

Philly Fans Prove Negative Rep Is Warrented

Buckle your seat belts Philly fans, you're not going to like this...

The clichés about Philly sports fans are so old, so tired, so overused that it's almost sinful for the media to keep harkening back to them. Sure, nearly 50 years ago, we threw snowballs at Santa Claus. Twenty years ago we threw batteries on the field. There was a courtroom in Veterans Stadium. We've heard them all before, ad nauseum. Locally, the collective belief seems to be that these crimes were committed by the fans of yesteryear and that we, the current crop of loyal, paying customers don't deserve the cheap shots repeatedly levied by anyone with an opinion and access to the internet. Just when I, the rational, level-headed Philly fan begins to get sucked into this idea, the miscreants of Philadelphia...my neighbors, my friends...show the entire world that sometimes stereotypes are not misplaced and that people are simply calling a spade a spade.

Tonight the Flyers, along with the rest of the hockey world, honored Ed Snider, a man whose passion and love for the game was always on display. His work with the Flyers, the NHL, the city of Philadelphia, and countless charities was truly admirable. He deserved nothing but the classiest, most heartfelt sendoff, and the Flyers organization delivered. Then the game started and the humbled, grief-stricken fans morphed back into the drunken savages that everyone loves to hate. Showering boos at the referees because of a jaded, hometown view and also at the players for not living up to their unrealistic expectations, the "Philly Phaithful" were back. The despicable part, though...the part that made me feel like I had to go all Jerry Maguire on the internet...was when a Flyers player, though unintentional, clearly committed a major infraction. Instead of recognizing this and accepting the ensuing penalty, numerous Philly fans decided to throw their commemorative bracelets...the ones given out to honor the fallen hero I spoke of above...onto the ice in protest, disgust, who knows. It was rude, classless, and even cost the home team another penalty for delaying the game.

That reputation...the one we all hate hearing about so much...we bring it on ourselves, people. Time and time again, we go above and beyond normal fan shenanigans to the point of becoming a national punchline. Sure, in the end it was probably just a large handful of drunken idiots. But we seem to have an awful lot of drunken idiots because this kind of thing happens far too often here. Like the house-trained dog that makes a mess on the living room floor, we deserve to be ashamed of it. My passion and my love for my Philly sports teams will never die, but too often I find our actions are truly embarrassing.