

SPORTS VOTING
A.SPAULDING
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WRAP
5:35 TRT

(ANCHOR)

SOME SPORTSWRITERS TODAY ARE VOTING FOR CERTAIN
BASEBALL PLAYERS TO WIN THE NATIONAL LEAGUE PLAYER OF THE
MONTH AWARD FOR APRIL. THE AWARD IS ONE OF MANY AWARDS GIVEN
TO MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS EVERY YEAR. SPORTS
JOURNALISTS ALSO GIVE OUT OTHER AWARDS SUCH AS THE MOST
VALUABLE PLAYER AND THE CY YOUNG AWARD. HOWEVER, SOME
PEOPLE ARE QUESTIONING THESE WRITERS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE
AWARD. ComRadio's ANTHONY SPAULDING HAS MORE ON THIS ETHICAL
ISSUE.

TAKE SPAULDING WRAP FINAL 5:05 RT

(NATURAL SOUND)

AS PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES FIRST BASEMAN RYAN HOWARD
CRACKED HIS FIFTH HOME RUN OF THE SEASON, ALL THE PITTSBURGH
PIRATES FANS COULD DO WAS PUT THEIR HEADS DOWN IN SHAME. THEY
KNEW HOWARD WAS A THREAT BECAUSE HE WAS NOT JUST THE PHILLIES
CLEAN-UP HITTER, BUT HE WAS THE 2006 MOST VALUABLE PLAYER OF
THE NATIONAL LEAGUE. HOWARD GOT THE AWARD BECAUSE THE
BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION VOTED FOR HIM TO WIN THE PRIZE.
THE BBWAA VOTES ON A PLAYER WHO THEY THINK IS THE BEST PLAYER

IN PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL. HOWEVER, SOME PEOPLE FEEL THE WRITERS GROUP SHOULD NOT BE VOTING FOR THESE AWARDS BECAUSE THEY ARE CREATING THEIR OWN NEWS. BALTIMORE SUN SPORTS EDITOR STEVE BIEN-AIME SAYS SPORTS JOURNALISTS ARE THE BEST PEOPLE TO VOTE.

BIEN AIME SOT 1

“They would be the most knowledgeable. Often times it is going to be the local media that are going to watch all 162 games and can give you information that won’t be seen in the highlight reel.”

THE BBWAA BELIEVES JOURNALISTS ARE THE MOST QUALIFIED TO VOTE, ACCORDING TO PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER COLUMNIST PHIL SHERIDAN. LIKE BIEN AIME, NEW YORK TIMES BASEBALL REPORTER JACK CURRY SAYS THE WRITERS ARE THE BEST VOTERS BECAUSE THEY WERE THERE FROM THE START.

CURRY SOT

“If you go back 80, 90, a hundred years, it was a time where all there was were newspaper writers covering the teams and I frankly think because of that tradition that has been built up, I think the writers earned the right to vote.”

THE BBWAA HAS BEEN VOTING FOR THE MVP AWARD SINCE 1931. DESPITE THEIR TRADITION, SOME NEWSPAPERS SUCH AS THE TIMES AND THE BALTIMORE SUN HAVE BARRED THEIR REPORTERS FROM VOTING FOR THESE AWARDS. CURRY SAYS THE TIMES HAS A REASONABLE ARGUMENT.

CURRY SOT 2

“The New York Times’ argument is they believe that we should cover the news, but not make the news.”

CURRY ALSO SAYS THE TIMES WANTED TO AVOID SITUATIONS WHERE THEIR REPORTERS COULD POSSIBLY INFLUENCE A VOTE IF IT INVOLVED A BASEBALL PLAYER FROM NEW YORK. DESPITE THIS RULING, SOME READERS FEEL CURRY HAS A BIAS WHEN HE IS COVERING A TEAM OR WHEN HE VOTES. CURRY SAYS THAT IS NOT TRUE. RATHER, CURRY HAS A DIFFERENT TYPE OF BIAS.

