

Episode 24 - Sports Are Stupid

w/ Zack Meisel and Andrew Lopez

MJS = Mike Schubert

ES = Eric Silver

ZM = Zack Meisel

AL = Andrew Lopez

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

ZM

You know, if he's shirtless in the lunchroom, he's a target.

Intro Music

PM

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 as always by my trusted co-host, the shitting on the Los Angeles Lakers to no reason to Magic Johnson, Eric Silver. Eric, how's it going?

ES

Listen, I have a very good reason to shit on the Lakers. Magic Johnson has no good reason to shit on the Lakers. I also am a man of popcorn insights.

PM

Mhmm.

ES

And I would like, also, to say that I like SkinnyPop popcorn, and I always go with sea salt and pepper.

PM

Mhmm. Sea salt and pepper is good. Pepper Jack, also, very good flavor. You get a little bit of that spice.

ES

Just throw ube on that. That would be delicious.

PM

Hmmm.

ES

Magic Johnson, you tweet about ube, it would be much better than the crap that you're putting out right now.

PM

See, the problem is that you're expecting Magic Johnson to do good things, and he's not. For anyone out of the loop, Magic Johnson went on first take and just dunked on the Lakers for 30 straight minutes, which doesn't make sense because he quit.

ES

Yeah.

PM

It was something where it would have been like if he got fired. And then what was my favorite part is that he was upset and tried to talk about being backstabbed by Rob Pelinka for saying that Magic Johnson was never there. And then other people just came out with their point saying, "Well, yeah, Magic was never there."

ES

He was just never there.

PM

It was not a – it was not a dig at Magic. If anything, it was a statement of fact.

ES

You can just go on social media and be like, "Oh, yeah, he was in Italy here. He was in France here." Like, we know you weren't in the office, dog.

PM

Uh. Well, before we get into our main chunk of the episode, we got to go get ready to consume this chunk. And, for that, we got to make sure we're all prepped in our little segment that we like to call The Locker Room, which is going to have a little bit of a name change.

[Ads 1:54 - 5:08]

PM

So, with that out of the way, we have a very special Full Court Press this time, because very interesting things happened in New Orleans in that the Pelicans, even though they only had a 6 percent chance of winning, won the NBA Draft Lottery. So, who else could we call besides Andrew Lopez?

ES

Of The Times-Picayune?

PM

Yes.

ES
Yes.

PM
So, I had the pleasure of speaking with Andrew recently about the situation. And here's our interview. For this edition of Full Court Press, we have a very special news announcement. Who else could we bring in besides our very own – I guess you're a Pelicans' correspondent for now.

AL
Yes. Yes.

PM
But we're bringing Andrew Lopez from NOLA.com, The Times- Picayune, to talk about the wildness that was the New Orleans Pelicans winning the NBA Draft Lottery and shaking up the entire league. So, Andrew, first off, how are you? And, second, how are the Pelicans?

AL
I am good. The pelicans are better. A lot – a lot better than, than where they were even a month ago right now.

PM
They went into this draft lottery having a 6 percent chance of getting the top pick.

AL
Yeah.

PM
And a big wrinkle in the whole draft lottery thing was, oh, either we're going to see the next team to get Zion Williamson and build from the ground up or we're gonna see a team that positions itself as a contender, whether that was the Celtics winning, as a team that could probably try to trade that pick for Zion. Not only are we gonna know where Zion is going, but we also might know where Anthony Davis is going. But then Anthony Davis' team won Zion. So, now, everyone is confused.

AL
Yeah. So, I'm sitting in there in the – in the lottery room itself.

PM
Oh, because you were there. Yeah.

AL
So, we're, we're watching it. Yes. Yes. So, I'm sitting there watching everything. I turned to Will Guillory, a buddy of mine, who writes for the Athletic. He covers the Pelicans. And we're,

we're joking with each other. We're like, "Man, you know, they get three. They get three. And, like, they can get RJ Barrett. That, that'd be pretty good. Maybe they get four, and they can like guarantee themselves Culver or Hunter or maybe even get Garland or Coby White instead of sitting back at seven or eight." That, that's probably good. I'm thinking, "Ah, maybe – ah, maybe the Knicks get number one. The Knicks get it. Then they'll flip it for AD."

PM
Right.

AL
And just kind of come up with all these scenarios. Not once did we come up with the scenario of the Pelicans winning. Like, we didn't even think of that.

PM
Right.

AL
But, like, aah, you know – and then, when it went from Dallas envelope to Washington, I turned around. I was like, "Damn. Top four." And we're like, "Oh, oh, this is happening." And then we're watching, and, you know, the Lakers come out at number four. The Knicks come out at number three. And I turned to him. I'm like, "This is – this is happening. This is happening." Boom, the Memphis' name gets pulled. And I'm like, "These dudes have all the luck in the freakin' world."

PM
Yeah.

AL
Like, you know, Griff worked his magic again. And it changed everything because, now, if AD still wants to be traded, you don't have to absolutely hit a homerun with that trade like you did before because you already have Zion.

PM
Right.

AL
You already have him. You can – you can figure out the best trade. You know, you can still start a bidding war between the Lakers and the Knicks and Boston and maybe Brooklyn or maybe Denver. Like, all of these teams or maybe the Clippers. It's not like you have to settle for pennies on the dollar for AD. You're still gonna get good value for him if he wants to be traded.

PM
Right. So, speaking of that, do you have any insight as to whether or not he still wants to be traded? Because it'd be a very interesting situation for him to be like, "I want out. I want to leave. I want to leave." And then now you get potentially a generational talent on the team.

And then he has to come back be like, “Yo, guys, I was just kidding. That, that's all, for sure, was funny, wasn't it? Ha, ha. Good thing I sat out all these games so we could tank.” Like, is he gonna come back with his tail between his legs? Or is he still like I wanna get out of here?

ES

So, here's, here's the thing. And this is what they can do to kind of make this different. And Griff has already played this perfectly.

