



Dear Mr. McDonough and Mr. Blunk,

I would like to begin by saying that it has been a wonderful thing to witness the resurgence of the Chicago Blackhawks over the past two years. Hopefully there will be plenty of Blackhawks hockey to talk about going into June. Unfortunately, I've had to view much of this season from afar due to some dubious actions by Media Relations Manager Brandon Faber. In 11 years of covering sports in Chicago I have never experienced a lack of professionalism and decorum from anyone with whom I've been in contact that comes even close to Mr. Faber's.

Things came to a head at Blackhawks practice on Saturday, March 14, at The Edge in Bensenville. I arrived for the session hoping to get some comments from some of the players and Coach Quenneville for the show the following morning just as I had done just two weeks prior without issue. Mr. Faber saw me there on February 28, and even guided me to where Coach Quenneville does his press availability. However, for some reason, my presence was a problem on the 14<sup>th</sup>. As I was waiting along with beat writers Chris Kuc, Tim Sassone, and Comcast SportsNet reporter Josh Mora to talk with goaltender Nikolai Khabibulin, Mr. Faber came up to me and asked me who I was with. I told him I'm with "SPORTSLINE," and he subsequently told me I had to leave because I had not called ahead to warn of my attendance. I left the locker room shocked but quietly so as to not be disrespectful of the players and the other reporters there. I walked all the way to the door and waited to get Coach Quenneville's comments and to hopefully talk with Mr. Faber afterwards.

In the meantime, Mr. Sassone came out to wait for Coach. I asked him if he had called ahead about coming to practice, and he told me that he had not. He then asked me if I had been kicked out of the locker room, and I told him that I had. His reaction was one of surprise toward Mr. Faber's action.

Then Mistery Kuc, Mora, and his camera operator came out followed by Coach Quenneville and Mr. Faber. Coach began to address questions, and I began my recording like any normal small press conference. While the Q&A was going on, Mr. Faber tried to get my attention from just behind Coach. He then went around Mr. Kuc, Mr. Mora, the camera, and the camera man to get to me in the tight hallway. He proceeded to grab my elbow two or three times without success as his fingers slipped, and I moved my elbow away from his grasp.

Once the session ended, Mr. Faber addressed me confused as to why I was still there. I told him that I had never had to call ahead to simply attend a regular season practice for any team that I had covered before including the Blackhawks only two weeks prior. I also told

him that Mr. Sassone hadn't called, and his response to me was that the Daily Herald reporter's situation was "different." I got my point across to him in a very strong manner that instead of being a conduit between media members like me and the team that he's been nothing but an obstacle since mid-November. He seemingly has a personal issue with me and my radio partner Gary Zahara that has absolutely nothing to do with how we conduct ourselves as radio media. We are not here to make friends or enemies. We're here to do our job covering the team to give the team the exposure we think it deserves and provide content for our show.

After Mr. Faber assumed his current position in the Summer of 2008, Mr. Zahara and I contacted him as to become familiar with each other and to let him know our desire to continue our great coverage of the Blackhawks, especially with the anticipation of what was to be a successful season. We were welcomed to the Training Camp Festival, