

Episode 71: Let Me See Your 1, 2 HORSE

MJS = Mike Schubert
AM = Adam Mamawala

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

AM
When did we insult the Wizards?

MJS
Probably—

AM
Probably all the time.

MJS
—during the Russell Westbrook trade talk maybe.

AM
Yeah. Someone, someone was offended that we insulted the Wizards.

Intro Music

MJS
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 cohost, the Mike Conley almost winning the three-point contest to Steph Curry making the last shot to snatch victory from the claws of defeat, it's Adam Mamawala. Adam, how's it going?

AM
It's going well. Steph Curry, he, he does have a flair for the dramatic, does he not?

MJS
I feel like it was an intention. Like, I feel like somehow, in Steph's brain, he, he found a way to do the math that he was gonna win on the last shot and maybe missed some other ones on the way. It was just a ridiculous performance and the three-point contest is very fun. It, like, never disappoints.

AM
It is as fun as the skills competition is not fun.

MJS
The skills competition is so close to being incredible. I loved the decision to make it big men versus guards. I think that makes it way more fun. But I feel like it needs to be harder because what they currently do in the Taco Bell Skills Challenge, to call it by its full Christian

legal name, is they have to dribble through some cones, pass it into a ring, make a layup, dribble through some things, dribble down, and then make a three pointer. And I feel like it's not basketballly enough or not silly enough. It's in the weird middle ground. And I feel like there needs to be something more fun in it.

AM

There is also a profound lack of effort.

MJS

Yes, that, that was—

AM

Running even remotely hard apparently is not cool. So, to exert your energy for a full 20 seconds would apparently be more than anyone can ask of these skills competition. I've never understood it. I, I would rather see the horse competition get brought back, not only because our podcast is called that, but, also, because—

MJS

Mhmm. Mhmm. Mhmm.

AM

—it's just a little more interesting. But, yeah, it's like it's already so easy. And the fact that nobody even really tries – I enjoyed the thing that they used to do with WNBA players where it was like—

MJS

Yeah.

AM

—the – almost like the hotspots and all that. Yeah.

MJS

They would get one current player, one WNBA player, and then one legend.

AM

Mhmm.

MJS

Like, a retired player. And then they would have some sort of shooting competition. And then you would always end with a half-court shot, which was always really fun.

AM

Right. It was almost like around the world. So, it was like—

MJS

Mhmm. Mhmm.

AM

—they had to make a shot from each of these little spots on the court. And that was cool because it also involved WNBA players and legends as you said and people seemed to try.

MJS

Mhmm. For our diehard fans at home, that was the Kia Shooting Stars Challenge. And, no, I did not have to Google that.

AM

Oh, boy.

MJS

I think – you know what will be fun, honestly? WNBA versus NBA people in the skills challenge because it's not that hard to do. So, it's not like a dunk contest or something. It's very doable on both ends and I think that that could be very fun. So, NBA hire us to fix the Taco Bell Skills Challenge.

AM

Only, only if we can change it to the KFC Yum Skills Challenge.

MJS

Really, I think we need to get Whataburger in the mix for my, my Texas – did you have Whataburger when he came to my wedding?

AM

No, but I did have some kolaches.

MJS

That's – okay. That's very important. And then we had breakfast tacos as the party favors. So, you did pretty well. You did well for yourself.

AM

I did. But I – Whataburger is definitely on the agenda for the next time I go to Texas, which is never.

MJS

We'll find a way. Something will happen. Maybe in the future for – if Horse goes on tour. We'll – we'll find a way.

AM

Sounds good. Sounds good.

MJS

Given how bad the Rockets are gonna be for the next couple of years, tickets might be really cheap. So, we could do courtside seats at, at a Rockets game and we could stay at Casa Schube Hotel. Kick it with Barb and Joel.

AM

I would love to kick it with Barb and Joel.

MJS

So, before we continue, let's take a little bit of a breather in the best place to take a breather, the Teal Memorial Locker Room. Breathing easy. It's like a nice therapeutic dehumidified room up in the Teal Memorial Locker Room.

AM

What is the temperature in there usually? Like a 68 situation, 68-70?

MJS

It's 69 so that we can all [Inaudible 4:10 - lock].

AM

Nice. Nice. Nice. Nice. Nice. Nice. Nice.

MJS

It is perfect that 69 degrees, in addition to being the funny number, is like a perfect temperature to be in. It's wonderful that that is how the world works.

AM

It is.

[4:20]

TEAL MEMORIAL LOCKER ROOM

[10:41]

MJS

And, now, we can move on to our next segment, which we'd like to call Full Court Press. Get it like the news?

AM

I do.

MJS

Oh, you do. That's very good. So, we already talked a little bit about All-Star weekend stuff, but the All-Star game happened. Everything was on Sunday night. It is smooshed into one night, which was very interesting. The three-point contest I thought was very fun. The dunk contest, Obi Toppin was absolutely robbed. It is a felony that they robbed the title from him. A very important title. This will be his villain origin story. I'm very excited for this is the moment when he becomes the Joker, but I guess the, the Toppin. I have no idea.

AM

Tall people are always penalized. They're – they're always judged too harshly.

MJS

I've – it's—

AM

Other than Dwight Howard, I feel like every tall person who has ever participated in a dunk contest just gets screwed.

MJS

Yeah, I think that's what happened. It's not fair. It's very heightist. Anfernee Simons, who is great, no disrespect to Mr. Simons, but his dunks weren't as technically challenging as the other two competitors. But he jumped higher and, because he's like 6 feet tall and isn't as big, it just looks more impressive. And then the judges just gave him higher scores. It's the dunk contest, not the high jump competition. Now, would it be incredibly entertaining to watch NBA players do the high jump event like in the track and field Olympics? Sure. But that's not what we're doing here. It's the dunk contest.

AM

I will say if he had actually kissed the rim – and I am glad he didn't try because he could have seriously hurt himself.

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

If he had kissed the rim, Anfernee Simons, that would have maybe been the best dunk of all time.

MJS

Right. Unfortunately, he did not. And, alas, he just kind of came close to it. I don't know. It was heh, nah, nay.

AM

I also have to say, with all due respect to your boy, Obi Toppin, if Obi Toppin is the highest profile participant, that's not great.

MJS

Yeah.

AM

I know that we're long past the days of like Michael Jordan and Dominique Wilkins participating. Like, LeBron has never done the dunk contest. Like, Cassius Stanley of the Pacers has never even played an NBA game, I don't think.

MJS

Let's look up – let's look up Cassius Stanley's Bball ref stats real quick. Cassius Stanley has played in eight games total. He's averaging 1.1 points, 0.4 rebounds, and 0.0 assists. He's averaging 2.9 minutes per game.

AM

Yeah. So—

MJS

I mean I think this here is a bit of an anomaly.

AM

Not – yeah, not shitting on the guy. And I'm sure they, they probably had a hard time getting people to agree to be participants. It's just it was disappointing. And last year was so, so good even though Dwayne Wade screwed everything up.

MJS

Oh, Dwayne. Oh, Dwayne. But mentioning the difficulty of getting people to even show up was largely because of COVID stuff and protocols. And, speaking of those protocols, Ben Simmons and Joel Embiid could not even play in the game in the All-Star game itself because their personal barber tested positive. And, when the test results came in, it was too late to where they were already in Atlanta. But the game hadn't started. So, they just had to stay in the room the whole time, which this was the entire reason that you and I and many other people, players, most notably, were saying that this is a bad idea, because what if this information didn't come out until they were on the court? And I don't think Ben and Joel actually tested positive for COVID. It was just a contact tracing safety precaution. But this is why this was such a bad idea.

AM

Well, right, because, even if you are doing everything absolutely right and taking every possible precaution, there is still the chance that something can go wrong. And that somebody can be asymptotically carrying COVID before having tested positive. And, honestly, if it had – and I guess we don't fully know yet. But, if it somehow had turned into some sort of super spreader event, the PR fallout from that for the NBA would be catastrophic.

MJS

Yeah, it was very silly that they went through with it. Hopefully, as time goes on, we don't have any bad break out of COVID situations from it. We're recording this on March 9th. No bad news has happened yet. So, hopefully, nothing comes of it. But it, it just felt like a very silly idea and not a safe one. And it was a close call. And that's not what you want when all of the best players in league are all gathered in the same place. I will say the All-Star game was very fun. Anything with the Elam Ending where you have a score to reach as opposed to a time limit is very fun. Damian Lillard and Steph Curry just making half court shots for giggles very casually.

AM

It's unbelievable. And, when they're making half court shots, there's no luck involved. Like, when you or I make a half-court shot, we're just throwing the ball near the hoop. We're not – we're not hitting a jump shot from half court.

MJS

Yes.

AM

The fact they did that on back-to-back possessions was just outrageous.

MJS

Absolutely ridiculous. So, it was a fun experience. I don't like that it happened. And I don't like how close we came to a real scare. So, hopefully, it's only good news from here on out. But, speaking of news and good news, especially if you like the Nets and/or Blake Griffin, Blake Griffin reached a contract buyout with the Detroit Pistons and is now a member of the Brooklyn Nets, which will be interesting just because I feel like we haven't really seen Blake Griffin this season. And he's definitely a big name. But the question is, "Is he actually going to make the Nets better? What can he bring to the team besides from sweet jokes and KIA commercials?"

AM

Ah, yeah. I mean the star power that is in Brooklyn right now is getting absurd.

MJS

Mhmm. It's starting to feel like the Lakers team that had Karl Malone and Gary Payton on it before they retired, where you're getting a bunch of names even if the playing ability of those players isn't matching their past glory. But, on the flip side, if the Nets don't win, it's just going to be that much more embarrassing. Like, the memes are just gonna be relentless with already they're ridiculous Big Three of people in their prime. We're not even talking about old guys. We're not talking about Harden, Kyrie, and KD. Blake is a little past his prime for sure. But, if they don't win at all, it's gonna be pretty fun for the meme department of various fan bases.

AM

Oh, it definitely is. One thing that's disappointing about how good the Nets are and are going to be is that I may never be able to afford going to a basketball game in this city again. Like, the Knicks since Linsanity have been extremely expensive. I mean you and I have gone to a couple games.

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

But, like, a cheap ticket to a Knicks game is like \$60 or \$70.

MJS

Yeah.

AM

The Nets, when they've been bad, you could go to, like, a low profile game. Like, if the Nets were playing the Hawks or something, you could go to the game for \$20 or \$30 in the nosebleeds. Now, granted, a lot of it has to do with the fact that it's 10 percent capacity and tickets are hard to come by. But I've looked, just out of curiosity, to see, like, what it would cost to go to a Knicks or Nets game, the cheapest seat for any game the rest of the year is, like, \$200.

MJS

I just don't want to go to a game right now.

AM

Yeah.

MJS

I know that the fans are separated and all this stuff. But I don't – it's just is it worth it. I really don't think it is.

AM

Now, would you feel more comfortable if fake hand sanitizer were squirted all over your face?

MJS

Whoa. I mean, gosh, maybe, if real hand sanitizer from an actual giant bottle was squirted all over my face, I'd feel better about it and not CGI, you know, pretend hand sanitizer.

AM

It is funny to think about – it's not funny. But it is interesting to think about so much of the experience of going to a sporting event is not going to be the same at least for a while. Like, the idea of people who work for the team throwing stuff into the stands—

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

—for people to catch, like, “Hey, do you want this thing that I just touched?”

AM

There's gonna be a lot of very different things and things are gonna change. I have no idea when I'll feel comfortable enough to go to a game again. But I don't know. I have no desire to go to a game. It is sad that the Nets ticket prices might get really high. But there's also the chance that, like, the Nets, who were last in home attendance, still have bad home attendance even with all of the good people on their team, especially now that the Knicks are somehow relevant still. It's the All-Star break and we're above 500. Like, I don't – it's very – it's very strange. It's very strange and I'm trying not to talk about it too much because it will jinx us. And I'm going to knock on wood right now. [knocks on wood]

AM

Knocking on Christian Wood?

