball world. We need to center ourselves and continue to freshen up using the Dr. Teal's, we're still waiting on their sponsorship.

TEAL MEMORIAL LOCKER ROOM
[02:15 - 9:48]

MIKE
And now we can move on to Full Court Press, get it like the news.

ADAM M.
Uh-hmm.

MIKE

All right, we've got a whole bunch of news first thing really quickly. ESPN is making a new show called NBA today which is basically The Jump but not The Jump anymore, because Rachel Nichols is no longer being put on a lot of ESPN Basketball content, if anything anymore. And it's going to be hosted by Malika Andrews and it has all the regular folks who are on the jump like Zach Lowe and Woj. And unfortunately Kendrick Perkins, but happy for Malika, she deserves to be in the spotlight. She's very good at her job. I'm glad she's getting some recognition and some airtime that she rightfully deserves.

ADAM M.

Well said.

MIKE

Other quick thing that is less fun, but interesting, and we'll have to see how it develops. The NBA is currently dealing with some vaccine rules because there are certain cities like New York City where you and I both live, that have strict you have to be vaccinated to do basically anything indoors that isn't a store activity--

ADAM M.

Uh-hmm.

MIKE

--so entertainment is included in this, basketball games are included in this. And because of that, if you are a player on the home team in a city that requires vaccines for indoor activities, I think so far, that is only New York City and San Francisco. So just the Knicks, Nets and the Warriors right now, you can't do anything. Like you can't play at home games. I don't know if they can come to practices. So far, it is only a restriction on the home teams, which seems strange and nonsensical. It feels like it should be for both of the home and the away team--

ADAM M.

That's bad.

MIKE

--but if you are a player that is unvaccinated, and you're on one of those teams, you might not get to do stuff with the team. And they interviewed someone from the Nets. and they gave this vague statement of, "oh if that was enacted today, not everybody would get to play", not saying if this is a high profile player like KD, Kyrie, etc. Or if it's just someone who's more of a bench player. And there's also the big tinfoil hat thing that the restriction is not on the away players because LeBron isn't vaccinated, and that would destroy ticket sales across the country. So I'm not really sure it's interesting. We'll have to see how it develops.

ADAM M.

Yeah, it's very interesting. I mean, how likely do you think it is that this is going to be an issue during the season.

MIKE

I think it really just depends on how strictly these cities are going to enforce it. And if other cities get on board, but I feel like at least for those teams, you're gonna either have to get it or you can't play that's been happening beyond Basketball. It's just a thing where if you work for a company, more and more companies are saying, you got to get vaccinated, or you can't come to work, or you got to work from home, or you're fired. And I don't know, I I--I think more cities could get on board with it, seeing how the trends and stuff go, I think it's smart, to be safe. I'm surprisingly using doing this for everybody. But we could have a situation where players don't play and the season starting soon.

ADAM M.

Yeah, that's going to be very, very interesting how that plays out. Because we are as we record this less than a month away from Basketball beginning.

MIKE

Yeah, preseason is coming around soon. Media Day, at the time of recording this on September 22, is in less than a week. Media Days, when the players take photos in the uniforms and talk to Reporters and they ask a bunch of generic questions of the Players and the Coaches, it's going to be interesting, I would assume what is probably gonna happen is that the players are just going to get the shot. And the only way I see this becoming a bigger thing is if there is a high profile player on one of these three teams currently, that has to not play in games or practices, or both, or whatever the ruling comes down to.

ADAM M.

I could also see a situation where they have some sort of exemption where it's like, if you have a strong reason that you feel you don't want to get the vaccine for religious purposes, etc, that you can make that claim and then that becomes something where it's like, if someone does make that claim, even if you think it's bullshit, you kind of have to go with it. So I wonder if that will be what happens.

MIKE

Right. And maybe it's the thing where some employers are doing that you just got to get tested all the time type of thing. They could make--

ADAM M.

Right.

MIKE

--certain exceptions for that. But Charles Barkley, I think gave a pretty compelling argument as to why you shouldn't be, in his words, "a selfish anti vaxxer." He says, quote, "I heard these idiots talk about chips in it. I heard people talking about the government wants to follow us around. They can follow us around anyway. Everybody's got a cell phone. What are you doing that you're worried about people following you?" Which, yeah, yeah Chuck.

ADAM M.

Yeah. I mean, I kind of love the fact that Charles Barkley who famously once said, I am not a role model is pretty much being a role model right now. I I--I dig it.

MIKE

Yeah. And he's speaking the truth. As someone who worked in Digital Marketing for six months, I saw how the social media sausage gets made, and all of the different tracking things that all the platforms have. And let me just tell you, if you have a credit card, they know everything, like--

ADAM M.
Oh, yeah.

MIKE

--you're done. If you have a credit card, it's game over. So you can do all the stuff you want to on social media and Google like that stuff helps. But if you have a credit card, that's it, they've got it, and they've sold your info to everyone. So Hooray. And the last things we're discussing in Full Court Press, the Ben Simmons situation, we have talked about it in previous episodes. We even talked about it a little bit in the intro here, but basically, Ben Simmons has officially gotten to the point where he says that he is not going to play a single game for the 76ers, he's not even going to report to training camp, the practices before the season starts. He doesn't want to show up in Media Day. He's going to get hit with a lot of fines. He really wants to trade out there. Obviously the Sixers want to get rid of this ugly situation but I don't know it's just this is the kind of stuff you hate to see. I'm all for players having ownership of their careers and trying to even the power balance scales a bit. But this stuff is just always not fun for everyone involved.

ADAM M.

Yeah, I I don't really have a lot to add other than to say that I hope he lands somewhere that he wants to be, and that the situation works out for everyone. But it's a thing where you just wish it could have been handled before now, if this was going to be the outcome, you know.

MIKE

Right. And the other thing is just I don't understand how he doesn't want to play Basketball because the last taste that we have in our mouth of Ben Simmons, playing Basketball, is his complete meltdown in the playoffs. You would think that you would want to play and show that you're better than everyone last saw you play you. Maybe you just had a bad series, whatever it is, but here's my tinfoil hat theory. I think that Ben Simmons or his agent, whoever's making these decisions, wants Ben Simmons to be traded at his lowest values, so that the team he gets traded to has to give up the least amount of good players and good assets. So that when Ben Simmons gets to that new team, they're not as worse off, this is my galaxy brain, thinking of it because his contracts--

ADAM M.
Hmmm.

MIKE

--already locked up. As long as he gets traded. Yes, he's losing out on money every day that he doesn't play. But as far as his annual salary stuff, he's not taking any hit there. I think he's trying to go reverse Carmelo where a big complaint of the Carmelo trade is that he forced his way to the Knicks a little early, because it was more time sensitive. They did give up more players than they wanted to. And then he got to the Knicks. And they were basically just Carmelo and then nobody else. And that wasn't great as Carmelo and Amar'e Stoudemire

and some friends? But I'm wondering if this is the reason Ben Simmons doesn't want to raise his value, because then the other team doesn't have to give up as much stuff to get him.

