

A's News Clips, Thursday, January 6, 2011

Newhouse: Fans can join Quan in seeking "Oakland" Warriors

By Dave Newhouse, Oakland Tribune Columnist

Mayor Jean Quan has made it perfectly clear: She's into hoops. Quan loves basketball. "The Warriors are my favorite team," she said. "I like fast action."

Perhaps Quan will keep a basketball on her mayor's desk as a paperweight, although it's too soon to know if she will regularly attend Warriors games.

For the Warriors offer no release from the stress of running a city. The Warriors are stressful enough for their loyal fans, who continue to support mediocrity with a fervor unmatched anywhere in the National Basketball Association.

The Warriors have new owners, a new coach and new players. But it's the same old story, and the same old Warriors, who've been among the NBA's worst team since the mid-1990s, though it hasn't yet been evident at the turnstiles.

Ah, somewhere, former owner Chris Cohan is smiling -- \$450 million richer. Somewhere, Chris Mullin is grinning -- hey, this isn't entirely his fault. And somewhere, Don Nelson is sipping a mai tai -- he can't be blamed any longer.

And sometime, like now, is an opportune time to rename this misdirected franchise as the Oakland Warriors. In fact, it's long overdue -- 39 seasons in Oakland to be exact.

Quan said in October that she would "push" for hanging the title of "Oakland" on these bedraggled ballers. We'll see if push comes to shove, for she has more pressing matters than applying a full-court press on the team's new ownership.

But the point needs to be made -- it's not Oakland's fault that the Warriors remain an embarrassment under any name. So why not call the team "Oakland?" What difference does it make, certainly not in the form of attendance?

New owners Joe Lacob and Peter Guber are reluctant to make this change, leaving themselves open to moving the team one day. They've already alluded to this possibility.

Going back to San Francisco? Relocating to San Jose? These rumors are out there constantly, though unsubstantiated. Santa Clara County is having enough difficulty latching onto a professional football and baseball client.

Oakland is the best place for the Warriors, by all degrees of sanity. Why Lacob and Guber can't see this is beyond all reason. Who'd want to watch these odorous Warriors elsewhere?

And to think that Lacob and Guber brazenly predicted playoffs and championships when they took over the Warriors franchise three months ago -- with a coming-out party in San Francisco. Getting the picture, Oakland?

But like Cohan, they have no clue on how to get it done. Big smoke, no fire.

Thus they should be grateful that Oakland even wishes to attach itself to their hapless franchise name-wise. And they should welcome, with red carpet, a visit from Quan and Joe Haraburda, president of the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, who also favors renaming the team the Oakland Warriors.

But if the new owners need even further encouragement, resentful Oakland residents can phone, write, fax or e-mail them at the Warriors offices. The phone numbers: 510-986-2200 or 888-GSW-HOOP. The fax number: 510-452-0142. The mailing address: 1011 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94607. The e-mail address: community_web@gs-warriors.com.

Show these owners exactly how you feel about being slighted. And, if you so choose, bring signs to Friday's game against Cleveland supporting the case for the "Oakland Warriors."

After all, the NBA has 30 franchises, and Oakland's is the only one not named after a city (25) or state (4). And Oakland has more national pro sports championships (7) than most of the cities in which these NBA teams play.

That's Oakland's problem: It's a championship town with chump ownership. Just look at the current A's, who rival the Warriors for disingenuousness.

But, at least, they're the Oakland A's. Quan sees Oakland as "the soul of Major League Baseball -- great diversity, ethnically and income-wise." Hallelujah.

Wise up, Lacob and Guber.

Eric Chavez to work out for Dodgers

Staff and News Services

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Eric Chavez will work out for the Dodgers on Jan. 20, the longtime A's third baseman confirmed to The Chronicle, and his agent said that Chavez will hold private workouts this month for two American League teams (not the A's).

Chavez has been working out at the Athletes' Performance center in Arizona five days a week and he said he is feeling good, he's taking grounders at third and his problematic right shoulder, operated on twice, is much better.

"The throwing has been unreal," he said in a text. "I need to see live pitching to judge the hitting accurately, but things look good."

The Dodgers are believed to have strong interest if his health checks out OK. Chavez has stated a preference for playing in Southern California, and he has spoken to Dodgers manager Don Mattingly.

Chavez, a six-time Gold Glove third baseman, spent 12-plus seasons with Oakland.

-- According to two team officials, the A's are deep in negotiations to buy radio station KTRB, which is in receivership. KTRB is expected to continue to carry A's games, whatever the outcome of the sale.

- *Susan Slusser*

-- The Rangers introduced Adrian Beltre as their new third baseman after agreeing on a six-year, \$96 million contract with the All-Star, who played for the Red Sox last season. ... Shortstop Cesar Izturis has finalized a \$1.5 million, one-year deal with the Orioles.

Ex-A's slugger McGwire loses Hall support

By Jane Lee / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Honesty proved futile for former A's slugger Mark McGwire, as his voting numbers dropped in his first post-PED confession appearance on the National Baseball Hall of Fame ballot.

A record 581 ballots were cast by members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America this year, the results of which were announced Wednesday.

Second baseman Roberto Alomar (90 percent) and right-hander Bert Blyleven (79.7 percent) received more than the required 75 percent of ballot votes and will thus represent the 2011 Hall of Fame class.

McGwire, meanwhile, watched his numbers decrease from 23.7 percent to 19.8 percent. Less than a year ago, he admitted in a statement that he used performance-enhancing substances extensively during his Major League career, including the 1998 season, when he shattered Roger Maris' fabled single-season record of 61 home runs.

Through 16 big league seasons, McGwire compiled a career .263 average and tallied 583 home runs, 1,414 RBIs and 12 All-Star appearances. His 10.61 at-bats per home run are a Major League-best.

Now the Cardinals' hitting coach, McGwire has now been on the ballot five times. Players may remain on the ballot for up to 15 years provided they receive five percent of the vote in any year.

Outfielder Dave Parker, who played in Oakland during the 1988 and '89 seasons, received just 15.3 percent of the votes during his 15th and final year on the ballot.