MJS

Hey, he's on the Fantasy Team. I'm excited to get him back from his injury hiatus.

AM

Speaking of the Fantasy Team, if I may.

MJS

Yes. Yes, perfect way to round out Full Court Press.

AM

Okay. So, we are several months into the NBA season, which means we're several months into our Fantasy season, aka the Dream Team segment. Thank you to our editor, Mischa. And, as of this moment, Mike and I have the exact same record.

MJS

Oh, I didn't realize that.

AM

65-64 and one. So, we're basically both exactly 500. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I lied.

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

As of this moment, Mike is one game ahead of me. He is 65-64 and one, slightly over 500. I am 64-65 and one. And our buddy, James, who you have not met I guess but is a close friend of mine. He's sent out a midseason wrap up. And I would like to—

MJS

Oh.

AM

—I would like to read the descriptions that he gave Mike and myself. So, he was referencing Golden Eye, which is a game from quite some time ago. For our slightly older crowd, you may remember this from N64. But that is what he's referencing. So, I am labeled mostly harmless. You got to love that. This is what James wrote, "Before we go punching walls," which is a reference to me punching a wall after a Cubs game did not go the way I wanted it to. "Before we go punching walls, let us clarify that it is mostly harmless and not most harmless. We haven't gotten the Wills team yet. Shout out to Will, the worst player in our league. He has a new dad. So, we'll give him a pass. Adam is respectively fighting it out for playoff contention and his team has had its share of injuries, postponements, et cetera. But I must say I've been impressed with his restraint this year; currently rostering only two balls. Adam receives the mostly harmless Award for his current record in addition to the fact that Giannis, Russ, and Andre Drummond ensure that, even if Adam wins a week, he will inevitably donate free throw percentage to his opponent. Side note, if Adams first words when reading this where, "Oh, come on," you have to do a shot."

MJS

Where they? Because it feels like that would be your—

AM

Yeah, they were. They were. They were. And Mr. Schubert has been deemed most frantic, which I think is correct.

MJS

Accurate. Accurate.

AM

Yeah.

MJS

It is fair. But I will say, at the time this email was sent, it's much more dramatic, whereas Balling like Balkman is going to surpass me in franticness.

AM

That might happen.

MJS

Because my roster is getting solidified now that everyone is coming off of injuries.

AM

That is true. That is true. But, at the time of this writing, which is a couple weeks ago, Mike was labeled most frantic. And the description is as follows, courtesy of my friend, James Vans. You know exactly why you got this award Schubert. Mike has so far made 27 roster moves, nearly double that of the next highest 16. And a majority of these moves were made at around 3:00 AM. If you're concerned about Mike, you should know that 3:00t o'clock is typically when waivers kick in. So, we don't have reason to believe our colleague is furiously researching and plotting during all hours of the night. With this shocking approach to roster building, Mike has managed to find some diamonds in the rough and, admirably, climbed to sixth place with Cat Out. That means Karl-Anthony Towns. But one wonders if the revolving door affects team chemistry, especially considering he's probably still paying off Alan Houston's contract.

MJS

Now, what's very funny about this thing is that he does give me too much credit in that he said that the waiver wires kick in at 3:00 AM, which is, like, an automatic thing. But I did make many moves at 3:00 AM because that's when you are allowed to drop a player that played that day. And, thanks to my strange sleep schedule, sometimes, it helps me scoop up people before other people can do so.

AM

No, I think you set your alarm for 2:58 and you wake up in the middle of the night to make moves.

MJS

Honestly, that might be healthier than me staying up late to try and make moves for this Fantasy League. But let the record show. I'm currently at 30 transactions made. The next person is 27. So, I'm no longer as ridiculous. Though I am still ridiculous.

AM

And frantic.

MJS

And very frantic. And that can conclude Full Court Press, get like the news.

AM

So, for today's That Actually Happened, I wanted to explore one of my least favorite things about someone who was a member of my most favorite team, the late 90s Bulls. And, so, today we examined Dennis Rodman's bizarre relationship with his best friend, North Korean Dictator, Kim Jong-un.

MJS

Whoa. Interesting. We have not covered this on the show and I don't know too much about it aside from it existing.

AM

Yeah, I was hoping that we hadn't. I do sometimes feel that I should check with you to see whether or not you've covered a topic. That's probably something I should do moving forward. Mental note. Before we get into Rodman's strange post basketball career, let's talk about what he accomplished in the NBA. Dennis Rodman is a five-time NBA champion, two-time All Star and seven-time rebounding champion and member of the NBA all-defensive first team. He ended his career averaging 7.3 points 1.8 assists at a staggering 13.1 rebounds per game and was inducted into the NBA Hall of Fame in 2011. If there's anything that Rodman was most known for as a player, it was his complete all out hustle all the time. And he's uncanny ability to get under his opponent's skin. I would say a good modern comp for Rodman is Joakim Noah. What he does is not pretty. If he's on your team, you love him. But, if not, he drives you nuts. I know your experience as a Knicks fan is different with him.

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

But, like, just as a frame of reference for, for more modern NBA fans.

MJS

Yeah.

AM

Who, who would you say is the most Rodman like in the current NBA?

MJS

I would say that Draymond Green is the most apt comparison. He has that same intensity. He does all of the non-pretty things like score a bunch of points and stuff. And his impact doesn't necessarily come through on the stat sheet. Some of the things Draymond does might not show up in the box score, but he's very impactful on the court.

AM

Yes. Yeah, I would agree. So, Dennis Rodman has led a very troubled life. And I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge his incredibly challenging upbringing. What I'm about to say is hard to fathom, but Rodman has stated that he is the oldest of 47 children.

MJS
What?

AM
Yeah. Now, not full siblings, naturally.