ADAM M.

But who does that benefit?

MIKE

Let's say he's getting traded to the Minnesota Timberwolves, so that long suffering timberwolves fan can be less long suffering. Ben Simmons right now, his values at an all time low. If he was rated on a scale of 100. Let's say he's an 80. Whereas if he played more games in a season, they'd be like, oh, he's like a 90 player, so--

ADAM M.

Right. I see, I see. So whoever he gets traded to would theoretically be less depleted of a roster--

MIKE

Right.

ADAM M.

--having not given up as much as they might have if he were at his best.

MIKE

Exactly, because what the Timberwolves would need to trade to the Sixers to get an 80 rated player is not as much good stuff as it would be to get a 90 rated player. It's like why trading for Julius Randle, one of the greatest players in the league, requires more stuff to trade for as opposed to Tomáš Satoranský.

ADAM M.

Hey, don't talk about my boy Sato.

MIKE

He's not on the Bulls anymore.

ADAM M.

Oh, Sato stop it, stop it. Don't do like that Sato.

MIKE

He's on the Pelicans now you don't have to pretend to like him anymore.

ADAM M.

That's true. I tell you what, I felt a lot like Ben Simmons yesterday because I played some basketball out here in a story. And ahh, if you lose a game, we usually play like three on three or four on four. If you lose, you have to then shoot if people are waiting to come out of the court.

MIKE

Uh-hmm.

ADAM M.

I missed four straight free throws yesterday--

MIKE

Mmmm.

ADAM M.

--can happen, cannot happen.

MIKE

Nah, can happen. You're not gonna get paid \$304,000 a day at that rate, you got to start making some free throws.

ADAM M.

You know what's funny about what you just said? It's actually 308,000 and I would be happy to take the difference of 4000 from what you said 20 minutes ago to what you just said, right?

MIKE

So we'll see how the Ben Simmons situation develops, but it's uncomfortable. It's unfortunate and I know a few Sixers fans who want him to get treated to whatever team makes him the most miserable, because they're not liking this. I do think we're gonna get a big, I think Joel Embiid is going to have an MVP season. Purely just riding the vibes of anger from the Ben Simmons situation and then relief from whenever Ben Simmons does get traded. I feel like Joel Embiid I want to bet on him to make the MVP right now I'm locking it in on September 22. Joel Embiid MVP solely because of anti Ben Simmons fueled Basketball.

ADAM M.

I think that's not a bad call. I think you should find a place to ahh you know, put five bucks on that and see what happens.

MIKE

That concludes Full Court Press, get it like the news.

ADAM M.

I do.

MIKE

So we have a very special that actually happened slash interview for the remaining portion of this episode. As we talked about in previous episodes of Horse. There is a new documentary on Netflix called "Untold: Malice at the Palace". And it gives the perspective mostly from the players involved. Most of those players coming from the Indiana Pacers, of a very infamous brawl that took place between the Indiana Pacers and the Detroit Pistons in 2004. So if you've heard of anything similar to this, some people call it the Runner Test Brawl. But most notably, it's Malice at the Palace. It's where players and fans clashed in a very scary event. And Adam and I talked with some comedians that Adam knows one of which is a Pacers fan, one of which is a Pistons fan. We have a discussion about the documentary and how they

felt about it from their perspectives especially as people who watched the game when it happened to live but before we get into that, Adam and I just wanted to kind of recap the event, and in case you hadn't seen the documentary or be if you just want a little refresher so that when we reference stuff in the interview, you know what we're talking about.

ADAM M.
Exactly.

MIKE

So this game took place on November 19, 2004. In Detroit, the stadium at the time was called the Palace of Auburn Hills. That's why it's Malice at the Palace because it rhymes and it took place at the Palace. So going into this game, the Pacers and the Pistons were two of the top teams in the East they had just faced in the playoffs the year prior with the Pistons, defeating them and then eventually going on to win the NBA championship. But in the offseason, the Pacers made some moves to put themselves in a really good position. Going into this game, the Pacers were perceived to be the better team and ultimately the favorite to win the Eastern Conference, if not the entire NBA championship that season.

ADAM M.

Right. And for anybody who's listening who was not following Basketball at this time, these were kind of the consensus best two teams in the Eastern Conference. Like this would be very much like if the Bucks and let's face each other. Or if you go back even further, the you know, Bulls and Knicks in the 90s like these were the marquee teams at that time. And there was bad blood that had been brewing for quite some time.

MIKE

Right. There was bad blood because you have some feisty players on both of these teams. And also these teams were both very physical, very defense heavy teams. And that's always going to lead to some pushing and some shoving and that will sometimes lead to some scuffles. And unfortunately sometimes those scuffles can escalate a little bit and that's what happened during this game.

ADAM M.

Right. And--and honestly, like, especially at a time in the NBA where the league wasn't as quote unquote "soft" as you might hear people describe it now. It--

MIKE

Uh-hmm.

ADAM M.

--would not have been a surprise to me at that time to have seen a brawl happen on the court. What was so alarming about this situation was that it bled into the stands. And that's what separates this beyond anything else that had ever happened in the league at that point. Because you and I have talked about incidents during NBA games that, my first that actually happened was about Kermit Washington punching Rudy Tomjanovich so hard during the game that he almost killed him. So like violence on the court is not an alien concept to the NBA. But the fact that it ended up being between players and fans is what really makes this a notable event.

MIKE

Right. And it really changed the league going forward because then you had David Stern institute the dress code, which was very coded language type thing to try and remove the quote unquote, "thug image of the NBA". And that is what all of the media people were saying happened after this brawl. That's what they were pointing to with Allen Iverson, his fashion choices and stuff. So the league really cracked down after this event, and it kind of shaped the league for the next couple of years to come. But as far as the game itself, the players that you need to be aware of and these are the players that you hear from in the documentary. First, Jermaine O'Neal, he was an all star center for the Pacers he had been traded from the Blazers. He was really good, he was making a name for himself on the team. Then you have Ron Artest who was branded as like a Dennis Rodman type and people at the time would say things like he's crazy and he's a nutcase. Things that looking back are, are terrible because Ron Artest just went to a therapist and had mental health problems like many many many people do and he was just branded as such a negative person because of this? And yes, he was very intense on the court but he's still a guy just doing his best and thankfully that comes through in his interviews in the documentary.

ADAM M.

Yeah, and for modern NBA fans ahh, and correct me if I'm wrong, I think a good comparison for his game would be Marcus Smart. Like he's someone who--

MIKE

Yeah.

ADAM M.

--at times can put up big numbers scoring, but his main value is being an incredibly disciplined and talented and fierce defensive player.

