

Frankly Plank

By Duane Plank

"What are words for, when no one listens anymore?" Ever feel like that, when we are barraged with texts, tweets, e-mails, etc. on a daily basis? No one is paying attention to the spoken word? The quoted words were part of a song by the early-'80s band Missing Persons, who I hesitate to call a one-hit wonder because my lack of musical knowledge will be highlighted again by someone like Mike E. (editor's note: They did have at least three other hits, but you didn't read that here...)

But do you actually listen to what the guy or gal who you are talking to says? Wait till their done speaking before retorting with your own story, piggybacking on their words? Raining on their parade?

I am a big-time offender. I am working on listening more, talking less. You know, the whole two ears, one mouth deal. Although I intently listen to anything *some* people say. Why is that? Why are they so blessed? "I might as well go up and talk to a wall," the singer from MP continued. Maybe they were speaking to me back in the day when they recorded the ditty.

Sports in a moment, but does anyone other than me have what can kindly be termed an "eccentric" older relative? I have an aunt, who snuck into the family on my mom's side because she married one of my uncles.

She has always been kinda reclusive and quiet, with some real mean-spirited-ness tossed in for good measure. She's the type of bitty who when she sees you after a year or two, will say, "Boy, you have put on some weight!" Thanks, Auntie. And she told me that after I had actually lost 20 pounds or so. She wasn't exactly Heidi Klum herself, by the way. And reportedly favors the cooking sherry.

Yup, I may not be exactly svelte nowa-

days, but I was a real porker back in the day. Tipped the scales at more than 200 lbs, with 75 percent body fat. Maybe that's why I had such a horrible season in my first year of Colt League baseball? A 200+ pound kid trying to beat out a pathetic two-hopper to short. Think I ended up that season hitting about .125. And my coach still lobbied to get me on the All-Star team. Bless your heart, Mr. Dodd. Luckily for the league, he was unsuccessful.

Dropped about 60 pounds before the next season, ended up starting at shortstop for the JV team, and somehow won the pitching trophy for good old MICO high. I think I finished 5-0, picking up four of the wins in relief, after the starting pitcher went to pot... or maybe *started* the game on pot. Sorry about that, Poker (which was the nickname of one of our starting pitchers).

Anyway, my good-old Auntie put together a family cookbook, and keeps sending us revisions. Bless her heart! But now she is apparently ticked because she thinks that we are not using the recipes. Which may or may not be true. If I could find a new and exciting recipe for French fries, nachos, or hot dogs, I guarantee that the family cookbook would become a page-turner. If I could find the darn book.

All right, leading with the baseball stuff, cuz that's what I know, and that's what the masses clamor that I write about. Join the masses at Franklyplank@gmail.com.

The Little League Mighty Mariners had a three and zero week, overcoming big deficits twice on Saturday when we played a doubleheader that started at 9 a.m. Means I had to be there, bright-eyed and bushy tailed, at 8 a.m. Okay, I showed up. Which ain't the best starting time for the old bat-

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Dodgers Continue Roll; Derby Shocker

By Duane Plank

Did you behave on Cinco de Mayo? Did you know it was the fifth of May on Tuesday? What were we supposed to celebrate? Plank stayed home and watered the plants, although I was considering heading a bit south and checking out an event that was supposed to feature radio personality, front-runner and Laker apologist Vic the Brick. Can't stomach too much of VTB, but what the heck. And if you think I stayed home and watered the plants, well...

Was fortunate enough to attend the Dodger game on Sunday at the Ravine. Took the kid out to the festivities. Received the tickets courtesy of one of the Dodger team doctors, who seems really fired up about the 2009 campaign.

Dr. Landis came down to chat with us in the fifth inning, and we were shooting the bull when a couple of old geezers plopped down in the row behind us. No problem there until the moron behind me said: "If you sit back, I can see the game!" The fossil had just sat down in the fifth inning. Betcha those weren't his seats--looked like a seat-jumping freeloader to me. Okay grandpa, I'll sit back. Which I did. And stewed about the rude jerk sitting behind me. Asked the kid, a studly 15-year-old, if he would join the fray if I had to brawl with the roughnecks. He said that he had my back.

Avoided the fisticuffs (and it could have gotten really ugly), and pretty much enjoyed the Dodgers' 7-3 victory over the Padres, the hometown team's 10th consecutive home victory. The Dodgers rested four regulars, with Manny, Furcal, Blake, and Martin taking all or most of the afternoon off.

Quick aside regarding Martin. Karaoke Jen, who had her sights set on Steeler quarterback Big Ben Roethlisberger, may have now begun fancying the Dodger catcher. Miss Jen was seen recently sporting a Martin jersey. We shall see how this riveting scenario unfolds.