PM

This dude has been masterful in his new role. He has been absolutely killing it. Not even just getting the pick, which shoutout to him for working that magic somehow still since he won so many with the Cavs. But, like, he has been very good in the PR stuff. Like, when Rachel Nichols asked him, “When I say Zion Williamson, you say” – and he was like, “We have a lot of work to do.”

AL

We have a lot of work to do. Yes. He's good. He's good. He's real good at his job. I'll say this, what he also does is he has painted it to basically say, “AD had a reason for wanting to leave. AD wanted to leave. And, if he wants to come back and he's about winning, we will help him. And, if he doesn't, we will accommodate that.” He's opening the door for him to basically say, “Hey, guys, I realize things are different. I'll come back now.” If AD does say, “You know what? This is my best chance to win.” The Pelicans are making it to where he can come back without it being as weird. Now, it's gonna be weird.

PM

Right.

AL

Don't get me wrong. It's going to be extremely whipped. You are that's all folks short to your last game. It's going to be awful. Will the fans still accept him? I don't know.

PM

Yeah.

AL

I think they'll boo him at first. But, once – you know, once they run that first AD-Zion pick and roll, nobody's gonna care anymore.

PM

They'll forget everything.

AL

Yeah. Everybody's gonna forget. His first game they booed him. They booed the hell out of him his first game. But, as soon as he had an – he converted on an alley-oop, it was like, “Oh --

PM

We love this guy.

AL

All right. Oh, yeah, I forgot. My bad.

PM

I love this big tall man.

AL

We were just angry. We're sorry. So, that's where you're at with it right now. And I still think there is a route where he can come back, especially if, if, if you want to be about winning if that's what you're about. You want to go deal with what's going on in LA? Really?

PM

Yeah. Oh, gosh. Especially with all the recent Magic Johnson leaving and then going on first take and just shitting on the entire organization.

AL

He, he friggin' just took a flamethrower to them.

PM

Well, I – that's a whole another story, but like he is ruining the Lakers.

AL

You wanna go to New York with James Dolan?

PM

Well, as a very biased New York Knicks fan, I will say that, since hiring Scott Perry, he has – James Dolan has mainly been focusing on his kazoo career as a Jazz lead man. So, I think he's been too preoccupied to screw up the Knicks.

AL

When you think back and look at it, like, where else is he gonna go --

PM

Right.

AL

-- where he has two teammates, like Jrue and Zion. Now, you get KD and you get Kyrie. And you can build them up. Okay. Great. But you got to give up everybody else basically to make that happen --

PM

Right.

AL

-- money-wise.

PM

Exactly. I personally want him to stay, because what I would love nothing more is for him to come back and be like, "Yo, guys, I'm really sorry." And then everyone loves Zion, because how can you not? He's a beast. He's a wholesome boy.

AL

Yeah.

PM

He jumps and dunks and doesn't look like he should be as good and as quick and as amazing, and as athletic as he is. He becomes everyone's favorite player. And then Anthony Davis has to look himself in the mirror and think about what he did for the rest of his time with the Pelicans.

AL

Here's the thing with AD. He had every right. He really did. One thing that Trajan Langdon said on Tuesday in the press conference to introduce him --

PM

Yeah. What's his new position?

AL

He is general manager.

PM

Okay.

AL

They made that one very simple instead of executive vice president of basketball operations. They [**Inaudible 12:28**] --

PM

Right.

AL

-- which I hate having to type out every time.

PM

And it's so many.

AL

We're abbreviating him EVP now and then GM, but still.

PM

Mhmm.

AL

So, Trajan is very simple. Trajan is the general manager. But he, he mentioned yesterday, we don't have to – we can't go into win now mode too quickly. And a lot of Pelicans fans recognize that, because --

PM

That's what happened.

AL

-- that's what -- that's what Dell Demps did. He tried to go too quickly. The future is so bright in New Orleans right now considering everything that happened.

PM

Yeah, the future is very bright. We will have to see what shakes out. One thing I did want to say about Trajan Langdon before moving on, he's definitely a Game of Thrones character, right? Like, that -- I've never watched an episode, but it certainly sounds that he'd be like, "I'm Trajan Langdon, Manager General of, of the New Orleans Pelicans realm."

AL

I feel like you just wrote a Game of Thrones episode.

PM

I'd write. I --

AL

And we are going to see that next week.

PM

Well, I'm very excited to see Bleacher Report. Oh, well.

AL

Yes.

PM

Well, Andrew, thank you so much for giving us the scoop on the Lottery situation and what the Pelicans are going through. Hopefully, we'll be talking to you soon about something ridiculous based on whatever happens, but thanks again. Always appreciate having you on the show.

AL

No problem, man. Thank you.

ES

Well, I'm so informed. I learned so many things about Pelicans and draftings.

PM

So, many things. So, for our next segment, we are going to do a 3-on-3 draft, which we've done before when we have a guest for our That Actually Happened segment. And we do have that, but that's later in the show. Oh, foreshadowing.

ES

So many guests.

PM

Mhmm.

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

PM

So, before we get into that very fun guessing that we have later for this 3-on-3, we are going to draft the best onion sports articles and I'm very excited. And I hope you don't pick any of mine.

ES

I actually hacked into, into your computer, and I stole all of your information. I'm gonna pick every single one of the ones you want.

PM

Cool, cool. How did we determine? Oh, we did Rock Paper Scissors last time, right?

ES

Yes, we did.

PM

All right. Let's do it.

ES

Okay.

PM

Rock, paper, scissors, shoot.

ES

Rock, paper, scissors, shoot.

PM

Rock, paper, scissors, shoot.

ES

Rock, paper, scissors, shoot. Damn it. Rock, paper, scissors, shoot.

PM

Rock, paper, scissors, shoot.

ES

Yeah, got him. Get out of my house. I built this house. They are my logs. I harvested them.

PM

Cool.

PM

All right. So, Mike, everyone knows about The Onion. It is the satirical website that skewers in their own fun way --

PM

Mhmm.

ES

-- what is happening in our present news. I'm really starting to warm up to their sports. And I don't know what you have. But I have a combination of ones that are called Photo Finish --

PM

Okay.