MIKE

Right. And also with that kind of stuff you can tell it's an on the court thing, not necessarily and every day, I'm always angry and yelling at people, it's when you're on the court, you become a different person. The other person involved is Steven Jackson, who was someone that the Pacers traded for in the offseason. And similar to Ron Artest, he was known as someone that was a tough guy, but people didn't think of Stephen Jackson in the same way as Ron Artest with mental health situations going on. It was more Stephen Jackson was just really intense and talked a lot of trash. So--

ADAM M.

Uh-hmm.

MIKE

--you have a lot of fiery people on the Pacers. And then on the Pistons, they're a fiery team as well. They've got Rasheed Wallace, they've got Ben Wallace, two of the most intimidating players in the NBA. Rasheed Wallace has set records upon records for getting as many technical fouls as anyone could. Ben Wallace was a very intense player. So you've got a lot of intense folks in this game. In general, the teams don't like each other, the players don't like each other, it's going to be a recipe for disaster. And that's ultimately what happens. So

with 45.9 seconds left in the game, Indiana is winning by 15 points. The game is over, they have made mincemeat of the Pistons, but Ben Wallace, who was on the Pistons gets fouled from behind by Ron Artest and Ben Wallace is going up for a layup attempt. It's usually good sportsmanship to not try to push someone pretty hard when they're in the middle of the air because that can be dangerous, especially in a 15 point game like this?

ADAM M.

Also an indication of how much the league has changed because there is no world in which star players would still be on the court with a team of 15 with less than a minute left.

MIKE

Right. And that's actually the misconception that happens and they talked about this in the documentary. A teammate Jamaal Tinsley told Ron Artest, "hey, get your foul"m which is just found someone on purpose that the game stops and you can leave. But he misinterpreted this as foul someone hard?

ADAM M.

Right. Like get your shot in because now it's not going to hurt us.

MIKE

Yeah, something like that. So he fouled Ben Wallace too hard. I--It wasn't an obnoxiously hard foul, but it was more than was warranted in a game at all, especially in a game where the lead is 15 points with less than a minute like--

ADAM M.

Yeah, I think that's a good way to describe it. It's a good hard foul in a close game. It's a completely--

MIKE

Uh-hmm.

ADAM M.

--unnecessary foul in a blowout.

MIKE

Right. So Ben Wallace got very upset and scuffle starts to happen. There's a big push, then pushes Ron Artest and and Ron Artest by the way, he has changed his name a couple of times since he was Ron Artest at the time, later change his name to Metta World Peace. He is now Metta Sandiford-Artest. So if any of those names ring a bell, it's all the same person. He's just legally changed his name a couple of times. He gets pushed, there's just your standard kind of holding me back yelling at each other stuff that happens in the NBA. And it starts to escalate a little bit more. It doesn't get broken up immediately, Ron Artest and he talks about this in the doc, Ron Artest was doing a mental health exercise that his therapist told him to do, which is to leave the situation and do a breathing exercise. He does this on top of the scorer's table on the side where you'll see people on computers and where the players check in and the Refs give people information about who the fouls against stuff like that. Ron Artest is just laying on that table. And the Pistons fans thought he was doing it in a showboating manner, but he was doing it in a I'm just trying to remove myself from this

stressful situation manner. And unfortunately, a fan then took a cup of beer, a full cup of beer threw it, and it lands just right on his chest neck face area, like right in the worst part to have something thrown at you land. Immediately Ron Artest gets up and tries to find that fan and chases after him and starts swinging punches at who he thought threw it. And then Stephen Jackson goes into the stands with Ron Artest to try to defend him because some of the fans started piling on to Ron Artest. And then it just got worse and worse from there where there were fans on the court. There was a fan that came down on the court and tried to intimidate Ron Artest and looking like he was gonna punch him so in self defense Ron Artest hit him, then Jermaine O'Neal came from across the court to lay an additional punch on this guy. It was one that would have been really hard and might have done some serious damage to this guy. But thankfully, Jermaine O'Neal slipped and didn't really hit as hard this guy as he could have. And then it just got even worse from there where fans were throwing all sorts of stuff, drinks, food, even chairs at the--

ADAM M.

Yeah.

MIKE

--players and got really messy.

ADAM M.

Yeah, basically, I mean, this whole thing is like mob mentality at its worst. Like, if you're not familiar with this incident, ahh it's basically like Lord of the Flies, but make it basketball.

MIKE

Yeah.

ADAM M.

Like it's, if there are no rules, if no one is enforcing anything, what do people do if they feel like they can do anything. As ugly as it was for the NBA, it was ugly for civilization, like, it's disturbing to watch now and be like humans are capable of this behavior? Like it's really, really upsetting.

MIKE

Yeah, it was rough. Eventually, the players got out of there. And there were lots of suspensions given it was just bad on the fans, the players, the lack of security at the game, the league, there are so many different people that did wrong things in the situation. So we'll talk about all that with our two guests now in the interview, and ahh hopefully you enjoyed this conversation. It's a good time and the documentary is really solid cannot recommend it enough. It gives a very good perspective. And we'll talk about in the interview why we think that this documentary is important for shaping the narrative about this infamous event.

ADAM M.

Yeah, let's get to it. So as we mentioned, ahh we are doing a very special episode today where we are going to be talking about the Pacers-Pistons brawl, a.k.a. The Malice at the Palace. And the only way that we could properly handle that was to get perspectives from Pacers fan and a Pistons fan. They do exist, they're here with us in this zoom call. They're real, they're real people. Ahh they're also Comedians I'm super happy that they're joining us

today. Our first guest the Pacers representative. Ahh you may have seen him on Comedy Central. He also has a great podcast called Standby Airband, Tom Thakkar with us, what's up Tom?

TOM

Heyyyy Adam. Good to see ya. Hello, Mike. It's ahh it's good to be here. I'm happy to be represented the Pacers. I'm excited to you guys are able to find a Pistons fan who isn't in jail for a DUI currently so that's that's--

MIKE

Ohh-huh.

ADAM M.

The shade has already begun.

MIKE

It's o--it's also like Pacers fans are just as trash--

ADAM M.

I was just gonna say the idea that anyone from Indiana would condescend to someone from Michigan. We're all in jail here. Our Pistons representative today, you may have heard his album on ASpecialThing Records. And if you haven't, he's going to plug it later. It's very funny. Ahh Nate Fridson how's it going man?

NATE

It's a pleasure to be here. And it's a delight to be here talking to this ahh. I guess sore losers? I guess it would be. I mean, I don't want to get ahead of ourselves. But I mean you know, clearly, you know, why are you so obsessed with me? I don't know. I--

TOM

You had to make a doc--

NATE

Why, [30:03]

MIKE

Wait, do you think I made the documentary?

NATE

You did, you did. That's why you've [30:09] it so many times right?