MJS
Right.

AM
But, according to his father, Rodman has either 26 or 28 siblings. But, either way, I think it'd be safe to say that that is not a normal situation to grow up in.

MJS
No. Sound tough.

AM
Yeah. Rodman also grew up in one of the most impoverished areas of Dallas. And his sisters, Debra and Kim, were actually the basketball standouts in the family. Both of whom were college all Americans, which is kind of cool. Dennis, however, did not play high school basketball. He didn't make the team or, if he did, he was cut. Nor did he make the football team. And it was largely because he was 5'11" when he graduated high school. But, much like his future teammate, Scottie Pippen, he had an enormous growth spurt post high school and grew from 5'11" to 6'7", which allowed him to play college basketball. Now, despite being a standout player in college and getting to the NBA – he was drafted by the Pistons – Rodman was haunted by personal demons. And, in 1993, he tried to take his own life. And I, I do want to warn our listeners that this is a somewhat disturbing anecdote. This is a 1993. Apparently, he drove to the parking lot at the Palace of Auburn Hills, which is where the Pistons played, carrying a loaded rifle in his truck debating whether or not he wanted to continue living. And, eventually, he fell asleep in the truck where he was found by police who had been called to perform a welfare check on Rodman by a friend. And it was, in that moment, that he had an epiphany. And I'm quoting here. He said, "I decided that, instead of killing myself, I was going to kill the imposter that was leading Dennis Rodman to a place he didn't want to go." So, I just said, "I'm going to live my life the way I want to live it and be happy doing it," which, frankly, is pretty beautiful. Like—

MJS
Yeah.

AM
—that's quite a realization to have in the most extreme circumstance. And you can see a distinct change in Rodman after that moment. He was very flamboyant. And, and, without realizing what we were witnessing at the time, honestly, he was flipping a lot of gender norms on their heads. Like, it's not something—

MJS
Yeah.

AM
—that was really talked about very much in the 90s. But, in terms of coloring his hair a certain way, or painting his nails, or showing up, like, wearing a wedding dress, which, of course, was largely a publicity stunt. But the point is, like, this was not stuff that was, in any way, happening in the mainstream at that time. And I, I feel like that's a big deal. Rodman's remaining years in the NBA were not without their controversy as well documented in *The Last Dance*. But one cannot argue with his value on the court. In any case, I want to get to the actual subject of *That Actually Happened*, but I felt like it was important to provide some context. Also, I need to stop here to make it abundantly clear that Kim Jong-un is a very bad dude.

MJS
Yeah.

AM
Like, the amount of human rights violations he is responsible for is almost beyond measure. So, now that I've reminded you of that, let's move on.

MJS
Right. Just in case.

AM
I would hope that people know that the person who is in charge of North Korea is not an actively great guy. But, in case anybody doesn't, now you do. So, let's fast forward to 2013, the year of Rodman's first visit to North Korea courtesy of Vice Media, who was filming Rodman's trip to watch an exhibition game featuring three Harlem Globetrotters. Now, this is very interesting. Initially, Vice had tried to get Michael Jordan to go to North Korea, but, for obvious reasons, was unable to. And, instead, they asked Rodman and he agreed, which is kind of predictable.

MJS
Mhmm.

AM
Now, according to a YouTube video that I have absolutely not vetted but seems reliable, Rodman's agent didn't seem to know the difference between North and South Korea.

MJS
Ooh.

AM
And Rodman tweeted that he was excited to, hopefully, meet “The Gangnam Style guy.”

MJS

Very 2013 quote right there, baby.

AM

Yeah, very, very, very. The event was branded "Basketball Diplomacy." Because, evidently, Kim Jong-un is a big fan of the 90s Bulls. Sure. After that first trip, Rodman declared in several interviews that the dictator was his friend for life and a great guy. And he suggested that then President Barack Obama called Kim on the telephone. Rodman supposedly didn't know much about Kim Jong-un, but was treated like a god in North Korea and couldn't get enough of it, which is why he returned multiple times. But I want to explain how it came to be that Kim Jong-un was into the Bulls. So, apparently, in 1996, when Kim was 12 – approximately 12. His actual birthday is unknown.

MJS

Who's to say?

AM

It's January 8th of a year. That is what is believed. January 8th, for sure, unclear on the year. But, when he was 12, he was sent to school in Switzerland under a fake identity and, during that time, was exposed to more of Western culture, including the Chicago Bulls. And, at that time, he began wearing a Michael Jordan jersey and Air Jordans every day. And his mother encouraged him to play basketball because she thought it would make him taller.

MJS

Man, I wish that's how that worked. I'd be, like, 7'9".

AM

Yeah, I want to be clear. I am not a medical doctor. But I'm pretty sure that's not how that works. Then, again, let's not forget the Kim's father, Kim Jong-il, once claimed to have shot 38 under par during a round of golf. He said he shot a 34 on 18 holes of golf.

MJS

It's pretty good.

AM

Now, to be fair, would you be the one to question him on that?

MJS

I mean the only thing about that is that that would mean he got at least two hole in ones.

AM

Mhmm. That checks out.

MJS

It checks out. I do like the idea of a doctor prescribing to a child that isn't doing so well in the whole height and weight percentages department recommending as his diagnosis to the mother, "Hey, have you ever considered your son hooping? Because, you know, if you want to see him get up in that growth percentile."

AM

You know, I, I don't want to be heightist, but I do not think that playing basketball helped Kim Jong-un in that category. He does not seem like a tall man.

MJS

Allegedly. Who's to say?

AM

Who is to say?

MJS

It's just like his birthday.

AM

He might be. So, that's, like, 7'6". And who's gonna call him on it?

MJS

Yeah. Yeah.

AM

Now, initially, Rodman attempted to use this unlikely friendship for good trying to broker a deal to encourage him to release American, Kenneth Bay, a Korean American Christian missionary who had been detained after crossing the border in 2012.

MJS

Well, that's really cool.

AM

Yeah, it's very cool.