Anyway, the Dodgers are on fire. But sometime, somewhere, they are actually going to have to play a major league team. No more walkovers against the Pads and the Giants. Bring on the Phillies, the Cubs, the Cardinals. Wish my Angels could play the Pads 19 times this season!

Loved watching Dodger third base coach Larry Bowa in action Sunday. He's the guy that I pattern myself after when I am coaching the Mighty Mariners. Okay, I mostly pattern myself after Bowa, with the exception of the tight pants the big guy sports.

So Bowa waved a runner around third in the first inning, and then focused on James Loney, who had singled but was nailed at second after the throw from the outfield was cut off by the first baseman. Bowa barked a very, very nasty word at Loney, and then

ignored the first baseman as Loney trotted back to the dugout.

Easy does it, coach. And make sure that you stay in the coaches' box, sir.

On to the Kentucky Derby. Why no Lakers, you say? Well, gotta file the column on Monday morning, and since the second round series against the Houston Rockets doesn't start until Monday night, it would be a tad bit difficult to say much of import here. But have no worries: I'll throw something at the wall and see what sticks a little later.

Played a trifecta ticket on the Derby, which involved the favorite, I Want Revenge. Placed the wager at the ghost town known as Hollywood Park. All was well until I found out about 2 p.m. Saturday that Revenge had been scratched, because of a "hot spot" that was found on the horse's left front ankle.

Imagine that you are the horsey doctor who discovered the hot spot. Now I am no vet, but I gotta believe that there has to be a decent chance that if you run the horse, the horse wouldn't break down. May win the race. Or may finish 20th. But kudos to trainer Jeff Mullins, who decided along with the owner, to keep the horse in the barn.

"I've been in this business kind of all of my life," said the veteran trainer who should be back working at the Track of the Lakes and Flowers this weekend. "Most of the things that I have learned in this business, I've learned by hard knocks in more ways than one. Your biggest dream is to get here, but your biggest nightmare is to get to race day and have to scratch."

Good call, Mr. Mullins. Those who think that horse racing is unfair to the animals should consider Mullins' decision. I'm just saying.

On to the actual race. I was again rooked into a pool by NASCAR Guy, who approached me and demanded that I fork over the five bucks and enter his little pool. I lied to NASCAR Guy, told him that I was out of cash, and that I would catch him later. But that didn't fly because New York Johnny was forking over *his* five bones and said he would sponsor me. I said no, but NYJ flipped NASCAR Guy the moolah, and I was in.

Which did not appear to be a good deal cuz the horse that I selected to win was a no-good nag. Or so I thought. By the time Saturday rolled around, my horse was in the neighborhood of 47-1. So I figured that I had wasted five bucks. But I hadn't paid NYJ back yet, so I was thinking that maybe he would forget and I could skate on the bet. Learned stuff like this from RJ the Golfer, by the way.

So the race approaches and NASCAR Guy demands my five bucks for another pool. By now I'm like, "What the heck..." so I open the wallet, dust off the dollar bills, and ante up. I select the horse Regal Ransom, who seems to have a decent shot. Okay, what the heck. Dodger Girl also got strong-armed into the pool; she was fortunate enough to select Friesan Fire, who went off as the lukewarm post-time favorite.

Well my horse, Mine That Bird, ended up dusting the field, winning the race after leaving the starting gate sporting 50-1 odds. Sorry to say that Dodger Girl's pony finished an awe-inspiring 18th. NYJ cashed in one of the pools, and I even paid him back his fin.

And oh yeah, about the Lakers. Game three is Friday. Lakers win the series in five. And for the puckheads, the Ducks jettison the guys from Hockey Town in six. Which will be played on Tuesday night...

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Tuesday		
5:30-6:45am	Vin Yoga - All Level	Vin
7:00-8:15am	Vinyasa Flow - Level I	Leticia
Wednesday		
6:00-7:15am	Vinyasa Flow - All Level	Dotty
5:30-6:45am	Hatha Basics - Level I-II	Andy
7:00-8:15am	Hatha Basics - All Level	Dori
Thursday		
5:30-6:45am	Power - All Level	Theresa
7:00-8:15am	Beginner Hatha	Delia
Friday		
6:00-7:15am	Vinyasa Flow - All Level	Dotty
6:45-7:55am	Vinyasa Flow - All Level	Alex
Saturday		
9:30-10:45am	Hatha Basics - All Level	Andy
Sunday		
6:00-7:15am	Hatha Basics - All Level	Cathy
8:30-9:45am	Yoga Tune-Up - All Level	Theresa
5:30-6:45pm	Hatha Basics - All Level	Andy

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Back for Yoga

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