

THE FEMININE TOUCH

BARE WITH ME

By Kimberly Gadette

THE WNBA + BAYWATCH = BAYSKETBALL. THE CENTER AS A CENTERFOLD.

Last night I had a dream about the WNBA. I was at a game that was taking place in the middle of next season, say June-ish, and the Palace of Auburn Hills was filled to capacity. A dude named "Busta Dimes" was making so much money scalping tickets out front, he was thinking of buying his own WNBA expansion team. Even though the Detroit Shock won the 2006 WNBA championship, I was still stunned that this game was sold out. I thought to myself, since when do these many people, particularly men, pour into a stadium for the WNBA?

With the game about to start, the crowd roared in anticipation. Correction, the men roared in anticipation. The women looked excited. The kids looked away.

As the public address system blared out Joe Cocker's "You Can Leave Your Hat On," the players sashayed onto the main court. But something was askew. Where were usual baggy shorts two sizes too big hanging down to the women's knees? What happened to the shapeless sleeveless shirts, so formless that they could easily hide a member of the opponents' coaching staff?

Instead, the women were dressed so suggestively, almost to the point of lewd, that I woke up with a start. Oh, what a dream. Buy hey, what an idea ...

Let's consider the idea of revealing dress. Take Hooters. Take bikinis. Take two aspirin and call me in the morning. No, seriously, men love to look at women in various stages of tight and/or suggestive undress. So much so that Madison Avenue has been using sex to sell just about anything since a man had a discretionary dollar and a dream. Honestly guys, since when does a scanty-pantied platinum blonde end up sitting in the passenger seat as you pull out of the car lot in your brand-new-to-you, but pre-owned Chrysler Sebring? Yet the car commercial, any car commercial, suggests she just might.

Even the most naïve seller on eBay has caught on. A few months ago, as I was searching on eBay to purchase tickets to that '06 World Series that we won't discuss, EVER, I noticed that instead of pictures of team logos or superstar players, the sellers had posted pictures of hot babes next to their auctions. Madison Avenue-inspired eye candy on eBay? OK ... as if the buxom bikini'd bimbo in the tiny picture next to the ad might agree to go with you to that particular event, but only if you paid serious coin to win that auction. Here's an idea: Instead of spending endless hours crawling


through eBay to score a ticket with the best location, the right price and the barely-there dream date that exists in some cyberworld far, far away, with the ultimate result of landing a crappy seat at the top of the stadium behind the foul pole, substantially stripped of cash—buy an econo-sized bag of cheese-dried chips, turn on the TV, and call a 900 number. It'll be a far more satisfying experience. In each and every way.

A satisfying experience—isn't that the intention of spectator sports in general? Yet the attendance records for the WNBA speak otherwise. According to a September 1, 2006 article in Sports Fan Magazine, "Attendance was down for the eighth consecutive season; at its peak, the average attendance was 10,800 fans per game ... attendance this last season was 7,500, which is not much more than AAA minor league baseball in most markets. Even worse, it represents a decline of 31% from the peak with eight consecutive years of decreases."

That's a lot of figures. If, instead of those figures, you had 10 very nice figures to ogle at, wouldn't that be far more delightful? Let's get simple: Men love to watch barely-dressed, twentysomething women. Men love to watch sports. Therefore, if the WNBA women changed their look (think Baywatch) men might finally want to watch them. Problem solved. The WNBA + Baywatch = Baysketball. The center as a centerfold. You get the idea.

Oh, sure, there may be some grouching at the first suggestion of a four-inch spiked heel sneaker, but given how great it would look on the leg of a six-foot-one Swin Cash, or a six-foot-five Lisa Leslie, a turned ankle or two wouldn't be that great of a price to pay. What Brandi Chastain and her sports bra did for women's soccer in 1999 would be nothing compared to a Deanna Nolan or a Ruth Riley in a bikini bottom. Hey, I could even see coach Bill Laimbeer get into the action with a Speedo ... oh God no, never mind. Sorry. Just like a basketball, I got carried away.

I can see it now. A rematch of the Detroit Shock and the Sacramento Monarchs. But this time: Shirts v. Skins.

I can't wait to have another dream tonight. Maybe I'll come up with an improvement for NASCAR. After all, I can dream, can't I? 

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