ES

-- which is just the headline and then a fun photo. And then there is a one called News and Brief, where you have the headline and then a little bit of satirical writing as well.

PM

They are great. You can plow through, like I did, in 30 minutes. I plowed through three years' worth of content.

ES

It's true. All right. Well, these are all gonna be basketball-related. So, I'm gonna go to my first one, which I promise is basketball related. My first pick in the three best Onion headlines draft goes to Eric Silver. Eric, you have the floor. Thank you, dad. That was my dad, Adam Silver. I don't know if you knew from the way that my voice changed. My first pick, Employee Using Up Sick Days Before Leaving Company. And then it's just a photo of Kevin Durant.

PM

It's very good. That's very good and very timely. That was posted yesterday.

ES

It was. And that's why I liked him so much. And it's also a really good photo of Kevin Durant because he has his hood on. And he looks just like cold and upset. whenever he has this hood on. He looks like a five-year-old, who doesn't know where his mittens are.

PM

We'll post this photo, and all the photos, and the articles on the episode page at horsehoops.com.

ES

My favorite thing about the NBA, as we've talked about before, is that the NBA is like an office. So, imagine that Kevin Durant is like, "Fuck this. Hate all of you. You're all mean. I just don't like it. I'm just going to use up all the sick days that I had saved up when I was in the Oklahoma City Office." And, now, he's just gonna bounce. That's what I would do.

PM

For anyone out of the loop, it is highly rumored that Kevin Durant will leave the Warriors next season. And he's currently injured and the Warriors are doing just fine without him even though he skipped this entire round of the playoffs to nurse his injured calf. I'm very happy that more fuel has been added to the KD-might-leave fire now that the Warriors are just fine without him. So, this makes me, a Knicks fan, super stoked.

ES

Wait. Wait. Mike, are you a Knicks fan?

PM

I'm --

ES

You've never talked about it on this podcast.

PM

Oh, you should listen to the podcast more. I talk about it like every episode. It's probably very annoying.

ES

Oh, I blackout every time you say -- you talk about the Knicks. All right.

PM

Okay. So, now, are you -- are you all set?

ES

I just want -- I had a whole riff of, like, Kevin Durant working from home, but like it's fine. Just go ahead.

PM

So, my first pick in this draft actually features your father. It says Adam Silver Sends League-wide Memo.

ES

Fuck. Damnit. Shit. Ugh.

PM

Adam Silver Sends League-wide Memo Just Asking Players Where the Fuck They Want to Play.

ES

Oh, [Inaudible 17:11] list?

PM

"Enough already. Let's hash this out," says NBA Commissioner. It is very brief. So, I'd like to read the whole article.

ES

Please go ahead.

PM

In response to a litany of high profile trades and a general sense of dissatisfaction for many star players, NBA Commissioner, Adam Silver sent out a league-wide message Friday simply asking players where the fuck they wanna play basketball.

ES

I want to get an email like this. These are -- all the Multitude emails are just Amanda just like laying in the fucking keyboard.

PM

A highly underrated aspect of this Onion article is that it takes it very seriously like a real article because the day was in brackets --

ES

Very good.

PM

-- to make it look like a real official report. "Look, we're just gonna put all this bullshit to rest and figure it out now. So, everyone send me a list of their top three preferred teams, and I'll try my best to make everyone happy," said Silver in the memo. Insisting that, once all 494 players were moved to the team of their choice, he didn't want to hear any more complaints or demands until everyone was a free agent again in five years.

ES

That is so good.

PM

Everybody's constantly bitching about getting traded or leaving in free agency. And we're all sick of your shit. We're going to make this as painless as possible. Do you want to play for the Lakers? Fine. Go play for the Lakers. Do you want to be Knicks? Great. Pack your bags. Let us know now so we can all just focus on basketball. At press time, Silver sent a follow-up message to explain that everyone can't choose to play for the Warriors. It's very good.

ES

I, I just liked the idea of Adam Silver swearing.

PM

Oh, very good.

ES

Just like the fact that he says fuck so much. Very good. I, I want Adam Silver, my vampire Commissioner dad, just to just let it out. All right, Mike. I'm mad that you made my pick, but I have to delete it off my board.

PM

Sorry.

ES

And we're gonna move on. All right. I got my second pick. NBA ref Petrova – this one's really funny. NBA ref petrified after seeing depiction of own death while looking under replay hood. My favorite about this one is that it's News and Brief. It's not even in sports. Very important news from the Onion. I also have something for this. This is from San Antonio.

PM

Oh, it's very good.

ES

Staring into the distance with his mouth agape and sweat beating on his forehead, NBA referee JB DeRosa was reportedly terrified Monday after seeing a depiction of his own death while looking under the replay hood. JB was under there awhile on what seemed like a routine call. And then, all of a sudden, he pulled his head out violently. He was shaking and he had gone completely pale, said fellow referee, Sean Wright. Adding that DeRosa was in a puke-like state and completely ignored him when he was asked if he was okay. Only to later reveal to team physicians that he had glimpsed a brief spectral vision of his future demise in-between frames of an attempted blocked by LaMarcus Aldridge.

PM

That's very good. Once you said JB DeRosa, I googled JB DeRosa to see if that was a real person. And, now, I'm on NBRA.net, which is the National Basketball Referees Association website. And JB DeRosa is in a second season. He's official number 62 from Canton, Ohio. And he was born in April 1991. So, he's like a year older.

ES

He's my age.

PM

He's your age.

ES

He's really my age. Look at the – look at his – look at his face. Look at his terrified face.

PM

Very stoic.

ES

I have more to this article. After Sean Wright grabbed his shoulder, he turned around and just started muttering, "No, no. How?" as his lower lip trembled in fear. Then his nose started bleeding. We still don't know what the call was. At press time, a frantic DeRosa was desperately trying to discourage the NBA from holding its All-Star weekend in Charlotte, North Carolina this year. So, he dies in Charlotte, I guess.

PM

It's very good. And, if you want to know some fun facts about JB DeRosa, did you know that he is the son of former NBA official Joe DeRosa? And he started refereeing local CYO and recreational league games in Canton, Ohio area at age 13. He excelled in track and field in high school and college. And, during the offseason, he enjoys playing golf and traveling with his wife.

