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Your Team . . . My Team . . .

SEPTEMBER 29, 2003

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OUR TEAM SUCKS. ¶ MY TEAM IS IN THE FIRST YEAR of its annual five-year rebuilding program. ¶ Your team is full of thugs, criminals and perverts. ¶ My team is colorful.

YOUR COLLEGE COACH wouldn't suspend his star players even if they stored the stolen stereos under his desk.

MY COLLEGE COACH believes in due process.

YOUR QUARTERBACK is dumber than a bottle of peroxide. He wouldn't know the playbook if Elmo read it to him.

MY QUARTERBACK relies on his athletic instincts.

YOUR ANNOUNCER is a shameless, drunk homer.

MY ANNOUNCER is the last of a dying breed.

Your Team . . . My Team . . .

YOUR TEAM'S FANS are the kind of single-toothed, liquor-soaked, foulmouthed vermin that real vermin cross the street to avoid.

MY TEAM'S FANS fans are fiercely loyal.

YOUR DEPARTING SUPERSTAR sold out teammates, fans and the city that supported him for 20 years just to grab an easy ring.

MY ARRIVING SUPERSTAR isn't afraid to chase his dreams.

YOUR OWNER is a silver-spoon billionaire who bought a championship just because he could.

MY OWNER is part of the capitalist system that made this country great.

YOUR PITCHER is a headhunter.

MY PITCHER controls the inside of the plate.

YOUR NBA COACH was a weed-smoking hippie who does nothing more than roll the balls out every day to one of the greatest rosters in league history.

MY NBA COACH lets 'em play.

YOUR SLUGGER is a steroid-dripping cheat.

MY SLUGGER has made a major off-season commitment to reshaping his body.

YOUR SUPERSTAR is a selfish and arrogant narcissist who can't even stand his own teammates, much less his fans.

MY SUPERSTAR is focused.

YOUR CHEERLEADERS are uglier than the primates at the Tehran Zoo.

MY CHEERLEADERS reject the old, chauvinistic notions of spirit leaders.

YOUR COLLEGE'S BASKETBALL COACH is a perverted lush who has rubbed up against more coeds than a sorority-house beagle.

MY COLLEGE'S BASKETBALL COACH understands the importance of student-body support.

RICK REILLY

YOUR STADIUM is a bandbox with more tricked-up features than a plastic surgeon's waiting room.
MY STADIUM is neoclassic.

YOUR SHORTSTOP hasn't had a decent year since David Wells was a size medium.
MY SHORTSTOP is primed for a breakout season.

YOUR NASCAR DRIVER is a No-Doz-addicted maniac who is out there putting lives in peril.
MY NASCAR DRIVER is racin'.

THE PARENTS ON YOUR KID'S SOCCER TEAM are ref-baiting loudmouths who need to get a life.
THE PARENTS ON MY KID'S SOCCER TEAM are fully engaged in the lives of their children.

YOUR COACH is a bloodthirsty, chair-heaving madman who ought to be handcuffed for emotionally and physically bullying his players and staff.
MY COACH is old school.

YOUR DRAFT CHOICE is a complete bust.
MY DRAFT CHOICE is still getting comfortable with the intricacies of the system.

YOUR FIGURE SKATER is *so* gay.
MY FIGURE SKATER enjoys the pageantry and tradition of the sport.

YOUR COLUMNIST hasn't had an original idea since fifth grade.
MY COLUMNIST is a devoted reader of *Mad* magazine (with thanks).



Postscript: YOUR BEST-OF BOOK makes every column its own chapter and adds a lot of pointless postscripts in a status-seeking quest to fill 300 pages. MY BEST-OF BOOK is substantial.