MJS

The, the fact that he's trying to break him out. Not the, the—

AM

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. But, yeah. He was – he was detained and sentenced to 15 years at hard labor. I don't know what that entails in North Korea, but it's probably not great. Then, during a 2014 CNN interview, in which Rodman was noticeably inebriated, he suggested that Bay may have deserved his fate.

MJS

Agh.

AM

Ah, not great.

MJS

No, Dennis.

AM

Ultimately, Bay was released and he directly thanked Rodman for bringing attention to his case. And Rodman later said. And I quote, "If I don't finish top three in voting for the next Nobel Peace Prize, something is seriously wrong."

MJS

Oh, Dennis, come on, man. That's not how – arghhh.

AM

Yeah, there's a lot going on here. I'm trying to just report the facts without editorializing too much, but the whole thing is very bizarre. But don't worry it does get weirder. That same year, Rodman returned to North Korea for another basketball exhibition just one month after Kim had had his uncle murdered. Good timing. Rodman led North Korean players and some retired NBA players in singing happy birthday to Kim who was in attendance. He even appeared to bow to Kim during that event. But how did this happen? Well, Vice was not involved this time. Instead, an American professor of neurobiology, who taught at a college in North Korea named Joseph Terwilliger—

MJS

Quite the name.

AM

—bid \$2500 to play Dennis Rodman in a game of horse. Good start.

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

And then employed the help of a third man who ran a North Korean tourism company and had a close relationship with the supreme leader and he was able to get a visa for Rodman. So, from what I was able to gather, there was a charity auction to play horse with Dennis Rodman in North Korea. But this auction happened before anybody knew how and if Rodman could actually get to North Korea again.

MJS

Ridiculous.

AM

It's all just—

MJS

Ridiculous.

AM

—very, very odd. And it gets even stranger. The month that President Trump was inaugurated – and I'm so happy that we no longer have to call him that – Rodman traveled to Pyongyang and gave Trump's book, *The Art of the Deal*, to the North Korean Sports Minister. This led to Rodman taking credit for the notorious meeting between Trump and Kim

Jong-un in 2018. Understandably, Rodman has been criticized and, at times, ridiculed for his friendship with Kim Jong-un. But the case could be made that he might be the only human on Earth to be friends with both Donald Trump, whom he knew through being on the Celebrity Apprentice years earlier, and Kim Jong-un.

MJS

What a strange Venn diagram.

AM

A very, very strange Venn diagram. And, in fact, our old pal, Joseph Terwilliger, argues and I. And I quote, "While I don't suspect that very many Americans would have chosen him to be an emissary or international Goodwill Ambassador, Dennis has had a long friendship with Mr. Trump and has also developed a very cordial relationship with Mr. Kim. In this tense climate as we stand at a perilous crossing, Mr. Rodman's unique position as a friend to the leaders of both US and North Korea could provide a much needed bridge to help resolve the current nuclear standoff."

MJS

The world is just a game of Mad Libs. If we're in a situation where the only way to broker peace—

AM

100 percent.

MJS

—between two nations is Donald Trump, Kim Jong-un, and Dennis Rodman, what – the simulation has broken and someone is messing with the code.

AM

Yes, it is all very, very strange. And, honestly, as I said, I don't know how to feel about any of this. This That Actually Happened was really more me just reporting some very odd stuff that I found.

MJS

Mhmm.

AM

But it is certainly more than strange enough to explore as a topic here. And I'll leave you all to decide how to feel. But that is the story of how Dennis Rodman may or may not have helped us avoid nuclear war. And That Actually Happened.

MJS

It's absurd. It's ridiculous. I appreciate knowing more information about it because I knew this was a thing, but not necessarily how it started and why it continued. I am interested to see if the basketball games that he saw were I feel like I read something once about North Korea having different rules in basketball, where dunks were worth more points and missed free throws, like, subtracted points from your team if you missed them and stuff.

AM
Mhmm.

MJS
So, the only thing I could think to make this even zanier is if they were playing special North Korean rules variant of basketball where all the points are made up and nothing matters.

AM
Yes, The Whose Line is it Anyway of basketball. The whole thing is very strange. And there are a lot of different opinions on it. Like, some people actually think that Rodman was a valuable asset for the United States in brokering some sort of, at least, negotiation between the countries. But a lot of people think that he kind of allowed himself to be used as a pawn and also as some sort of distraction.

MJS
Mhmm.

AM
Like, there was something else that I read that – do you remember the, the story of the – I believe it's a college student, Otto Warmbier.

MJS
No.

AM
So, he was – like, he had been on a tour in North Korea and tried to steal a propaganda poster and was held by the North Korean government. And it was a very strange and, like, disturbing thing where they ultimately did release him back to the US and then he died a couple days later. Like, clearly, whatever they had done to him, he was not left in good shape.

MJS
Mhmm.

AM
But the day he was released was a day that Rodman was there doing some sort of basketball exhibition. And it seemed like they intentionally did that as a means of distraction.

MJS
It's a really strange. It's really, really strange.

AM
Yeah. And there was even speculation, at that time, that, like, somehow, Rodman was involved in that or that he had, like, agreed to come play basketball in exchange for letting a hostage go. Like, it was – it – the more and more I read about it, the stranger it was.

MJS

Wow. Well, I appreciate your reporting. And I also don't know how to feel about it, especially—

AM
Yeah.

MJS
—because there's so much lies surrounding anything that goes on with that, but very interesting at the least.

AM
Yeah, I don't even know that I stand by my reporting as having been particularly good. I, I just – like, I've always been curious as to, like, what actually happened over there.

MJS
Mhmm.

AM
And, to your point, like, it's not really clear.

MJS
And you can't necessarily believe anything from either side. It's very hard.

AM
Right.

MJS
Especially because it's not like he is officially sent by the US as some sort of diplomat or whatever. He was going over there because North Korea wanted him over there. And then that's just going to cloud anything positive that Rodman could say about the situation because, yeah, what if it's just because he likes being treated lavishly. So, of course, he's gonna go to a country that treats him like a king anytime he goes.

