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Cryin' Shame

Baseball season's imminent cancellation greater blow to fans than players, owners

In the past few weeks, many have been at a loss to fully comprehend the deep discussions of "salary caps" and "revenue sharing." But what has not been as elusive is the bottom line: no baseball.

For what all the blustering and blowups really amount to is the stoppage, at least for this season, of America's national pastime. And at this late hour there seems to be no hope for its revival.

On an economic level, the losses are immense and hit everyone from hot dog vendors to ticket sellers. Unfortunately, much of the focus of this debate has been on money. This "dollars and cents" mentality doesn't fully encompass the entire issue, for some of the strike's worst repercussions are those that can't be measured.

The Nike "Play ball. Please." campaign reflects the social effects of a game gone Hollywood. The ad with a lone fan doing the wave amid the vast, bare stands rings true with die-hard fans who feel deserted by their favorite game.

For those seasoned fans and amateurs alike, the season that looked so promising will most likely end in disappointment.

The pass-the-buck mind-frame that has permeated talks from the beginning brought neither side closer to an agreement. The one revelation that never graced the negotiating tables is the fact that it doesn't really matter whose fault it is the strike happened. It did and that's that.

If both sides had really been serious about the game, perhaps the strike wouldn't have happened. Even if it did, it certainly wouldn't have snuffed out the rest of the season.

In the event that neither side would reach an agreement, "Sports Illustrated" decided to write its own ending to the tumultuous season. The fictitious account began right after a labor reconciliation and ended with the Cubs winning the World Series.

Though the piece was written as a joke, the real tragedy of the situation is that it's probably the only record anyone will have of this ill-fated season.

With no hope in site, fans, old and new, will have to content themselves with a whimsical article and the knowledge that greed and baseball don't mix.

Abolishing parole possible solution



PAT McNEILL
Columnist

For those of you who are considering a law enforcement career here in South Carolina, I'd like for you to answer a potential sample question from the Department of Corrections entrance exam:

Q: You have an inmate who has been convicted of murder and sex offenses. He is serving a life sentence and appears to show very little remorse. While in the trusty program, he flunked a sobriety test and was apprehended while purchasing drugs. What is your best course of action?

- Put him in solitary.
- Put him in detox.
- Take him out of the trusty program and keep him under tight supervision.
- Give him a state vehicle and let him run out to Food Lion for some toilet paper...alone.

As you've probably guessed by now, the correct answer is "d." This is how convicted murderer and sex offender Joseph Pooler was allowed to drive around in a South Carolina Department of Corrections vehicle. Pooler used this privilege to get drunk, buy drugs and sexually assault an 11-year-old boy. This is yet another fine example of how our state tax dollars are put to good use.

Many of you might be wondering, "How could this happen?" Well, according to the explanations of Department of Corrections officials, Pooler was allowed to drive around without supervision because they did not believe Pooler would try to escape. Of course, they were correct. Pooler, like any other inmate, had checked on the status of the economy and decided that his job security was a lot better in the slammer than on the outside.

Not every jurisdiction handles repeat offenders by loaning them state vehicles. My home state of Virginia is about to embark on a new era of criminal rehabilitation. They are debating over the governor's plan to abolish parole in the

state of Virginia. That's right. No more parole board. But the idea appears to be popular with voters who are fed up with repeat violent offenders.

Naturally, there are people who believe that requiring prisoners to serve their entire sentences eliminates incentives for good behavior, forces the building of more prisons and is ultimately counterproductive. The National Center for Policy Analysis in Dallas, Texas has done a statistical analysis on the expected punishment for violent offenses. Their figures will probably surprise you.