ES

My favorite part about that is how related it is to my pick.

PM

I'm just giving --

ES

And you're reading off another website.

PM

I'm just giving you facts about JB DeRosa starting in this article.

ES

He also died in Charlotte of this year. So, interesting.

PM

Whoa.

ES

Whoa. He got impaled on a big boy spike.

PM

Now, this is a old boy spike.

ES

This is the hand of a big – of a big boy. You know, they have the restaurant.

PM

Yeah. Wow.

ES

That's what happened.

PM

Well, that's fantastic. My second pick --

ES

Well, I wouldn't say fantastic about it. He saw his own death. So --

PM

Hey, at least, he saw it coming in, you know.

ES

Listen, LaMarcus Aldridge definitely bought that guy. No doubt.

PM

So, my second pick for this Onion draft is a recent one that says, "Duke anthropology professor devastated to learn promising student dropping out." And it's a picture of Zion Williamson.

ES

Oh, that's a very good one.

PM

Fretting over the future of the young man he had once considered a protégé, Duke anthropology professor, Edwin Greeley, was reportedly devastated Friday upon hearing that his most promising pupil, Zion Williamson, was dropping out of school. "Zion is one of the most engaged and thoughtful students I've encountered in my 30 years in academia. It's simply shame to watch him squander these immense gifts," said Greeley, adding that under the right tutelage, he had no doubt that Williamson was destined to become a world-renowned anthropologist, perhaps, even on par with the likes of Bronislaw Malinowski or Clifford Geertz. "He has a grip on the subtle differences between early Mesoamerican cultures that you just can't teach. Zion was always staying after class to chat or coming to my office hours, but now he's throwing his life away for reasons I can't begin to understand. I told him that we could arrange --

ES

For sports. It's not even – if I made a list of all the things that humans have done over time, sports not on the top.

PM

I told him that we could arrange some sort of financial aid, but he just said this wasn't the place for him.

ES

Fuck. Yeah, obviously, he needs financial aid.

PM

I'm afraid the loss of such a promising young academic will be devastating for the whole field. I don't know why anyone so talented would do this." At press time, Greeley was trying to convince the – the burgeoning anthropologist that a \$30,000-per-year adjunct professorship was easily within reach for someone with his promise.

ES

That's pretty – okay. That's pretty good. Listen, he'll always have shoes. You won't break out of shoes in the anthropology field.

PM

What do you think the over/under was on the number of classes Zion attended?

ES

Hmm.

PM

Like, he had to probably go the first week, right?

ES

Sure.

PM

And that was about it.

ES

I don't know how many classes they have at Duke. And like everyone who went to Duke --

PM

Let's just say, they're not gonna be on the clock.

ES

-- for one trimester. So, like, I don't even want to try.

PM

Regardless of how many classes, I think the number of homework assignments that he completed --

ES

Well, like, three.

PM

-- that he did himself was about --

ES

Three to five. That's --

PM

And that's an overestimate. I would say one to two.

ES

Listen, he's the burgeoning anthropologist. He did all of his anthropology homework. You know, in the beginning of this, I was like, "Is this a real article?" It could have been. Like, interviewing people who are like, "Oh, I'm gonna miss Zion. He was such a good student.

PM

He did quote a lot before entering the draft saying how much he loved Duke and how much he loved the college experience. It's like, "Yeah, dude, everybody would love college if they got to just play basketball, be beloved by the entire campus, and not have to do any homework on their own."

ES

Yeah.

PM

That sounds pretty fucking great, dude.

ES

Yeah, that sounds just like my college experience where everyone knew my name and loved me, and I was on national television.

PM

And I didn't have to stay up till 4:30 every morning doing engineering problem sets and saying, "Oh, I got four hours to sleep last night not too bad of a night."

ES

Yup, that was me. I love those engineering problems. That's -- ugh. All right. Mike, I'm gonna lift your spirits from my third pick. Are you ready?

PM

Cool. Yes.

ES

This is just a Photo Finish.

PM

Cool.

ES

So, it's going to be really quick and to the point. Are you ready?

PM

Mhmm.

ES

Joel Embiid downing bucket of lukewarm shrimp in preparation for game three.

PM

I need to see this photo.

ES

Do you want? Okay. Here's the photo.

PM

Lukewarm shrimp. Oh, my.

ES

It's just a – I don't know whoever got this photo to start with. But it – it's just Joel Embiid with, like, a Photoshop bucket of shrimp on – in his hands. You can tell it's lukewarm. Like, I don't know if they put shading on it' but like it just doesn't look fresh.

PM

No. It does not.

ES

Joel Embiid also looks like – he's like, "Oh, wait, this was my shrimp tie. This is my, my shrimp before I – before my games.

PM

It reminds me of a one that they did in the past for the Yankees. It was CC Sabathia eats homemade baseball marinara sub. And it's him eating a – like a meatball sub, but the meatballs are baseballs.

ES

Meatballs. It's very good. Listen, if it came out that Joel Embiid went out into a seafood buffet in Toronto every time that he had an away game, I would believe it. I would 100 percent believe it.

PM

Yeah. I mean he did have the whole Shirley Temple thing.

ES

I guess he tried that.

PM

You're – you're aware before he was playing for his rookie season, he was out the whole year with a foot injury. There were reports that he used to order pictures of Shirley Temple room service to his room.

ES

That's [inaudible 25:28].

PM

Which – I can't --

ES

We talked about this. Before the Join the Party secrets show, we were killing time and we did a fantasy draft for garnishes for cocktail.

PM

Right.

ES

And Brandon was the second pick. And he chose Maraschino Cherries.

PM

Hey, Brandon, who is in the room sitting behind Eric Silver, how's it going?

ES

Brandon. So, he chose Maraschino Cherries. And I'm like, "I'm sorry. Do you love Shirley Temples? But don't worry, Brandon drafted expensive Maraschino Cherries. Like, good shit.

PM

I didn't know this existed. I didn't know they're for real.