MIKE

So this was a regular season game that took place on November 19, 2004. It was between two of the best teams in the Eastern Conference at the time. But they also these two teams had some beef going into it, they'd face in the playoffs, they were really gritty defensive teams, that's gonna lead to some fights and stuff. And eventually, that's what happened, there was a big fight at the end of the game in garbage time, which led to absolute mayhem. And it resulted in a lot of suspensions for a lot of people. And it was this big watershed

moment in the NBA, where unfortunately, it turned into things where the players were labeled as thugs by the media. And David Stern was incredibly harsh on all of the players. And for the longest time, it was always seen as this thing of the players were completely at fault, it's all their fault. They are the problem here and we never really heard their perspective until years later, when players got more of a voice and saying the league. And now this documentary really tells the story of the players and I think it's good, I think it's terrible how much media spin affected how people thought about this event. And I'm glad that we finally have a documentary where pretty much every voice you hear is from a player's perspective for once when for the longest time it was just like ESPN talking heads saying that these guys are a bunch of thugs, which is super coded language.

ADAM M.

100% and I have to say we--we don't generally share video clips from podcasts especially not when we haven't given people a heads up but I kind of want our listeners at some point to see the reactions and the faces that Tom and Nate were making during various points of recap. It was very entertaining to watch because I I think ee--already I'm sensing that there may be some differing opinions as to who really started it who's at fault and I'm I'm very excited to see how spicy this gets.

TOM

Yeah, I mean I'm uhm, here's the thing having watched the doc, as soon as you said it was good to hear from the players, I was like I know Nate is gonna bitch--there was only one Pistons player that they talked to and it's Ben Wallace, no one else was in it besides Ben Wallace. So I'm I'm very curious what your take is on this Nate because I mean, it feels like history is on my side now. I feel like the whole doc is skewed towards obviously, Pistons fans are disgusting. And then one of them throws a chair at Jermaine O'Neal. It's fucking, it's mayhem, It's Malice at the Palace baby.

ADAM M.

So this is this is what I would like to ask from both of you as if we are in court. Tom and Nate, I would like to give you both an opportunity to give an opening statement give some background as to your fandom as a Pacers slash Pistons fan. I would also love to know where you were on said night if you remember ahh and and I think let's start with that. So ahh, Nate, let me let me start with you as the Pistons fan,

NATE

Okay. Ahm I have been a pistons fan for as long as I can remember honestly, my family's very into sports. I grew up in the uhm Metro Detroit area the suburbs of Detroit. And as a kid, we would go to watch the Bad Boys. But yeah, my parents would split tickets with friends. And so growing up my favorite player was John Salley, who is not a notable player, but he does have like a weed company now. So ahh I think something like that, I don't know.

ADAM M.

Is it called John Saleef? Because if no,t real missed opportunity?

NATE

I'm sure it's not. But ahh yeah, so I uhm I've always loved the team I've they've been for the most of my life, like the team that I really like identified with the most in Detroit uhm that night

specifically. I believe it was a Friday night I was in college, uhm and I was at my friend, Richard Isacaws and Josh Nan has their apartment. Uhm Richard was the only one of our friends who had TiVo, this is how long ago this fight was.

ADAM M.

You can get laid with TiVo in that in those days.

NATE

TiVo was big, that was huge. Not that I know this, I didn't have a TiVo and so this was like the first big like until I delete moment for him on his TiVo that like we immediately put it until I delete and then we must have watched that fight. Gosh, I don't know what 30 times? Like we like slowed it down rewatched it, like watch people watch the guy with the with the glasses who like realizes he's about to get flattened by Ron Artest. Like we just pause it at that. watch that happen. Man, what a night one of my favorite nights is a Pistons fan I have to be honest, it was ahh, it was really great.

ADAM M.

And and I guess before we move over to Tom in looking at it now all these years later, who do you feel is at fault?

NATE

Well, you know, there was there were a lot of bad people on both sides--

MIKE

Ohhh.

NATE

It takes 40,000 people to tango and that's--you know. Ahh it, I mean, it's I think it is mostly John Green's fault. The guy who threw the cup full of beer, I would say somewhat Ron Artest fault, but that's mostly on reputation for him. Like I don't think anything that he did was particularly egregious, given the circumstances, but he had a reputation as being this insane guy who would do anything. And uhh this was even pre named change so it was like you know we didn't even have that level yet. You know he was like that generations Rodman, like he was volatile and a great defender, you know big personality. And so I think it was more that it was he's such a wild card who knows what could happen and you know John Green is clearly an asshole, I think that's in arguable.

ADAM M.

Yeah, and a fairly unrepentant asshole. Yeah and as we've seen from the documentary it doesn't seem like John Green has any remorse or contrition whatsoever like it seems like he thinks it's funny.

NATE

No. This was how it was like right after the, I mean like this dominated all of the local news coverage for months. Afterwards, it was just like every there was fallout from it we had to learn who all of the players were--

ADAM M.

Right.

NATE

--people in the stands fighting. Yeah, he's just a contemptible human being.

ADAM M.

I--I'm just grateful that this was before the days of social media because as we saw with the the infamous Suns in four guy he--

NATE

Yeah.

ADAM M.

--liked very much capitalize on that. And then there were advertisements, like you'd look at his Instagram story and it would be like "Hey, come hang out and bottleservice with me tonight". Suns in four guys gonna be at the club, like I have no doubt that some of those fans would have tried to pull the same shit.

NATE

I think John Green did try to merchandise it somehow, I think he--

ADAM M.

Oh my God.

NATE

--like tried to like sell cups or something--

ADAM M.

Sell cups?

NATE

-something like, well disgusting like that. Ughhh.

ADAM M.

This is on brand. Okay, so now having heard the perspective of our Pistons fan, Tom, where were you that night? Ahh if you recall and uhh kind of give us your background as a Pacers fan?

TOM

Alright, so it was a Friday night and uhh I was certainly at home and I I was I was a sophomore in high school. I'd never like would go out I didn't know our school had parties. I was saying in college. I was like, I would watch TV shows where I was like, but this is weird. Like my school didn't do this. And then years later, I was like, Oh wait, I just was fully not invited [36:41]. But I was watching this game because I watched every Pacers game at this time in my life. I was a huge Pacers, I was a huge Basketball fan. I watched Basketball every night at this time in my life. So I was watching that game and uhh at the time I was like couldn't have been more invested in the Pacers I was devastated that they lost the year before the playoffs to the Pistons so I felt the bad blood that was already in the air. And uhh

it was embarrassing that if you look it's funny I ha--I had to pause it at the part where they show game six of the--

ADAM M.

Yes.

TOM

--Eastern Conference Finals, because the final score, it's insane.

ADAM M.

It's a first half score.

MIKE

It was like 67-72 or something like that. And I remember when I was watching the documentary they were showing this intentional foul flagrant foul by Ron Artest--

TOM

Yeah.

MIKE

--they said swung the game. It was it was funny because they were talking like oh, this ruin the game. And I saw the score in the background of the replay. But it di--I couldn't see the quarter. And I was like why are they freaking out? It's the third quarter--

TOM

Yes.