CURRY SOT 3

“I’m interested in covering a good story. I don’t care who wins the game. I just want to write about a good story.

HOWEVER WHEN ASKED ABOUT BIASES, CURRY SAYS THE VOTING SOMETIMES BREAKS DOWN ALONG THOSE LINES. IN ADDITION, CURRY SAYS SOME JOURNALISTS SHOULD NOT VOTE FOR THESE AWARDS.

CURRY SOT 4

“The TV guys and the radio guys who cover the games get paid by the team. So, they are not good candidates to vote for the awards because they have a financial interest in how the team does.”

AT USA TODAY, DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR JIM WELCH SAYS HE VOTES FOR AWARDS SUCH AS THE HEISMAN TROPHY IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL AND THE JOHN WOODEN AWARD IN COLLEGE BASKETBALL. WELCH SAYS HE LIKES VOTING FOR THESE AWARDS.

WELCH SOT 1

“I’m comfortable with the ones I do. It’s consistent with our news organization’s policy and it is consistent with my own personal view as to what level do I want to participate and what kind of an impact I am comfortable with.”

WELCH SAYS THE POLICY IS BASED ON A COMFORT LEVEL. ALSO, HE SAYS THE HEISMAN VOTING IS MADE UP OF ABOUT SEVEN HUNDRED PEOPLE, WHICH HE SAYS HIS VOTE WILL MAKE LITTLE IMPACT ON WHO WINS THE AWARD. EVEN THOUGH THE BBWAA HAS A LOT OF VOTERS THAT PARTAKE IN VOTING FOR THESE AWARDS, WELCH SAYS HE WILL NOT VOTE IN IT.

RECENTLY, SOME BASEBALL PLAYERS HAVE PUT IN THEIR CONTRACTS THAT IF THEY MANAGED TO PLACE IN THE TOP TEN IN VOTING FOR THE MVP, THEY WILL RECEIVE MONEY. PENN STATE UNIVERSITY JOURNALISM PROFESSOR MALCOLM MORAN SAYS THIS IS ONE EXAMPLE OF A PROBLEM THAT WAS NOT A CONCERN IN THE PAST. MORAN SOT 1

“You got a plaque. It was something that was on your resume.”

MORAN ALSO SAYS THAT PROBLEMS SUCH AS STEROIDS ARE ALSO A BIG CONCERN WITH DECIDING WHO SHOULD WIN SUCH AWARDS.

MORAN SOT 2

“While it may be true that a reporter would have a level of expertise about performance, there is little or no expertise necessarily when it comes to who’s clean, who’s dirty, how do you establish that.”

SOME PEOPLE HAVE SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO THIS ETHICAL PROBLEM. THE NEWS-GAZETTE COLUMNIST TONY BLEILL SAYS AWARDS SUCH AS THE MLB HALL OF FAME SHOULD BE DECIDED BY THE HALL ITSELF. CURRY BELIEVES NEWSPAPERS SHOULD DECIDE ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.

Curry SOT 5

“If one person has been there for 30 years and has never given you any instance to think that this person wasn't objective, allow them to have the vote. If somebody else has been there for six years and you think they're awful close to so-and-so, and so-and-so might be up for the MVP, I am not really sure if we really want him to vote.”

FAWCETT SAYS THERE IS NO RIGHT WAY TO ESTABLISH THIS RULE.

FAWCETT SOT 1

“So no matter what way you choose to select these things, there is always going to be someone critical of it.”

HOWEVER, FAWCETT BELIEVES THAT JOURNALISTS SHOULD STICK TO THEIR PROFESSION.

FAWCETT SOT 2

“At the core of the profession, ethically you're supposed to be objective.”

THIS FINE LINE BETWEEN SPORTS JOURNALISTS REPORTING THE NEWS AND CREATING THE NEWS WILL BE DEBATED FOR YEARS TO COME.

I'M ANTHONY SPAULDING, REPORTING FOR ComRadio.

(Anchor)

THE PLAYER OF THE MONTH AWARD WILL BE ANNOUNCED EARLY
NEXT WEEK.