AM
Right.

MJS
It's natural.

AM
Very, very, very interesting. And, even – you know, for people who don't know a lot about Dennis Rodman, there was a story in terms of, like, how they were even able to get an interview with him for The Last Dance. And, supposedly – and I heard the, the director of The Last Dance talking about this. They had a hell of a time tracking Rodman down. And, when they ultimately did, he was like, “Yeah, I'm only gonna talk to you for, like, 15 minutes. Like, you have 15 minutes.” So, they showed up. They met him at some hotel. And they were like, “Can we – is there any chance, like, we can have more than 15 minutes?” And, of course, I'm passing this along anecdotally. But, basically, he had this, like, very strange

demand where he was like, "I will talk to you longer if you go get me, like, a tuna sandwich from Subway and Yoo-hoo." Like, it was like something that strange.

MJS

Whoa. Okay.

AM

And then somebody from the set went and got it for him. And then he talked to them for, like, four hours. And that's where they got their footage from.

MJS

Absurd. Absurd.

AM

Very strange.

MJS

Well, That Actually Happened.

AM

It sure did. Or did it? Who knows?

MJS

Who's to say? So, before we get into my 3-on-3, let's talk about our third sponsor for this episode and that is DraftKings.

[Ads 36:42 – 38:58]

1, 2, 3, 3, 2, 1, 3-on-3

MJS

So, let's move on to my 3-on-3. It's timely in that, this week, we learned more about Space Jam 2, which, sadly, is not called Space Jam 2: Electric Boogaloo. It is called Space Jam: A New Legacy, which is far less fun than Electric Boogaloo or 2 Space to Jam. But that's okay.

AM

Well, that's because white supremacists have co-opted Boogaloo and it's no longer appropriate to use.

MJS

Wait. Did they? No.

AM

You don't know about this?

MJS

Is that a thing?

AM
Yeah.

MJS
No, I don't.

AM
It's – they're like the Boogaloo boys or some wild thing. It's like—

MJS
No. No. No. No. No.

AM
Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

MJS
I use Electric Boogaloo as a trick so much.

AM
I think you're gonna have to stop, my friend.

MJS
I've had to stop using the Okay hand emoji, which was, like, my most used emoji in 2014. And, now, I can't say Electric Boogaloo anymore. White supremacy is the worst, obviously, for the obvious reasons, but come on.

AM
I'm, I'm gonna break your heart right now. The Boogaloo Movement, whose adherents are often referred to as Boogaloo boys or Boogaloo bois, B-O-I-S, is a loosely organized far right antigovernment extremist political movement in the United States.

MJS
Fuck. Why can't they just like bad stuff? Why can't they like—

AM
I don't know.

MJS
—boot-cut khakis and cargo shorts and white tube socks.

AM
Oh, my gosh. Oh, my gosh. Oh, my gosh. I'm reading more.

MJS
Oh, no.

AM

Heavily armed Boogaloo members are often identified by their attire of Hawaiian shirts and military fatigues.

MJS
Haaaa.

AM
I don't even know what to say.

MJS
Well, let's balance that bad with the good that is Space Jam.

AM
Yes, let's.

MJS
So, we know a little bit more about what Space Jam 2 is going to be about from Entertainment Weekly. I'll put this link on the episode page of horsehoops.com. The description of the plot, at least, is it says that LeBron James is playing a heightened version of himself. He struggles to relate to his son, not his actual son. It is a actor playing his pretend son named Dom, who is interested in creating games more than he is playing them. So, good for LeBron James' fictional look code-friendly son. When his tech skills draw the attention of a CGI humanoid named AI-G Rhythm – so, algorithm played by Don Cheadle, of course.

AM
Nice.

MJS
The Father Son duo get sucked into the Warner 3000 Entertainment Server-verse with the AI kidnapping Dom in the hopes of stealing some of the king's followers on social media. Cheadle doesn't consider AI-G a bad guy, but rather an AI with a chip on his shoulder. So—

AM
With a computer chip on his shoulder?

MJS
I guess that's the joke that Don Cheadle is making about his villainous character.

AM
Hmm.

MJS
So, there is basketball. Don't worry. In order to save his son and escape this virtual reality, LeBron James must round up the Looney Tunes, including a banished Bugs. Apparently, Bugs is banished. We don't know why.

AM

Bugs was canceled.

MJS

I guess, man. To defeat the formidable goon squad. So, there's no Monstars. The opponents to our lovely Tune Squad is now the Goon Squad.

AM

Hmm.

MJS

I have no idea who this is going to be made up of, but it's going to be centered on the reintroduction of Bugs, Lola Bunny, Daffy Duck, Tweety, and the rest of the Tune Squad, except – this article doesn't talk about it, but Twitter did – Pepé Le Pew, not in the movie, because of obvious Pepé Le Pew related heat he took this week since he's very not appropriate in our current climate where we try to respect women or anyone who says, “No, thank you” to someone's unwanted advances. And it's something that I didn't actively think about. But the second I saw Twitter saying that this guy is a problem. I was like, “Oh, yeah, right. That was very bad and never should be in children's cartoons.”

AM

Yes, I would agree.

MJS

Now, apparently, there was a report though that they did film a scene just on the LeBron end, not animated end, of LeBron teaching Pepé Le Pew about consent. But, apparently, weeks ago, they decided to axe that from the movie. So, I guess it's good that, if he was going to be in the film, it was at least gonna be in like a, “Hey, bud” way. But they just decided to get rid of Pepé Le Pew. Probably the correct call.

AM

Yeah.