MIKE

--and then the game ends. I was like, Oh, that was the final score. That was the last play.

TOM

Wow.

ADAM M.

Uh-hmm, uh-hmm.

MIKE

Very weird.

TOM

So, I was especially I mean, Reggie Miller is my favorite player of anything of all time. He's on the back of my phone--

MIKE

Oh, okay, Adam, we gotta shut up. We're shutting the pod down. Thanks so much for coming, Tom. I'm a huge Knicks fan so

TOM

I was gonna wear but I wore it last night I have the a shirt of Reggie Miller doing the choke to--

MIKE

Yeah, who who won that game and series?

TOM

Ahh i think that that game was the Pacers but the series I believe is the Knicks.

MIKE

Cool, cool cool.

ADAM M.

I just like that Tom is trying to claim that he doesn't wear shirts back to back days.

TOM

That one's too worn out anyway. And how are those Knicks doing by the way? Actually, right now they're decent but--

MIKE

We--we're in a better record than the Pacers last year so yeah--

TOM

and how did it go for you with that record?

ADAM M.

Break it up guys, break it up break it up.

TOM

Now, what's funny is I was actually rooting for the Knicks. I have no--I wear that shirt and people were like what the fuck like I look--

ADAM M.

Yeah.

TOM

--good we're gonna need to win this one. Because ahh, no I, people were like why would you wear that shirt? I'm a Knicks fan it's like the Pacers are I love them. But it's like, I have no illusions that like they're going to win the NBA Finals anytime soon. Like--

MIKE

Uhmm.

TOM

--I mean, last year, obviously was kind of a, you know, wild year where it felt like anything could happen. But even then I was like the Pacers are not 38:55 for this. And--

MIKE

Yeah.

TOM

--I was like, if the Knicks win, I'm I'm happy for him.

MIKE

That's good.

TOM

Ahh. I'm trying to think if there's any team that I actively hate now, and maybe maybe the Clippers but even then they have moments where I'm like, Oh, this is fun. Like I just don't care.

NATE

Is that because of Paul George?

TOM

Paul George I just don't like, uhmm and I do like, you know, Kawhi but I I don't like Pat Beverley. Like, it's funny watching people call the players thugs and stuff. I was like, I never felt like that, I but I was really pissed at Jermaine O'Neal and Ron Artest and Stephen Jackson. This is gonna go against my side a little bit here. But uh, so Jermaine O'Neal, I don't know if you guys know this, but I think he was like one of the producers of this--

NATE

I believe some.

MIKE

Sounds about right.

ADAM M.

In the way that Jordan was very influential in The Last Dance--

MIKE

Exactly.

ADAM M.

--how that narrative went, yeah.

TOM

Two parts of this doc that are very cartoonish in terms of like how skewed they are in Jermaine O'Neill's favor. One of them is the part where the Pistons fan comes on to the court, and he has no business doing that, and Artest clocks him. I think Artest had every right to do that.

NATE

Yeah, absolutely.

TOM

The part that I don't think makes any sense is when Jermaine O'Neal sprints across the court, to try to beat out the shit of this guy--

ADAM M.

The sliding punch,

TOM

He slips luckily or else like they say the that and I believe this to be true he would have killed him. And I didn't have TiVo at the time. So I only saw the fight in real time the one time, but I remember that moment so clearly. Jermaine O'Neal, they showed it on TV and he's sprinting across the court, but I was like what the hell are you doing? It like, I knew it would be one of Reggie's last seasons and it ended up being his last season and that's all I cared about was like let's get ready a championship, we were looking good. We had the, I believe number one record in the league the year before and that's why it was such a bummer that we lost. We were leading the league this year and Reggie's injured this game so he's not even out there he's I think he's still got suspended one game just for being part of the action afterwards when he was like on the court. But ahh the fact that Jermaine O'Neal did that and then he was like, I was trying to protect myself. Like--

ADAM M.

Right.

MIKE

Yeah.

TOM

--in that moment

MIKE

That's the only thing I I did notice the skew in the documentary there. I like I think it does make sense to have more Pacers players than Pistons players just because--

TOM

Absolutely.

MIKE

--I feel like when you think of that situation, I don't think anyone ever thinks any ill of Ben Wallace or anyone else--

TOM

No.

MIKE

--from the Pistons, like as a player's perspective, but like they didn't fight anyone in the stance so like I feel like to hear from the Pacers makes sense. But yes, I think it's different when Stephen Jackson says, "Yeah, I went into the stance to defend Ron Artest". People were actively surrounding Ron Artest and--

TOM

Yes, that is different--

MIKE

--punching him all over the place--

ADAM M.

Right.

MIKE

So Stephen Jackson jumping up there he is legitimately defending him.

TOM

Jermaine O'Neal, I do not think and--

MIKE

Right.

TOM

--I get it, once it starts collapsing and and they realize there's no security, if people are coming at you, yeah, you got to fight and figure it out. But like he runs across the court to punch the guy.

ADAM M.

Yeah.

TOM

The other thing that was really skewed in the doc because Jermaine O'Neal was an All Star, he was a great player. They were acting like he was going to be the next Kevin Durant in this thing--

ADAM M.

Right.

TOM

--like he was never that level, like--

NATE

He was good.

TOM

And it is a tragedy for his career. Ahh It's a little bit on him, but like not fully, but I just don't think his ga--because it's not like he was out of the league after that. He's still playing--

NATE

Yup.

TOM

--with the Pacers.

NATE

He had a good career.

TOM

--for a little while after and he just wasn't the guy. Like he just never--

NATE

Yeah.

TOM

--really evolved in the next level. And he got suspended some games. But like, that shouldn't ruin your career. I mean, we see it happen in the NFL. I mean, look at Antonio Brown right now--

NATE

Right.

TOM

--is still a stud and he's been out of the game--

NATE

Driving.

TOM

Yeah.

ADAM M.

Yeah. So I mean, one of the things that I enjoyed most about the documentary was that it gave context that I think has been missing a lot. And like 2004 was not a good time for me as a Basketball fan, because I'm a Bulls fan. And like those were--

TOM

Right.

ADAM M.

--some extremely lean years. So I still was a huge NBA fan, ahh much like you, Tom. I was not invited to parties. I think I was a Junior in high school, and was very much at home on a Friday night watching that game. But, I always thought that there wasn't enough discussion about Ben Wallace starting the fight. Sure, it was a--a hard foul on Artest. But Wallace, for sure escalated it. But I really enjoyed the context that they gave him the fact that he had just lost his brother--

TOM

Yes.

ADAM M.

--and was having a rough time because I had no idea that that was the case. And that would certainly explain why somebody would perhaps not be in a great headspace--

TOM
Yeah.

ADAM M.
--the other thing about it is that, for anybody who hasn't seen the documentary, there's already bad blood. So Artest fouls Wallace much harder than is necessary. Especially that point in the game. Wallace gets really upset, shoves Artest, basically in the throat, but ultimately, Artest goes to calm down. He's like very much--

TOM
Yes.