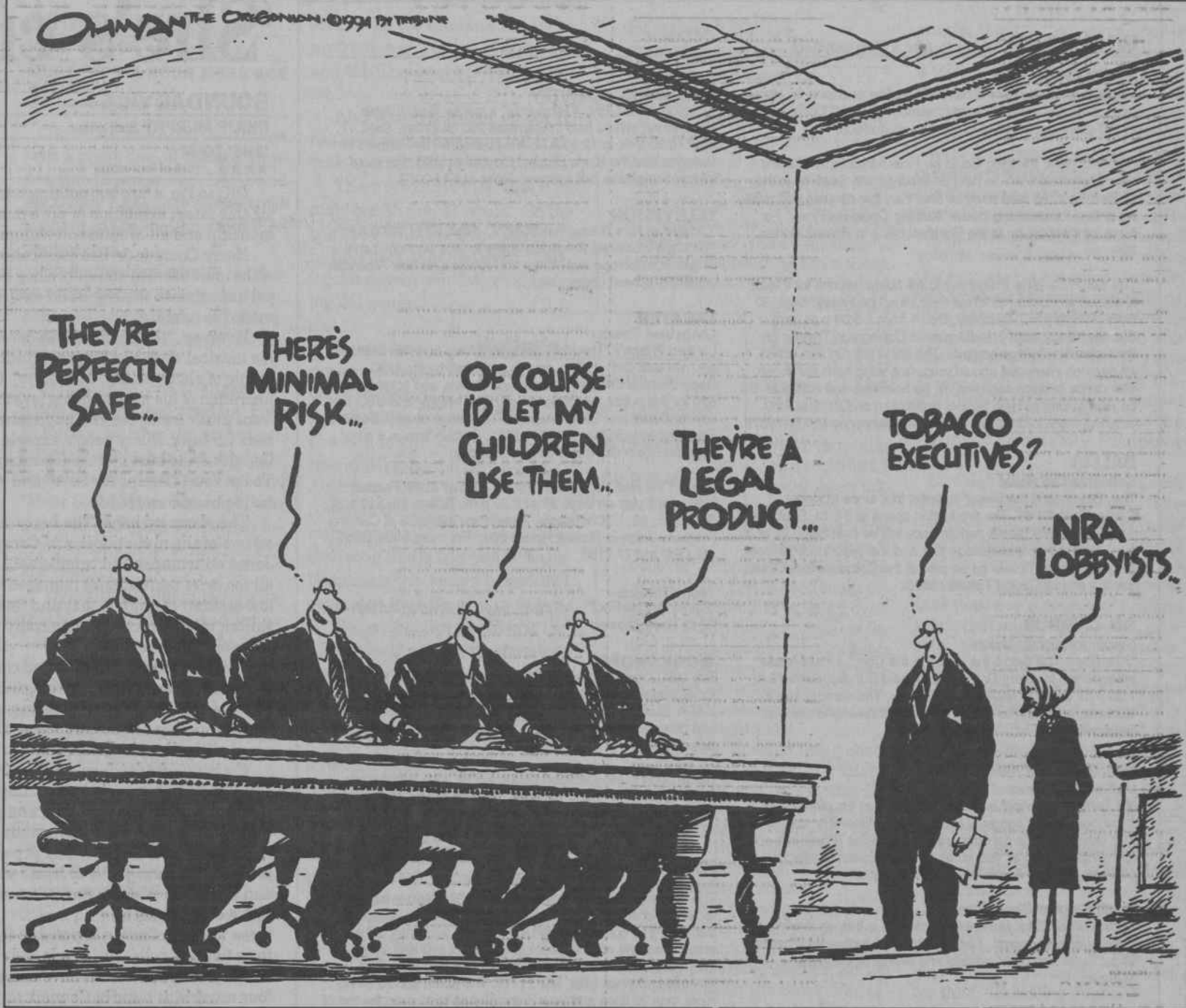
The Center factored in the possibility of a criminal getting arrested, convicted, prosecuted and imprisoned. They discovered that the average punishment for murder in America is 1.8 years in prison and that three out of four convicted criminals are no longer in jail. Many are out on parole or were given probation.

In what may be the most telling statistic of all, the study also revealed over the past forty years the expected punishment (time in prison) for all serious crimes is one-third of what it once was, while the number of serious crimes has increased almost fivefold. (NOTE: These two statistics may be connected!)

John DiJulio Jr., a Princeton professor who works for the Brookings Institute, provides even more ammunition for those who support the elimination of parole. He points out 88% of criminals who are paroled or placed on probation go on to commit other crimes. In fact, parole and probation are used so often that the average criminal spends only about one-third of the actual prison sentence in prison.

There are those who believe that the housing of prisoners is too costly. For the record, the average cost of keeping someone in jail is about \$25,000 a year, according to the Brookings Review. But how much does it cost to leave them on the streets? What is the cost of a carjacking? Or rape? Or murder?

Patrick McNeill is a third-year law student. His column appears every Monday.



"I think that Carolina's a good place—it has a lot of problems, but it has a lot of good things, too. The hopes and dreams of many people are launched at Carolina."

USC Director of Student Life Jerry Brewer

Clinton makes good on promises



BYRON JAMES
Columnist

President Clinton a failure? Give me a break! The president has two of the most successful years in the history of American government. The crime bill, NAFTA, Motor Voter, Family Leave Middle East Peace, Americorps and the list goes on. Aside from foreign policy blunders in Bosnia and Haiti, the president has done well.

In particular, the economy has improved and it should be called the Clinton Recovery. His first budget produced a cut of \$500 billion from the federal budget deficit and created four million private and public sector jobs, more jobs than Bush created in four years. Interest rates are relatively low and for the first time in 12 years the US is ranked number one in economic strength by the World Econ Forum in Geneva. The study included 41 industrialized countries.

