Written by Maury Brown
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Winter meetings obsolete waste. One team spent more on food than players –
Peter Gammons via Twitter

While many people started arriving Sunday in Indianapolis for this year's Baseball Winter Meetings, they technically get under way on Monday. At 10am, as approx. 200-300 media members convened in a work room on the second floor of the Marriott hotel, the dais was illuminated with light as representatives from the Baseball Hall of Fame announced that Whitey Herzog and Doug Harvey had gained inclusion, while (yet again), Marvin Miller got snubbed.

After that, there was nothing.

Nothing, but writers struggling with abysmal internet connection speeds in the Marriott (think dial-up, only worse). Most sat and perused MLBTradeRumors.com and laughed at how many unsubstantiated rumors happen when there are no real trades or signings to be had (I personally watched as a wholly dreamt up deal was hatched over beers and put on Twitter to see how long it would take the rumor mill to pick it up). This isn't a judgment being leveled against MLB Trade Rumors, but rather what happens when you have a army of media chasing a story. One story line read, "7 Teams Interested in Nick Johnson". Well, sure, a club could be "interested". One could simply say, "We're interested in Nick Johnson… if he's willing to come at the league minimum." The meetings lend itself perfectly to this type of feeding frenzy.

Monday is normally slow on the trade and signing front, but this year was worse than last, a sign that the meetings no longer have as much relevance on the transaction front as they used to, as trades and signings can occur well past them. So, when Gammons makes his comments, he has a point… on one level.

The meetings shouldn't be scrapped, as some have pondered, and others have said out loud. The name of them isn't "*MLB* Winter Meetings" but rather the "*Baseball* Winter Meetings."

If you didn't notice, The Biz of Baseball ran exactly one player transaction piece this year, and it was by no mistake. We wanted to see how much interest the player transaction deal pulled in relationship to other sports business news. We chose to chase other storiies, like Gammons leaving ESPN for MLB.com, MLB Network, and NESN.

Unless you are an aggregator of news, then why try and wrestle the likes of Kenny Rosenthal, or Jerry Crasnick, or other beat writers that have an inside track? Like Tim Dierkes of MLBTradeRumors.com said to me when I asked if he was going to the winter meetings. "I can't go. Leaving home to cover the winter meetings is our busiest time."

Ironic, don't you think?

So, the meetings should be gauged by "baseball" not "MLB". Stories like the Bloomberg Sports presentation regarding their endeavors into analytics, the Trade Show, and the PEBO Job Fair were activities that need a centralized audience. Besides that, many people go to the meetings to conduct business dealings that deal with ventures where getting all the clubs together in one spot has exceptional value.

Other than that, there is the personal side.

The meetings are a way to see everyone face-to-face in one location. The lobby and bar at the Marriott made for a lot of stories and laughs as everyone got caught up on what was happening in their lives. Here's a list of just a few (in no particular order, and forgive me if I missed adding you) of those that I'd like to thank for making this year's winter meetings great:

- Craig Calcaterra
- Victor Rojas
- Cory Schwartz
- Brent Gambill
- Will Carroll

- Christina Kahrl
- Kevin Goldstein
- Shawn Hoffman
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- Matthew Leach
- Tracy Ringolsby
- Ron Blum
- Jim Duquette
- Ari Kaplan
- Lynn Lashbrook
- Liz Lashbrook
- Johnthan Story
- John Manuel
- Steve Henson
- Billy Beane
- Josh Goldberg
- Stan Kasten
- Chuck Armstrong
- Ken Rosenthal
- Mark Smith
- Lisa Winston
- Jerry Crasnick
- Joe Rosen
- Joshua Fink
- Kevin “'Duk” Kaduk
- Gina Leo Stingley
- Blake Rhodes
- Ben Goessling
- Jordan Greenberg
- Johanna Wagner
- Benjamin Hill
- John Zajc
- Jonathan Mayo
- Joe Favorito

Finally, if you happened to grab an AC adapter for an Inspiron 1750 in the media work room... It's mine. Please bring to the Baseball Winter Meetings, next year in Florida.

Maury Brown is the Founder and President of the Business of Sports Network , which includes The Biz of Baseball, The Biz of Football, The Biz of Basketball and The Biz of Hockey.
He is available for hire or freelance
.
Brown's full bio is here.
He looks forward to your comments via email and can be
contacted through the Business of Sports Network
.

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