ADAM M.
--doing the things that you do. If you are someone who has been to therapy.

TOM
He's doing the counting. The scorer's table, we all thought he was being an asshole when he did that--

ADAM M.
Right.

TOM
--like being like taunting or something. And I found this out a couple years ago, because Megan Gailey is a huge Pacers fan too--

ADAM M.
Yes.

TOM
--and she was talking about it she was like, he was doing his therapy exercises where he was taught to count backwards from 10 and just having that 10 seconds will call you down. And you can see he's like smiling on the scorer's table--

ADAM M.
Uhhh.

NATE
--because he's trying to like get himself in the right headset and it's so insane that the beer hits him. Like--

MIKE
Right.

NATE

--watch it and it's so wild that it that it happens to land exactly there it's a great [43:56].

ADAM M.

Right and it's one of those butterfly effect moments where if that cup is two inches to the left or the right this entire incident--

MIKE

Uh-hmm.

ADAM M.

--might not happen but it's just that--

TOM

Yeah.

ADAM M.

--perfect or imperfect moment where it like that you know, they're tracking the cup as it's flying down and you can like see it happening in slow motion and then it's just, ughh.

TOM

It was so hard to watch this documentary because for me that moment was traumatic because it was--

ADAM M.

Yes.

TOM

--fun, It was like it ruined, the Pacers were the most important thing in my life at that time. It--it ruined the whole year and I still watch the rest of the season, it was awful. So I was watching it and every time I would watch that moment how it happened I was like maybe it won't hit him--

ADAM M.

Right.

TOM

--even knowing what happens I was like maybe it goes differently this time. That's why I think that's why I kept watching I watched it twice and I was like maybe it'll end differently this time because--

ADAM M.

Tom, how many times have you watch Titanic?

TOM

Oh, I think only once--fuck those people.

MIKE

I think the other thing that's interesting about it, going back to Ron Artest is that looking back It is so wild to think of the perception on Ron Artest is that he was this person who was just completely out of his head. This person that like no one could trust and he was this absolute wildcard and when he talks about it on the documentary he's just a guy going through mental health problems--

TOM
Yes.

NATE
Uh-hmm.

ADAM M.
Yeah.

MIKE
--like nothing ridiculously severe it was just this is a man who was really ahead of the curve just in the fact that he was going to therapy he was--

NATE
Yeah.

MIKE
--very open about it and it just sucks that the narrative around Ron Artest was wow this person's crazy just because he was actively trying to stay on top of his mental health. I think these types of documentaries, it's good to see the insight to those players because you kind of get it with Rodman but Rodman in the Last Dance he wasn't seeking professional help to deal with his mental health issues he was you know, leaving the team for an undisclosed amount of times for undisclosed--

TOM
Right.

MIKE
--reasons. Ron Artest was just doing all of the the steps that were recommended to him by professionals and he was seeking out professional help.

NATE
Yeah, but you know self care takes many forms--

ADAM M.
Yes.

NATE
--no, that's what you know, that's what Rodman needed at that time.

TOM
He used Carmen Electra for a while--

NATE

And yeah, did they win the title or did they not win the title? You know.

TOM

There you go. Ahh--as a fan at that time, I do remember feeling all of those things about him too. I was like this guy's a hothead. He's a crazy person I didn't really like that he was on the team except for he was he was a incredible defender--

MIKE

He's good.

ADAM M.

Really good.

TOM

--and unlike Rodman he was a great scorer too like--

NATE

Yes.

TOM

--he had moments of being a great scorer. He wasn't as good of a rebounder as Rodman obviously he wasn't as good as Rodman a lot of ways but he had an incredible game and like it was fun to watch him when he would pop off. But I remember seeing the footage of him like kicking your Camera man and like spitting Reporters and shit and I was like, what is with this guy which he would just chill--out and ahh he just never knew what he was going to do. And I think if hindsight 2020 if he were having all those problems now, now the mental health thing is all over--

NATE

Yes.

TOM

--the place, Like every pla--like this stuff with Kevin Love. Like Kyrie just takes weeks off at a time and people are just like "Yep, that's what he's gonna do".

NATE

Kyrie, he just takes a break, comes back sages just the court.

TOM

Yeah, and it's fine. And also the thing with Kyrie we saw I mean, this is jumping ahead, but it's like, all this stuff with like, somebody throws a water bottle at Kyrie, immediately everybody's like, you can't treat these players like this--

ADAM M.

Right.

TOM

--like that's insane. Even after he stomped the Irishman or whatever--

MIKE

How dare he.

NATE

Oh my god.

TOM

It's so stupid. But ahh I yeah, I remember being like he's a hothead now, I was I was also bummed out by it. Yeah.

NATE

At least none of us are Celtics fans, huh? Isn't that great?

TOM

Thank God.

ADAM M.

So where do you guys land? I mean, I feel like I'm gonna know your answers. But where do you land in terms of how fair the punishments were? The David Stern handed down, which was for anybody who has not seen the documentary. Ahh I don't have the exact numbers, but basically, Ron Artest was suspended for the entire season. Ahh Stephen Jackson was I think 30 games. Ahh Jermaine O'Neal was somewhere in that territory like watching it now or even at the time what were your takes on like, how reasonable that was?

TOM

I'll go and jump in because--

NATE

Yeah.

TOM

--there's, I mean they'd say in the documentary. There's a moment that's so funny and you can tell how bizarre this whole thing was where and I've heard Stephen Jackson tell this story before but the fact that Ron Artest is in the locker room right after it happened he goes "do you think we're gonna get in trouble?" As soon as it happened I was like this whole season is over. As it's happening I'm watching it just, I just am seeing numbers of games fly crossley in my in my head as I'm watching it happen and the longer he's in the stands, the more I'm like okay, that's gonna be another view and then I thought it was gonna be like 25 games I thought it was gonna be bad. I did not think it would be the entire season. I will say watching it with my fiance who had not known what happened she didn't know the story she felt really bad for the players but she was like yeah, you can't go and assault someone in the stands like yeah, you're gonna get in trouble like so I don't know I don't know if a full season was fair. I I think in the documentary they're trying to make it feel like nobody should have gotten in any trouble but it's like I just don't think that's true I think as a league if--I think

you've right now if that happened if a player went into the stands and started swinging on on fans they're gonna there's gonna be hell to pay of some kind it's just--

NATE
Oh yeah.

TOM
--how much is fair.

NATE
You could get like kicked out of the league for that now, I think like--

MIKE
Yes.

NATE
--like--

TOM
Yeah might even be worse.

NATE
Yeah, I got, I remember at the time like I think I was just so in shock that night that I had--I'm sure I was drunk, uhm but I thought that I had when it happened was like wonder at this event that had happened but afterwards--

MIKE
Uhhh.

