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February 12, 2006

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Will The Real Carl Pavano Please Stand Up

From [Newsday](#) today:

With Randy Johnson and Mike Mussina locks to start, Chien-Ming Wang, Shawn Chacon, Carl Pavano and Jaret Wright are left to compete for the final three spots.

"We'll treat them all like starters when we start spring training," Torre said.

Pavano is the biggest mystery of them all, considering he is coming off an injury-plagued debut season in pinstripes after signing a four-year, \$39.95-million contract.

Although the Yankees weren't able to find anything wrong with his shoulder to explain his problems, Pavano constantly complained of discomfort, became fatigued earlier than usual in his starts and produced radar readings that were down from previous years.

Pavano, who was shut down for the season in August, has been throwing regularly in Tampa, Torre said, but hasn't pitched from a mound yet.

"All of the reports point to the fact that he's fine, and he's been throwing," Torre said.
"Hopefully, it stays that way."

From the [Daily News](#), also today:

Yankees pitcher Carl Pavano visited a California back specialist last week after feeling lower back stiffness during a throwing session. But Pavano, whose first season in pinstripes was shortened by injury, received a clean bill of health and was cleared to throw when camp starts this week.

According to General Manager Brian Cashman, Pavano felt twinges after throwing on flat ground about two weeks ago at the Yankees' minor-league complex in Tampa. For their own peace of mind, as well as Pavano's, the Yankees sent the righty to the back doctor they regularly use, Dr. Robert Watkins of Los Angeles.

"This is a very low-level thing," Cashman said in a telephone interview yesterday. "We just wanted to make certain we were fine on it. We just sent him so when he gets to spring

training, he hits the ground running and there's nothing to stop him. This was just precautionary.

"If he feels anything more, obviously we'll back off," Cashman added.

Clueless Joe, indeed.

Posted by Steve Lombardi at February 12, 2006 01:07 PM

Comments

You could call it lazy reporting. Maybe you'd even call it outright lying. How can a reporter write that the Yankees "never found a reason" for Pavano's shoulder problems? Dr. James Andrews diagnosed Pavano as having rotator cuff tendinitis. Saying that Pavano had nothing wrong with him is saying that Andrews -- who is highly respected and the go-to guy for sports injuries -- is a liar. That he "covered" for Pavano with a false diagnosis. And that's plainly ridiculous.

Posted by: baileywalk [\[TypeKey Profile Page\]](#) at February 12, 2006 04:21 PM

It's not necessarily lazy reporting...it's another indication that most of the NY media is in Torre's back pocket. The rumors of Pavano having an "unknown" ailment and the whispers about him not having the "stomach" to pitch in New York obviously came from Torre and Stottlemire. In fact, if you recall, Stottlemire did something that I've never heard of an allegedly good pitching coach do -- sell-out his own pitcher in a post-game interview. There was a game at the Stadium in which Pavano did a "Javier Vasquez," i.e. give up a two-strike home run on a bad slider. Stottlemire told reporters he had no idea why Pavano would throw that particular pitch when he did. Trouble was, the pitch was thrown right after Stottlemire had come out to the mound for a conference. I assume he told Pavano to throw that pitch. Of course, he didn't tell him to hang it but...isn't a pitching coach supposed to know his own staff well enough not to tell them to throw their third best pitch in a pitcher's count? This is all in line with Stottlemire's oft-repeated dictum: make them put it in play, don't try to strike batters out. He famously told that to Gooden and Darling in the late '80s. Gentlemen, your witness...

Posted by: JohnnyC [\[TypeKey Profile Page\]](#) at February 12, 2006 08:28 PM

Or he could have told him to throw an entirely different pitch, and Pavano arrogantly chose not to follow his pitching coach's advice. So, rightfully pissed off and realizing that Pavano was not one to take the suggestions directly from him, he went through the media. Fans of the Boss are familiar with that strategy, right? Just a possibility...

Posted by: Nick from Washington Heights [\[TypeKey Profile Page\]](#) at February 12, 2006 09:53 PM

"What we've got here... is failure to communicate"

Posted by: Raf [\[TypeKey Profile Page\]](#) at February 13, 2006 10:31 AM

So was that Vasquez's excuse for throwing those same sliders on 0-2 counts? And was that also Weaver's prerogative to eschew his naturally hard-sinking fastball which he threw 85% of the time in Detroit and throw countless meatball sliders in his late, lamented sojourn with the Yankees? Come on, the pattern is unmistakable. And if all of these pitchers are ignoring his orders, what's that say about their lack of trust in Mel? Sean Henn has been quoted as saying that "they" told him to throw more off-speed pitches late in the count. That's why he'd zip to a pitcher's count only to get bopped on a spin-less breaking ball over the heart of the plate. when he went back to Columbus, "they" didn't tell him to do that. They told him to go right at the batter.

Posted by: JohnnyC [\[TypeKey Profile Page\]](#) at February 13, 2006 09:14 PM