ES

I didn't know either.

PM

But, apparently, they are and they're pricey.

ES

They're true. Listen, Joel Embiid, you could get expensive Shirley Temple's love.

PM

He could. I can't even fathom drinking a pitcher. Like, even halfway through a glass of a Shirley Temple, I'm like, "That's enough sugar for the month."

ES

I don't like that. I can't. That, that, that bad cherry flavor.

PM

I used – I used to pound those as kids.

ES

That was – that's a whole thing you do. That's what the kids are for. It's for just like getting super hyped up at someone's Bar Mitzvah. That's what it's for.

PM

Hell yeah.

ES

All right. Mike, I'm ready.

PM

All right. My final pick, I have one that is near and dear to my heart and something that I've dealt with on many occasions. Report, pickup basketball player too sweaty to guard.

ES

I should have known that you would pick one that was just like not about the NBA at all.

PM

It's too real. Allowing his competitive spirit to give way to revulsion, local 27-year-old Phillip Rayburn reported Thursday that a fellow pickup basketball player was too sweaty to guard. "I know I need to stay on him when he starts trying to back me down in the post, but I really don't wanna touch his sopping wet back," said Rayburn with – on no less than six occasions passively gave up the lane rather than risk banging into the sweat-drenched man barreling towards him. "I don't even like boxing him out on rebounds, because he just drips down on top of me. Christ, I can't even hand check him without getting wet." At press time, the man had reportedly just returned from a water break dripping from the mouth with a combination of drool, sweat, and Gatorade."

ES

Yup, that feels like me. I can't believe they reported on me. That was hurtful.

PM

I have dealt with this too many times, where you want to play nice defense in the post, but the guy is just so wet and gross. And then your shirt becomes wet and gross. And it's not wet and gross with your own supply. It's someone else's moisture.

ES

Yeah.

PM

So, then, if you're trying to wipe your face or something, it's super gross. I really appreciate the sweaty dudes out there who bring multiple shirts.

ES

Yes.

PM

I've played pickup with some guys who bring two or three shirts. And they'll change it if their shirt gets too wet, which is so kind and thoughtful.

ES

I'm so considerate.

PM

And it probably feels better on yourself too.

ES

Yes, sweaty shirts are the worst. I'm gonna shout out to my sweaty boy gang out there. Summers coming. It sucks. I just can't. It's too hot.

PM

I – I'm a sweaty boy as well. I get it. So, you got to come prepared and come correct and bring an extra shirt.

ES

Mike, I've got to level with you. When you're sweaty and your – it's like you're in a club. And, like, there's an attractive woman, who has been dancing it is sweaty and looks better because of it.

PM

Mhmm.

ES

And you could say that about some athletically gifted men out there who gets sweaty and they glisten as they jump through the air. Men of a different stature don't look as good when sweaty, Mike. I'm not talking to those who glisten when they sweat, unfortunately.

PM

Well, I don't know if I glisten while I sweat. But I will say that my, my, my head and my feet get really sweaty. So, if I'm dancing at the club, my hair will get all sweat and wet and even

my face, when it's not slicked back, it's long and can go down to, like, my mouth. So that's just --

ES

It's like you just have a whip on top of your head.

PM

It's just a bad look.

ES

Do you also whip your head back and forth?

PM

If the song comes on, yes.

ES

Oh, no.

PM

Otherwise, I don't want to hurt my neck.

ES

You're gonna just poison everybody.

PM

Well I mean I don't know. Yeah, that's true.

ES

That's poison damage right there.

PM

Mhmm. Hey, I'm gonna roll for poison.

ES

Wet, sweat, poison. It's a good draft. It's a good draft.

PM

This was good. Fun time.

ES

I have some other ones that I was excited about, but I'm --

PM

We'll do them in the 5-on-5.

ES

It's true. I have some – actually, there are two. I'm super – I'm actually very excited.

PM

Yes. I had a very hard time choosing just three. My initial whittling down I had 10.

ES

Oh, shit.

PM

And then – and then it's gonna even be hard to pick just two for the 5-on-5. But check that out on patreon.com/horsehoops. So, Eric, let's go to our next segment, which will be That Actually Happened. We had a –

ES

Wow. That actually happened.

PM

That actually happened. We had a wonderful guest, Zack Meisel, who writes for the athletic, talk to us about the Cleveland championship celebration and the time, which actually happened, that J.R. Smith threw a bowl of soup at an assistant coach. So, Eric, for this section of That Actually Happened, we're gonna kind of do an opposite of what we did last time. Because, last episode, we talked about perfect human being, Klay Thompson. And this time instead, we're gonna be talking about interesting human being.

ES

Chaotic guy, J.R. Smith

PM

J.R. Smith himself. J.R. Smith has done a lot of things over his career. Some of which have been very fun for my New York Knicks. Other of which have been very frustrating for LeBron James. And his tenure in Cleveland was certainly incredibly interesting. So, in order to discuss this, we have brought on a special guest, a senior writer for the Athletic. He covers a lot of different Cleveland sports. It's Zack Meisel. Zach, how's it going?

ZM

It's an honor to be on with you guys. How are you?

PM

We are great. It's an honor to have you

ES

Thank you for legitimizing our not sports podcasts again. We really appreciate that.

ZM

Well, you guys focus on the things that everybody should focus on, the off the court shenanigans. And I appreciate that.

PM

When we were talking I asked you if you knew about the infamous J.R. Smith soup throwing incident. And, just so that all of our listeners are aware, yes, that did actually happen. J.R. Smith threw --

ES

Oh, spoilers.

ZM

They did happen.

PM

J.R. Smith threw a bowl of soup at an assistant coach after a shootaround. And it wasn't just a bowl of soup. It was a bowl of chicken tortilla soup, which I think makes it the most perfect soup. I can't think of a better soup to throw. You got the little chunks of tortilla in there. It's a little spicy. Damon Jones, who's the assistant coach that had it being thrown at him said that the entire bowl was thrown at him. And it was the first bowl out of the pot. So, it was hot. What do you know about this situation and then just the aftermath of it?