NATE
--I'm sure I was angry at the Pacers for maybe possibly costing the Pistons games like you know i think that. I'm sure that thought occurred to me that I was like these, they started this riot and now Rasheed taking up to 10 games.

ADAM M.
Now Nate, having grown up in in Michigan, did you know anyone who was actually at that game?

NATE
I don't know anyone, I met a lot of people who claim they were at the game. It's one of those things--like how was that sad game?

TOM
You could see me, I'm actually right here, I'm behind. Like behind the bench a little to the I'm the white guy. You can see I'm a little blurry, but uhm, ahh yeah. It's just I don't think I have known anyone who's at that game.

ADAM M.

I mean it had to be incredibly scary like one of the images that always stuck with me from that night even at the time that I was watching it live is that older brother like holding his younger brother who is just sobbing and clearly horrified and thinking about it now and watching it again it is amazing that it wasn't worse than it was. Like it is--

MIKE
I know.

ADAM M.
--genuinely amazing to me that no one died that night--

NATE
Yes.

TOM
Yeah.

ADAM M.
--that could have gotten really really bad and especially showing the fact that there were what three police officers there--

NATE
That is--astonishing to me.

TOM
Yeah.

ADAM M.
Yeah, not that I'm in any way pro Cop, but like three people are only going to do so much even if they're doing the best possible job--

TOM
And you know what I never thought about it until now, they don't show this in the [50:37] I know it's like it's obviously The Palace but I've never heard of any Pacers fans who were there. Like I'm sure there were some like that's just the way arena--

ADAM M.
Yeah. if I got the hell out of there--

NATE
Yeah.

TOM
--that would be smart--

ADAM M.
Imagine if they tried to finish the last 42 seconds of the game.

NATE
All right.

ADAM M.

Man. That's a question for you Nate is that, I think the fans that they interview in this documentary do make the Pistons fans there look really rough. Do you feel like that was a poor representation of Pistons fans? I guess like obviously not every fan is going to represent everyone but they interview some of the worst people involved and they obviously show John Green and stuff and--

TOM

And then they're like happy to be on saying these things that make them look horrible--

NATE

They're happy to be talking about.

MIKE

I mean, I'm sure they got paid handsomely but--

TOM

I don't think they were paid handsomely--

ADAM M.

No, they were not. That one, that one Pistons superfan who had face paint on you know that he wanted to be, like the focus of this documentary and they they kept like 10 seconds of him and that's very satisfying to me.

TOM

I would say there's a strong possibility that they got paid zero to be in the thing and they were just like good they wanted the fame.

NATE

I mean that's that's that guy the guy who came down on the court, that's has been his whole thing he just--

TOM

Yeah.

NATE

--about the cloud it was all about cloud for him that's all it was.

TOM

He thinks he looks good in it.

NATE

Yeah, he thinks he's like yeah I'm the good guy these guys are richer than me so I'm better. But the guy, yeah--

TOM
Yeah.

NATE
--paint guy is my one of my favorite parts of the documentary. This guy is to me, I've seen the documentary they they do these very darkly lit very serious looking like a Clint Eastwood movie just like real contrast--

MIKE
Yeah.

NATE
--that like very sharp you know, but there's there's one guy who's a Pistons fan and he is wearing a like afro wig that everyone had for Ben Wallace. And then he's also, his face is painted, if I'm not mistaken he's not wearing a shirt right? And my head he's not wearing a shirt--

ADAM M.
That sounds right.

NATE
--and not only is he the only person in the entire documentary dressed like this, they never address it. They're never like hey, you're such a big fan you look ridiculous you've clearly brought shame upon your family and you're using your real name in this for some reason. You're not just going by like John Johnson a Pistons fan or whatever I don't know why--

MIKE
Mr. Piston.

NATE
--but you know something--that that seemed like propaganda against the fans. I gotta be honest.

ADAM M.
That that's one of those times where they show a guy like that and he's still wearing a wedding ring and I'm like how the fuck am I divorced?

TOM
Someone's--someone's with this guy for 50 years? You got to be more passionate man.

NATE
I know.

MIKE
What you brought up David of what that guy who came down and scraped up thought. I think that was a lot of the weird perception around it findwise thought Oh, these guys make a lot of money--

TOM
Yeah.

MIKE

--because they are not humans--we as fans were allowed to do all of the things we do to them. Because when I watched the documentary, obviously I was younger I was in like seventh grade when this happened. So I still remember but not super vividly and when I was watching the clips weirdly one of my first thoughts when they were doing it I was like it wasn't as bad as I recall like I thought the the amount of fighting that happened between the players and the fans was much worse it was kind of just a lot of people falling over each other in general like still terrible but aside from that one dude who gets wrecked.

TOM

There were some hard punches in their dawg. I actually--

NATE

There some in the stands, there was some guys who are really real and back.

TOM

Ron Artest is like fucking clubbing and then he's getting punched pretty hard too.

NATE

There's one guy in like a big gray shirt in the stands and he's getting like some full like stepping in--

TOM

Yes.

NATE

--punches you know like he's really delivering.

TOM

No, I think it looks like it's it's from a distance really but like--

MIKE

Maybe yeah.

TOM

--if you were to get punched the way that they're getting punched like that, it would fuck you up like it's the some of those were some hard hits and really the softest one was Jermaine missing on that dude--

NATE

Jermaine O'Neal slipping.

MIKE

I guess yeah, I guess I was expecting more of the of the like direct punches like--

NATE
Yeah.

MIKE
--happened with the Ron and the Jermaine thing. There wasn't as much of that was just kind of like, you know, swarms of people kind of hitting each other thing. But what I didn't realize is there is so much continuous just throwing and pouring of stuff--

TOM
Yeah.

NATE
Yeah.

MIKE
--on the players. There's so much beer that gets thrown there is so--

NATE
Uh-hmm.

MIKE
--much popcorn that gets dumped. I didn't remember the chair thing happening at all, but like it goes for so long. If people just continuously throwing and dumping stuff on the players for 20 straight minutes it is--

NATE
Yeah.

MIKE
--wild how much--

TOM
Yeah.

MIKE
--stuff got hooked at the players.

TOM
The thing I think about it is like I mean, I don't know how much beers are at The Palace, but it fucking Barkley's they're \$17 So--

NATE
Yeah.

MIKE
Right.

TOM

People we could have ahh put their kid through college with all the shit that got thrown.

ADAM M.

To--Tom would just be there with his mouth up and trying to get beers.

NATE

Don't waste it. Mike, I think you're absolutely right about people viewing the players as uhh rich and so therefore they're not humans. I think that's absolutely what happens. I think that still goes on today in some ways--

TOM

Yes.

NATE

--like he's like with what Russell Westbrook has to deal with.

TOM

Yeah.

MIKE

Oh, yeah, Utah, they were very [55:19].

NATE

People were just like, just screaming just awful, awful stuff at him. You know--

TOM

Yeah.

NATE

I think like, maybe it's not quite as bad as it was then. But I think that's still persistent.