President Clinton is dealing with tough issues

that call for tough solutions. He has the vision to lead this country to new heights, but the status quo stands in the way of change. Bob Dole and Phil Graham and that gang of Republican crooks could care less about change or improving the lives of all Americans. Change is uncertain and unpredictable but we must embrace it to make our country better.

Health care and welfare must come if we are able to fix the ills of the poor and working classes of America. Some of you might say we don't need health care reform because we have the world's best health care system and the best doctors, but why

are we 21st in life expectancy and 17th in infant mortality? What do we do with the 38 million uninsured Americans or the 21 million underinsured Americans? Change must come now or we will pay later. As we have seen in the '80s under Reagan and Bush, paying later hurts economically and socially.

President Clinton is entering this third year under a four-year contract, and we must support him if we want continued economic health and prosperity. He has given us every reason to believe that this country can be better than we have ever been before, but only if we join together and work for the common goal of improving the quality of life for every American.

Byron James is a political science senior. His column appears every Monday

Technology paves way for future conveniences



BRAD WESTON
Columnist

Look around you (I'll not continue until this is done so do it now) and try to find any object in your surroundings that doesn't have some sort of information about it stored in the confines of some computer system someplace. Virtually every person, place, and thing on the face of the earth has at least some bit of information about it on a computer—whether it be inventory information, technical drawings, prices, part numbers, dealers, chemical composition, ethnic group, class schedules, grades, pictures, maps, etc. The problem is: how do you get access to this information, and what exactly can it do for you or John and Jane Doe from Cheraw, SC. Let's start by looking a little ways into the future:

Last week, I made reference to a small handheld computer (PDA: Personal Digital Assistant) that will evolve into a device you'll use everyday for everything; but let us walk through a typical scenario of how this might be used. Suppose that the aforementioned John and Jane Doe want to take a trip to Canada. Well, first, they get in their car and place this little handheld computer on the dash and tell it where they want to go. While driving to, oh say Ontario, the computer automatically tells them where to turn and what roads to take to fit their lifestyle (do they take the quickest route or the most scenic?, are some roads closed? If so what are alternatives?, etc.) In the meantime, this same computer goes ahead and plans possible itineraries for

the vacation based on the things that John and Jane have liked to do in the past, and schedules the necessary reservations at hotels, restaurants, etc. This leaves John and Jane free to enjoy the trip without having to worry about anything.

Upon arriving at the hotel, Jane decides she would like to go to one of the nearby super malls to find a portable radio. She looks on her PDA for any such malls within, oh, say a five mile radius. Upon completing its search for malls that would contain stores that stock such a product, John and Jane ride off into the sunset to the chosen store. Upon entering, her PDA accesses all inventory and product information for everything in the store via a radio signal. Jane finds a nice Sony but is not sure of its reliability. She uses her PDA to find all consumer write-ups, return records and service statistics about this particular model of the radio, while at the same time finding out pricing and inventory information in this store and competing stores. She decides to buy and automatically transfers money from her home account into the store's account

via computer and is on her way.

This story, while seemingly impossible to achieve today, is closer to reality than you may think. In actuality, there is only one part of this story missing at present: widespread radio networking and global communication services. All of the information I spoke about is readily available for some stores over the internet and online services such as Prodigy, America Online or e*World. Information on these previously diverse services is rapidly being merged as the number of internet connections in homes grows, so what you're able to do on one system, you'll be able to do on any system.

We look at computers today as things you have to go to to get work done—stationary devices that may be connected to other devices, but not exactly portable to any place on earth in and of themselves. In the future, however, you will be able to communicate with anything anywhere from anyplace without the use of cables and without the expense of cellular phones and portable computers you find commonplace today. This should prove to be very convenient both to John and Jane Doe and you.

Brad Weston is a computer science senior. He is an Apple student representative.

Who's to blame for the baseball strike?



"It's the players. They don't need more money. I guess die-hard baseball fans, it's bad for them. It's not a baseball freak, though."

Greg Bowden
Geology junior



"All I know is that they went on strike to get more money. So, I think it's the players fault. And I think that if they think they're going to get more money, they should cancel it (the season)."

Telly Moody
Nursing freshman



"I think the strike—the only adjective I can think of to describe it—is egotistical. If there were a real honest-to-goodness reason for it, like if the players were mistreated, it would be okay. But the only reason I heard was they weren't getting enough money."

Melissa Boehler
Chemical engineering freshman



"I think it's (the strike) senseless and it needs to be over as soon as possible. I think the fans are going to suffer because the players are spoiled."

Allen Youmans
Electrical engineering sophomore



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The Gamecock will try to print all letters received. Letters should be 200-250 words and must include full name, professional title or year and major if a student. Letters must be personally delivered by the author to The Gamecock newsroom in Russell House room 321.

The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letters for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld under any circumstances.