ZM

The 24 to 48 hours after it happened and it happened -- I think it was a Thursday at shootaround. So, you're talking like lunchtime. And the next day or two made for the greatest sports talk radio in Cleveland history, because he didn't know what kind of soup it was for almost 24 hours. And you had radio hosts on air trying to debate, "Well, would it be better if he threw tomato basil or if he threw chicken noodle? Could it have been chili? And were there more chunks?" And it's like they're legitimately talking about this on the radio and trying to determine, you know, how this might impact the team moving forward. It was incredible. And you find out it's chicken tortilla. And, like, because J.R. Smith didn't really elaborate on it when he met with the media, no one really talked to Damon Jones. It just left open all these possibilities. And, you know, you hear things -- and it's why you guys have this segment. That you think -- you think -- like, if you just said that, you'd -- you would just assume someone was joking. And, and there's no way this actually happened. And, instead, with that Cavs team, especially because of the characters that they had because they had been together for a while and been to the finals and won a championship. And it was like it got to a point where any story that came out of Cleveland was believable. And I think this was just the peak of that, where the top headline in Cleveland for 24 hours was which type of soup did this player throw at a coach. When have you ever heard anything remotely close to that?

ES

I want to broach this question now because I think it's extremely important. It's which type of soup would be the worst soup or best soup if you -- if you are the thrower. Which is the best soup to throw at a person? I still think it's clam chowder, because, one, it's fishy; two, it's creamy. So, it's gonna be hard to get out of your clothes. And, three, it's funny to say. Like chowder. Saying that like you threw chowder at someone just feels funnier than saying just like tomato bisque.

ZM

Yeah. You want – you want to think of what's going to leave a lasting impact. And maybe, like, what type of soup would require maybe two trips to the laundry to, to really get it out?

PM

Yeah.

ZM

Yeah, I think you're right. It's interesting. I'm an avid soup connoisseur. Like, I'm the guy who --

PM

Ooh.

ES

Good. You're – you're in good hand.

ZM

-- will eat a bowl of – yeah. I'll eat a bowl of chicken noodle soup when it's 85 degrees outside. I don't care. And, so, I feel like I was – you know, the person. I know a lot of friends were asking me, you know, what kind of soup would make sense here in the situation. But it's also – they had a game that night. So, what kind of soup are you eating for lunch that you're gonna feel fine, you know, six hours later?

PM

Yeah. That's surprising that they would serve chicken tortilla soup as a pregame meal, because that feels, like, a little spicy and stuff. Like, what if things get a little smelly in the locker room pregame?

ES

I never really put this together though. So, like, this was food that the Cavs served that was like their meal before they went out. Like, it was from the Cavs?

PM

It was – it was after shootaround.

ES

Okay. I just kind of assumed that J.R. Smith went to like a Hale and Hearty and was like – he was like, “I have to have a sandwich for you as well.” Like, I didn't – I didn't put it together.

ZM

The one that I can't get out of my head that I – you know, I wish we could run a simulation on this. But, like, if you had a Hearty chili, I think that would be pretty tough to get out. I keep thinking of the office scene when Kevin brings in his big pot of chili and spills it everywhere.

PM

Right. Yeah.

ZM

And it seemed like that was really, really difficult to clean up. And I just wonder if – you know, Damon Jones said it, like, kind of hit – it hit him in the arm. Kind of like, you know, it was hot and it, it got him in the side. But I don't think it was a direct hit. And I wonder maybe if it was a chili if that would have been easier to toss because it kind of – the consistency helps it stay together.

ES

Zach, you're a massive sports fan. And I think that I like putting this in context within like the larger sports existence. Is this one of the wildest interactions between a player and a coach that you've ever heard of? Because, like, the only thing that I could think about is something that is, like, way worse was just like Latrell Sprewell flipping out on Jeff Van Gundy.

ZM

Yeah.

PM

Mhmm.

ES

Yeah. I love how that's buried in my mind forever. Is this one of the wildest stories that you heard between how players and coaches talk to each other?

ZM

Yeah, because I'm sure stuff happens behind the scenes that we never find out about. But this was so – like, what level of anger must you have to not, like, throw a punch or go at someone but to throw soup? Like --

PM

To throw a soup.

ZM

-- you have to be a certain degree of angry, but not too angry to the point where it will get physical. It's just – you know, Bill Simmons used to write about the Tyson zone, where like Mike Tyson had reached a point where anything he did was believable, because he was just so crazy and he had all these stories about him. And I think – like, this is – this is in that – in that vicinity, where J.R. Smith is so out there that I think something like this is believable. And, you know, there's probably some great stories that we'll never know about just because people don't want them getting out. I'm so glad, so grateful that this did make it out to the public.

ES

This is hilarious. This is the second reference to the Tyson zone we've had in two episodes.

PM
Yeah.

ES
Like, if you went all the way through the other side, past Tiger Woods, past Mike Tyson, you would find Klay Thompson, like, being as normal as possible on the other side. It's like Klay Thompson was in a Gap, and he bought two pairs of jeans. But, yup, that's entirely possible.

ZM
I can see that.

PM
I think J.R. Smith and Klay Thompson are, like, opposite versions of each other. Like, they're the anti-Dark Mirror world, Upside Down version of each other, where, if you had a story that was crazy, ridiculous, and bad, you'd be like, "That has to be J.R. Smith."

ES
Mhmm.

PM
And, if it was crazy, ridiculous, and good, it's like, "That, clearly, has to be Klay Thompson." Did J.R. Smith read the newspaper before his game? No, that has to be Klay Thompson.

ES
Though, if J.R. Smith or Klay Thompson were sponsored by Chocolate Milk, I would believe both. Like, there is an intersection there.

ZM
Yeah. And I think, like, every championship team needs a J.R. Smith though. I mean you have to – like, Dennis Rodman for the Bulls back in the day. I mean you have to have that guy who's got a screw too loose that makes the opponent think and makes fans – like, keeps him on the edge of their seat because you never know what he's gonna do.

PM
Was it ever revealed what made J.R. Smith so mad that he threw soup at Damon Jones?