MJS

So, my 3-on-3 of the first Space Jam is not about the new Space Jam. We'll see how that comes. But what I wanted to talk specifically is about the first Space Jam and the final game that happens between the Tune Squad and the Monstars because it's just a ridiculous game if you watch it. Obviously, it makes no sense. There's a point in which the score jumps where the Tune Squad just get 10 points out of nowhere. It's just like a continuity error. They're losing by 11 and then they're losing by one in the next frame. So, nothing makes sense at all in this game. It's very ridiculous. No fouls are called even though people are beaten up and burned and flattened. And all sorts of ridiculous things happen. Marvin Martian is got to be the Tim Donaghy of the Tune-related basketball game situation. Him, as the referee, he had to have been getting paid. He didn't call any fouls.

AM

Oh, someone got to him for sure.

MJS

Somebody had to get to him. So, there is a very fun article posted by Wired – we'll put the link to it – where people over at the Harvard College Sports Analysis Collective, a student-run organization, they put together the box score for the game. So, they watched the game. They put together who scored what particular points, who had assists, turnovers, steals, et cetera, and they've put together the entire box score. I watched the full game in prep. But what I'm doing for this 3-on-3 is the three worst and the three best purely basketball statistical performances from the final game in Space Jam 1.

AM

Love it.

MJS

So, this is based just off of the hard stats. We'll go with the worst performances. And this is not necessarily Monstars only or Tunes only. If you perform poorly, anyone's up for fair games. So, the number three worst performance that I will be giving out is for Wile E. Coyote. Wile E. Coyote didn't put up a single shot. He didn't make any shots. He didn't make any free throws. No rebounds. No assists. Nothing. All Wile E. Coyote contributed to this game was one turnover. That's it. He turned the ball over once. He did help cause a missed shot though. So, this is why he's third worst because he did, at least, have some positive contribution. He caused the only missed shot in the entire game to take place because he rigged the basketball rim with explosives and made a shot miss.

AM

Mhmm.

MJS

So, he did have a very, very slight contribution. They didn't credit this as a block, but he did allow for the only missed shot to happen.

AM

A real Giannis Antetokounmpo All-Star game situation here.

MJS

Yeah. Oh, yes. Giannis going 16 for 16, incredible. You love to see it.

AM

Also, the cutest son in the world possibly.

SS

Aah, quite adorable. Pretty solid bounce pass from his kid too.

AM

Oh, yeah.

MJS

It was really nice. So, for the second worst performance, I will be giving this to Blanko who is the Sean Bradley Monstar. Now, absolutely wild that Sean Bradley was chosen as a Monstar at all because he is not one of the most well-known basketball players ever, certainly, at the

time. But he was just tall and lanky. And I guess just for jokes, because they had Muggsy Bogues, the shortest guy in the league, they wanted Sean Bradley, the tallest guy in the league. So, he got in the mix. But, living up to Sean Bradley power theft Monstar situation, Blanko, even though he's on the Monstars, contributed no statistics at all. No shots made. No free throws. No rebounds. No assists. No steals. No blocks. He didn't have any turnovers. So, he wasn't in a negative, but he did nothing. Just absolutely nothing. And the fact that he couldn't even get a couple blocks in there, since his whole thing was just being tall, is pretty disappointing.

AM

He just didn't show up when it really counted, you know.

MJS

Yeah, I mean it's the biggest game of his career. And he can't do anything? He can't even distract someone into missing. Just nothing.

AM

Yeah, Mr. Swackhammer's not going to be too happy about that.

MJS

Oh, is that the name – is that the name of the coach of the Monstar?

AM

Swackhammer is the – is the name of the coach.

MJS

Danny DeVito plays Mr. Swackhammer.

AM

He's bigger than we used to be.

MJS

We watched this film many times at Mercer County Community College Tennis0 Camp.

AM

Oh, yeah.

MJS

We are Space Jam veterans. So, the worst performance is actually a two-way tie for two members of the Tune Squad that put up the exact same stat line. They put up nothing positive. The only thing they did was they each had two turnovers. That is Sylvester and that is also Foghorn Leghorn.

AM

Mhmm.

MJS

Now, you might love them as characters, but not really great performances on the court here for this very important game for Michael Jordan's freedom. And I would give a slight edge for Sylvester being the worst because there is a scene where he does semi eat Tweety Bird and then it spits out Tweety when a basketball gets thrown into his stomach. So, Sylvester goes the extra mile of having negatively affected team morale, team chemistry. But just to put up 0, 0, 0, 0 but then also two turnovers each for these guys just really not helping Michael in his fight for freedom.

AM

Yeah, to commit two turnovers and try to eat one of your teammates, that's, that's unprecedented in basketball.

MJS

It's not really great. I haven't seen it on the court, but I don't think that it would be worthy of an All-Star selection or an All-NBA End of Year Awards. So, those are the worst performances. Now, let's get on to the best. There are some truly phenomenal performances out there. Mostly from Monstars, not necessarily anyone not named Michael Jordan. You know, Lola Bunny puts up some good numbers. Bugs puts up some good numbers, but not making the top three here.

AM

No man hits a big three.

MJS

You know, people are contributing, but there are some clear winners. And there's three distinctly top tier players in this game. The first of which is Bupkus. He is the Patrick Ewing theft of basketball ability Monstar. He gets third place because he is the only person in the entire game to miss a shot. He did go 15 out of 16 from the field though, which is very, very good.

AM

Not quite Giannis but pretty good.

MJS

Pretty, pretty good. Bupkus put up a stat line of 15 out of 16 shots made, four for four from three. All of those were three point dunks, which is very impressive. None of his three pointers were shots. They were all dunks from beyond the three-point line. He also had two steals. So, he's playing some defense, but he finished with 34 points off of all dunks, four of which are from the three-point line. He missed that one shot though. So, he got a little bit of a negative mark on his record.

AM

Hmm.

MJS

But, 34 points off all dunks, pretty impressive,

AM

It's not bad.

MJS

Especially for the Patrick Ewing theft because he was not a three-point shooter by any means. But I guess, if you can dunk, you don't need to be good at three-point shooting.

AM

That's true.

