

GREEDY? – ENOUGH ALREADY!

By Bob Carroll

Among the things that get on my nerves (and there seem to more of them every year) is the constant use of the word “greedy” as an automatic adjective to be placed before players or club owners. It’s not only stale; in most cases, it’s incorrect.

Honest.

Let me start by noting that it’s stupid to make generalizations about people. (Yes, I know that I just made a generalization. Save your letters.) All ugly girls do not have great personalities. All fat men are not jolly. All beautiful people are not conceited. (My humility is one of my many virtues.) And all athletes and owners are not greedy. At least not by definition.

GREEDY – *Excessively desirous of acquiring or possessing, especially wishing to possess more than what one needs or deserves.*

Notice the word “excessively.” To me, that’s the key. To be excessively desirous of acquiring or possessing, one’s behavior has to manifest that excessiveness. Does the person lie, cheat, or steal to get *more*? Is his every waking thought directed toward making *more*? Will he stoop to unethical behavior?

Some would. But most players and even most owners wouldn’t.

So what do you call someone who is normally desirous of acquiring or possessing? The technical term is *human*.

What about you? Would you like to be paid more for your work? Of course you would. You’re human. Would you like more power? More prestige? More of anything? Then, do you think of yourself as greedy?

I’ll admit that phrase in the definition about “what one needs or deserves” gave me pause. After all, what does the ability to throw a tight spiral contribute to the overall condition of the human race? Do athletes deserve those humungus salaries as opposed to say, teachers or nurses?

Well, no. But then, do raucous rock stars who are to music what the Love Canal is to Vichy water deserve their millions? Do pretty movie stars who can barely act their way out of their clothes? Do four-hundred-dollar-an-hour lawyers? Do C.E.O.’s whose main skill seems to be to fire 2,000 workers at a time? Loads of people are paid more than they “deserve.” Almost everyone except me.

No one is paid according to how great he makes life on earth. We’re paid according to how much the traffic will bear. If you want to say there’s too much money in sports, I won’t disagree. But, if you tell me that it should all be bundled and tossed in the lake, I’m going to start growing gills.

Of course, you may be one of those millions and millions of folks who turned down a raise this year for the good of humanity. No? Why you greedy fan!