ZM
That's the thing. No one ever knows that. And then I know Damon Jones said that they went three – they went three months without talking.

PM
Mhmm. Yeah.

ZM

And they're around each other every day. So, you know, maybe, if it was like colder soup and, and didn't leave that much – you know, I don't know if he had like burns or anything. But maybe they would have patched things up sooner if it was the different type.

ES

I learned something really important about J.R. Smith because this was like the first soup. Like, it was so hot. It was the first soup that came out of the cauldron. Is J.R. Smith the kind of person who wants to be first on the lunch line?

ZM

That's a good question. You know, the other thing too that's dangerous is, remember, J.R. Smith does not wear a shirt very often.

PM

Yes.

ZM

You know, you'll recall, the moment they beat the Warriors, he didn't wear a shirt the entire summer. You know, they stopped in Vegas on the way back from California after game seven. And, like, every photo of him in the club in Vegas, getting off the plane back in Cleveland, the entire day of the parade, he's never wearing a shirt in any of that. And, so, I wonder, you know, if he's shirtless in the lunchroom, he's a target. You know, if Damon Jones ever wanted to get him back – you know, if you throw a bowl of soup at someone not wearing a shirt, that's, that's going to be a lot worse than Damon Jones, who is probably wearing, you know, a button-down or something like that.

ES

Zach, this is why we have guests. This is just like in the outside that I've never even considered.

PM

Yeah. So, that was the other thing we wanted to make sure we touched on. Was that J.R. Smith shirtless celebration week or – because you're right, it just felt like --

ZM

So right.

ES

The season of J.R. Smith shirtless.

PM

Yeah. It felt – it just felt like, the entire offseason, he was shirtless and celebrating. So, being around Cleveland, being there for like the celebration and the parade and all of that, like, how did all of that go especially with him being shirtless for so much of it?

ZM

So, I'll try to paint you a picture. You know, it had been 52 years since any Cleveland team won a title. And, so, you can imagine the pent up frustration. You know, people had written about what it might be like if it ever happens. And a lot of Cleveland teams got close and then had heartbreak. So, you just bottle up all that emotion in Game Seven. So, I live, at the time, in like the smack dab center of downtown on the street that has no traffic, pedestrians only. It's got restaurants on both sides of the street. And it's like, you know, I could see Quicken Loans Arena from my apartment window. So, very close. So, game seven that day, the Indians were home. I covered the Indians game. And then I went home. And, you know, the funny thing is, downtown, people were packed like sardines by like 4:00 PM. And the game didn't even start – I think it was like an 8:00 PM start that night, Eastern time. And, so, the restaurants were so filled. I used to remember, like, keeping my door open to my apartment. And these random people would just keep coming in. I didn't know, like, half the people in my apartment. But everybody, everybody wanted to be downtown just for that moment just in case. And the thing that no one ever talks about is, if the Cavs had lost and you have tens of thousands of angry, frustrated people dealing with another year of heartbreak, I don't know how that would have gone. And I think there would have been a lot of arrests and a lot of things lit on fire. Instead, it was – it was incredible. So, everybody in my apartment ran outside.

ES

Both all the people you knew, all the people you didn't know.

ZM

Yeah. Like, hand in hand whether you knew this person or not. And you get to the front door of the apartment building. And just you can't move. Like, the street is so packed. And people are just going crazy. You have people in their apartments pouring champagne out the windows onto the people below. People were passing shopping carts through the crowd over their heads, flowerpots, other people. It was absolute mayhem. And there was just like this constant roar. And, so, you had people climbing trees, people climbing street signs, people climbing fire trucks. And you just have people walking around, high fiving strangers, hugging strangers. There was – a few blocks away at West Sixth Street, there's a bunch of bars, a bunch of clubs. I just remember someone pulled up their car in the middle of the street, parked it, opened all the doors, and started blasting music. And then just a group of people was just dancing in the middle of the street. And this is like 2:00 in the morning on a Sunday night.

PM

That's good.

ZM

And, and, so, the craziest part is that Cleveland fans drank the entire city out of its alcohol supply. Like, you went bar to bar and everyone was out of beer. Everyone was out of liquor.

PM

Wow.

ZM

I remember we finally found this little dive bar that was out of everything except, like, top shelf whiskey. And I remember they were like, "We can give you guys this, but it's gonna be, like – I think it was like – it was like \$25 a shot."

PM

Ugh.

ES

Ugh.

ZM

My buddy was like, "You know, if we're ever gonna do this, it's going to be right now, right?" So, I think we did that. You know, I remember waking up the next morning. There was garbage, like, all over the place. But there was – there was just this incredible vibe in the city for months. Like, everybody was in a good mood for a while. And I know the Indians had started a 14-game winning streak right around that time. And then they rode that wave to the World Series. And it was like if you could script what a city would have – like, how they'd finally want to get to that point after 52 years, that would be it. And, like, the day of the parade, you know, obviously, J.R. Smith not wearing a shirt probably didn't even know where his shirts were at that point. People started making shirts of J.R. Smith's body with all his tattoos. So, you could wear the shirt, and it looks like –

PM

Oooh, it's very good.

ZM

-- you were J.R. Smith being shirtless.

PM

It's really good.

ZM

So, it was – you know, no one knows exactly how many people attended the parade. The number 1.3 million was thrown out there, which, for Cleveland, is a ton. But the parade also took, like, several hours longer than it was supposed to just because there were so many people spilling into the streets. The floats were moving extremely slow. You know, it, it's interesting because the only experience people could point to is if you were alive in 1964 and you witnessed the Browns winning the Super Bowl. That was it. But most of Cleveland wasn't around for that or doesn't remember that. And, so, what's crazy is you think about this is what people will think about. Everyone who got to experience it, this is what you'll be talking about for decades. And, so, you know, it was – it was certainly a few days that no one will forget.

ES

That's wild.

PM

That's fantastic.

ES

You know, I feel like so many Cleveland fans, after LeBron left, they're like, "You know what? We got our championship. It's fine." And, like, I don't think I really understood what that meant. But I think that, when you experience this, yeah, I would be satisfied with that too. I don't have to follow sports for, like, another decade. I'm fine. Whatever.