MIKE

Right. I think what's happened now with the league and some Sports Writers talk about this as if it's a bad thing. They call it the Player Empowerment Era, where now the players have more control in terms of contracts and trades and stuff like that. But I think a it makes sense because the players are the talent, so they should have more saying the league and largely for the most part, their destinies are controlled by the Owners. So sure, they should be able to force their way into some things. But I think the biggest thing is that now with social media and players hosting podcasts and former players being analyst on these TV shows, we get more insight to the players perspective, which when this happened in 2004, we got absolutely none of. Whereas if there were all these things now we would understand from the players involved from similar players, players could have defended it. When you watch the documentary, every single talking head person is just some ESPN person that was not a former player, the closest thing that anyone got to defending the players was Stephen A. Smith--

NATE

Uh-hmm.

MIKE

--like that was the closest they got to someone trying to argue on behalf of the players here. So I think that because now in the Player Empowerment Era, sure it's things about trades and contracts and teaming up and stuff. But also I think there is just more respect for the players. And that comes in the form of understanding their perspective on different platforms, media platforms, but then also I think the league is very good and the perception around the league by fans is so good that when those terrible things happen when the Utah fans says racist things to Russell Westbrook, when people throw things at Kyrie Irving, people are much more quick to defend the players and treat them as humans and that's because players like DeMar DeRozan stood up and talked about mental health again and the pressure that they face. And it makes me very thankful that that's the league we're in today. Because I think my biggest takeaway from the documentary is just even though the players did some terrible things, and obviously you can't go into the stands. It just sucked how much we heard from people that weren't the players--

ADAM M.

Yeah

MIKE

--without this and that that's what's horrible.

TOM

Yeah, definitely. Because it's like yeah, it--it must be tough for everybody to look at you like that. Like just because you put on the jersey of a team I don't like or a team I do like now everything you do is you only represent that and your you--

ADAM M.

Right.

TOM

--know, personal like I'm allowed to treat you like shit because of this.

NATE

Yeah, you're removed, It removes you from humanity.

TOM

Uh-hmm

ADAM M.

Right.

TOM

Yeah.

ADAM M.

So, ahh in conclusion, closing statements Tom and Nate?

NATE

Closing thoughts? Well uhm, you know ahh, first and foremost no regrets. Everything went according to plan you know, we have a tradition of hitting people in Detroit. Specifically on Basketball that's ahh what these guys were all about. So that's really the Bad Boys, so there we go. Look at these Sad Boys right here huh, on the both of us. We're not so different you and I--

TOM

I forgot it was even doing this.

NATE

It's ahh, no is--it's a real blight on the game. And it was really unfortunate that uhh there was I believe that was what led to the dress code.

TOM

Yes.

ADAM M.

Yeah.

TOM

It was so yeah.

NATE

So that is to blame for having to see Allen Iverson in a suit walking into an arena. Nobody looks less at home in a suit. Sheed and out AI should never be seen in the suit. And we had to see--

ADAM M.

Uh-hmm.

NATE

--in every National game, he walking into something it's like, you know, the odds, nothing fits, it's huge. You know, it's just like everything is enormous--

TOM

It's like in to Talking Heads music video.

NATE

So, so yeah, that was a bad outcome. But you know, if this thing that you have to deal with the older you get, and hopefully the more progressive you get that you share an interest with people you actually detest, or you have nothing in--

TOM

Yeah,

NATE

--common with. And so yes, there are all these Pistons fans who were, you know, racist and violent and conniving, and cloud chasing, you learn as you get older, these people are in your fan base, and like it or not, you, you know, you just have to deal with it. They're not going away, you know.

ADAM M.

And I do want to let the listeners know since you can't see this, that Nate is in full face paint during this zoom call.

NATE

It's you know, I only get to use the fro wig so often, you know.

ADAM M.

All right, Tom, closing thoughts.

TOM

Look, we've all done a lot of learning and a lot of growing today. And--I'm just glad that I'm part of a fan base that is polite and not racist. And every Pacers fan I somebody I agree with. No, it's funny as if you want to see a bad representation of Pacers fans. Watch the Reggie Miller documentary, the 30 for 30 Winning Time where you see them all actively pissed that ahh they drafted Reggie Miller over Steve Alford, ahh who is an IU ahh--like stud who is a white guy--

MIKE

And for for anyone listening at home if the name Steve Alford doesn't sound familiar, don't worry, he was nothing in the NBA south.

TOM

Yeah, and he truly was such a bust in the NBA. He did win an NCAA championships So there's your context Horse fans. Uhm--I look I I feel like Pacers fans were also not great about this and like also not kind to the players. Ahh it's not just like ahh some people thought of players is less I think everybody kind of, like I think the National like thoughts on how athletes were treated back then was different and you were expected to have a different type of mentality and not not be human. And like I I had a lot of resentment for Ron Artest for a lot of years because of all that and even though I felt for him in some ways, watching this broke my heart like watching The Malice at the Palace doc broke my heart for Ron Artest, the moment when he wins the championship with the Lakers, and they're interviewing him and they're like, hey, you're the only one on the team who is new here who hasn't won a championship before? How do you feel? And he's like, "you know, I let my teammates down. I let down Jermaine O'Neal and Stephen Jackson and Reggie Miller and Jamaal Tinsley. Those are the guys I should have won this with and they have to like move on because it's like this is not what we want to hear right now. As you can tell it's been eating away at him--

ADAM M.

Uh-hmm.

TOM

--for for a decade. A decade and a half because the whole time he's just like, you know, I wasn't a man I didn't call up Jermaine O'Neal when I left cuz he just left town afterwards. I don't think that that was that bad of an idea. I think that he would have felt weird coming back as a Pacer. And I think at the time he probably got a lot of shit for that but I I don't think it's really fair. You know, it was bad he needed to get away from it. Uhm, I came away from this doc with more love for the Pacers than I've ever had in my life and I think we're gonna win this whole thing this year so ahh thanks for having me guys.

ADAM M.
Pacers in four

MIKE
The Pacers in four.

ADAM M.
Well last but not least where can ahh, where can people find you Tom?

TOM
I, I do have a podcast called Stand By Your Band. If you follow me [@tomthakkar](#) t-h-a-k-k-a-r on Instagram and Twitter. I post, I try to post a clip every week I might be doing stand up if you live in Boise I will be at the Treefort Music Festival doing subsets as part of comedy for it so that's the end of September So come check that out.

NATE
Ahh you can follow me on twitter [@natefridson](#) n-a-t-e-f-r-i-d-s-o-n and ahh I post you know, stuff about shows I'm doing uhm and then my album is called Best Guy So Far and it's available, anywhere you can purchase albums or stream it.

ADAM M.
And no matter what, if you see there these guys on stage in person don't throw a cup at them, just don't do it. There's no need--

NATE
Wait till I lie down.

TOM
Yeah.

Outro [1:02:25]

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