MJS

Now, the second best performance is also going to be from a Monstar because, obviously, top spots got to go to Michael Jordan. They end up winning the game. But, the Charles Barkley Monstar, this guy's name is Pound. He was pretty good. I never – I never really knew the names of the Monstars. But the fact that Charles Barkley, who is nicknamed the Round Mound of Rebound, his Monstars being named Pound, I think, it's very fun. I don't know if that was intentional, but I appreciate it.

AM

Do they ever even say their names in the film?

MJS

I'm really not sure. But, for anyone that doesn't know, Charles Barkley's is Pound. Larry Johnson's is Bang.

AM

Bang.

MJS

Muggsy Bogues is Nawt, N-A-W-T. Patrick Ewing is Bupkus and Sean Bradley is Blanko. So, I don't really know what they were going on with there. Yeah, they got some names. No last name. So, they're all Brazilian, I guess. Pound put up a completely ludicrous stat line 16 of 16 from the field, exactly like Giannis, five of five from three-point land. So, very dunk-centric three-point shooting, but he did have one turnover, a bit of a knock. The only turnover that the entire Monstars had but six steals. Really impressive.

AM

Ooh.

MJS

Six steals is very, very nice. So, he ended up with 37 points all by dunk. So, these are five three-point dunks and six steals. A really solid gain for Pound the Monstar.

AM

Yes, it's hard to argue with that stat line.

MJS

Mhmm. But, of course, number one, we all saw this coming, is Michael Jordan, MJ, his Airness.

AM

Stretch Armstrong.

MJS

He has just a ridiculous game. Like, even by Michael Jordan standards, it's just absurd. He went 22 of 22 from the field. I feel like for writing purposes—

AM

Why couldn't they have made them 23 or 23, right?

MJS

Exactly.

AM

I knew you gonna say that. What the hell? What an oversight.

MJS

It's, it's right there. How do you not? Like, you—

AM

Ugh.

MJS

Ah, I'm sure this is something in minutia that they didn't realize when they writing it, and filming it, and putting it all together that he made 22 shots. But come – that's – your – ugh. So, so, so close. 22 out of 22 from the field. He's one of the rare players who didn't score all of his points by dunk. So, he ended up with 44 points, 24 of them were from a dunk. No free throws or anything. But he had two turnovers, not the biggest situation. So, no other stats. But to go 22 of 22 from the field is ridiculous. And the extra level of this the Harvard College people put together the usage rate statistics of Michael Jordan and compared it to real game stuff and it's pretty significant. So, Jordan's usage rate in this game was 44 percent. So, that means he used 44 percent of his team's possessions. Now, Kobe Bryant set the single season record in 2006 with 39 percent and Jordan is second all time for a season with 38 percent. Now, Jordan did have higher usage rate games, which is ridiculous because you would think, given his lack of talent on the Tune Squad, that he should have been at 100 percent usage rate.

AM

Right.

MJS

But, in game six of the 1998 finals, he surpassed this 44 percent usage rate with 55 percent. That's just obnoxious, ridiculous, and I'm surprised that the, the Tune Squad game was somehow lower. But, yeah, 44 points on 22 of 22 shooting pretty impressive stuff from Michael Jordan.

AM

I mean that secret stuff he was drinking as Chris Paul has been known to drink. Did we not see that recently?

MJS

Yeah, we did. We tweeted about it. I don't think we talked about it on the show. But Chris Paul, over his – whatever he was drinking; Gatorade, Powerade, or whatever – did he put Michael secret stuff or did he put Chris's secret stuff?

AM

I know secret stuff was involved.

MJS

Yeah, it was involved, which is the thing that players do because I think Gatorade has a contract with the league. So, you can't be seen drinking anything else on the bench. So, sometimes, people will be drinking out of very clearly a Powerade bottle with a label ripped off. But, yeah, Chris Paul. Very interesting that late career Chris Paul is, is undoing his years of no one liking Chris Paul. He's, he's got a late game character flip.

AM

Do people not like Chris Paul? Everyone likes Chris Paul. Who didn't like Chris Paul?

MJS

When your running thing is that you punch people in the nuts during games multiple times – he did it in college and the NBA.

AM

Hmm.

MJS

I think just all of his wrath foul baiting floppy stuff wasn't a great look. I think that it's been a little bit better now because he's fun and lovable on the Suns.

AM

Mhmm.

MJS

So, yeah, I'm, I'm here for Chris Paul realizing his transgressions as Clyde Frazier would say.

AM

I'm here for Chris Paul and Steph Curry both catching alley-oops and dunking in the All-Star game. That was awesome.

MJS

It's fun stuff. It's very fun stuff. So, that was my 3-on-3 for the best and worst performances from the big game in Space Jam 1. Check out the 5-on-5 where I get to talk about Bugs Bunny and Lola Bunny who did put up respectable numbers. Just not as respectable as these ridiculous stat line.

AM

Ah, Bill Murray didn't make the cut?

MJS

He might. We'll have to see. Go to patreon.com/horse.

AM

Larry, that could have been made.

MJS

Before we ran out of the he episode though, speaking of stuff that you can get, we've got new merge over at horsehoops.com/merch. We've got a new digital bundle that has ringtones that we previewed in the last episode. There's wallpapers. There's Sup Nerd's wallpapers for every single team that exists, even teams that don't exist anymore like the Seattle SuperSonics, who will, hopefully, come back. So, you can check that out at horsehoops.com/merch. And we're going to be doing a Horse live show on April 1st. Very, very excited. We'll go more in detail about it next episode. But follow us on social media so that you can see all of the posting about how you can get tickets. But we will be doing a safe live stream to do the better All-Star game on April 1st. I'm very excited.

AM

I'm very excited about it. And I'm also excited about some sort of time in the future that we don't know about where we get to do a live live show—

MJS

Yes.

AM

—in front of humans again. That's gonna be great. But, in the meantime, we're gonna do a really fun live show. It'll be my first live Horse show and I'm, I'm pretty pumped about it.

MJS

I'm hyped as well. Should be a good time.

[54:51]

Transcriptionist: Rachelle Rose Bacharo

Editor: Krizia Casil