ZM

Cleveland doesn't have – they've got some breweries, but they're not like downtown right next to the ballpark. But downtown smelled like beer for weeks. And I will never forget that.

PM

Good.

ZM

And it really was like a party for an entire city. And a city that has crappy weather nine months out of the year. A city that was the butt of every joke. You know, there was that montage that ESPN always aired anytime a Cleveland team was playing on their network. And there was a whole documentary earlier that summer about BelieveLand.

PM

Right.

ZM

And, finally, I think all that could be put to rest. And it – you know, it's weird because like sports are stupid. And why – you know, who cares who --

ES

Well, that's gonna be the punk quote. We're gonna send it to the Athletic. Yeah.

ZM

It's, it's true though. Like, we – people care so much about on-field results when really, like, you know, you're still gonna wake up the next day and go about your daily life. But the way that's – you know, everyone was just galvanized by that championship. And it was just so cool. And, like, Matthew Dellavedova is a cult hero in this city --

PM

Oh, baby.

ZM

-- and will be the rest of his life.

PM

The chipmunk himself.

ZM

Like, that's, that's the stuff that sticks with you. And I think that's what was so cool about it.

PM

That's great. And we're very happy for the City of Cleveland. Now, I know you cover the Indians. And there's something that you had mentioned that I wanted to discuss with you. It was when they made that World Series run, LeBron James and some other members of the Cavs at the time attended the World Series game. And LeBron was wearing Cleveland Indians gear. I, as a Yankee fan, know that LeBron is a huge notorious Yankee fan. He wore a Yankee hat a lot during his earlier career. He went to a bunch of Yankee games, got special tickets and all of that. Did the Indians just kind of ignore that when it came through? Or, like, how did that all go down?

ZM

There are a lot of people who have still not gotten over that when he was wearing the Yankees' hat. I think it was a playoff game in 2007 maybe.

PM

Yup.

ZM

You know, he grew up a Yankees fan and a Cowboys fan. I think he liked the Chicago Bulls. Like, come on. I mean, clearly, just a front runner. [Inaudible 46:35].

PM

He's favorite tennis player was Andre Agassi.

ES

So, you're saying he was a child in 1990? Yes, that's what it felt like.

ZM

You know -- and it's funny because now it seems like in the NBA, that's, like, everyone just wants to be on the front runner. And you just talk to your friends, who are gonna be free agents and decide what team you want to make great. And, so, it's weird. You know, that was such a cool moment when Rajai Davis hits a game-time home run in the eighth inning and the Indians come back in game seven and tie it. And LeBron is like flexing on the camera from his suite and, like, wearing a shirt that says Cleveland or nowhere even though he decided to go nowhere a couple years later. You know, it was --

PM

Also, the Cleveland or nowhere, there's the, like, blank or nowhere shirts. It's made by a New York company. So --

ZM

But, yeah, like that cool – that moment was awesome. He had never talked about the Browns. And he started tweeting and talking about the Browns more when he was here the second time. I do think there's a part of him that just grew up and realized, like, "Hey, you're from Northeast Ohio, you can root for the teams that you grew up seeing every day instead of the team who were just in the championship in the finals in the World Series every year." So, the crazy part is those guys were hammered in the sweep every game. Like, Channing Frye and J.R. Smith were just having the best time. Kevin Love was in there a bunch. So, it was fun seeing just the spirit and the camaraderie between the different teams. And, you know, now the Cleveland Browns are kind of good. So, maybe --

PM
Yeah.

ES
Yeah.

ZM
-- maybe that'll happen with all the teams here.

ES
You know, during the World Series, I heard that J.R. Smith actually went down from the suite, ran down to the bottom level, and kept trying to lean over and catch foul balls. I heard that.

ZM
Yeah. And --

PM
Just trying to catch them in a bowl of soup actually.

ZM
That's – you stole my joke.

PM
Yeah.

ES
Zack, this is awesome. Thank you so much for everything that you can tell us. Where can people find you? When they hear you on this amazing episode, they'd be like, "Well, this guy – like, I like the cut of his jib," they say to themselves.

ZM
Uh, has that ever happened? Has anyone ever said that to themselves? That phrase?

ES

I'm sure there are sailors who say – you did start this conversation by saying, “Oh, boy.” So, it's entirely possible.

ZM

Yeah, I'm on Twitter [@ZackMeisel](#). You can read my stuff on The Athletic. Subscribe today. We have crazy discounts every day. If you pay full price, that's on you. You can get 30 percent - 40 percent off all the time. And, yeah, I think that's it.

PM

Yeah. So, if you want to read Zack write about things, just remember that he said Sports are stupid when you're putting your credit card information for your subscription to the Athletic or buy one of his three books. Just – you know, just remind yourself Sports are stupid. I'm paying money to read him write about them.

ZM

Sports are stupid, but I think this – the other stuff. Like, I write about Mario Kart or Terry Francona eating \$44 worth of ice cream the night before playoff game. Like, stuff like that. That's the stuff that's not stupid.

PM

Zach, thanks so much for coming on. Thank you for giving us the details about J.R. Smith and all the things that he actually did for the things That Actually Happened.

ZM

You got it. I'm gonna go eat a bowl of chicken noodle. I'll see you guys later.

PM

All right. We're gonna have some lobster bisque.

ES

There it is. There it is.

PM

I was sitting on it.

ES

Well, Cleveland, no way.

PM

We talked about more than just these Cleveland things with Zack. And we talked about more than just the Pelicans with Andrew. If you want to check out overtime audio, which is going to be the stuff that had to get cut from those interviews, you can head on over to Patreon. That'll be the, the upcoming overtime episodes.

ES

Wow. Wow.

PM
Yeah.

ES
Yeah.

PM
Way more stuff.

ES
Oh, no. Oh, look, Mike, I'm stuck in this register.

PM
Well, let's cut to the outro then.

ES
All right. Let's go. Do, do, do, do, do, do.

[50:22]

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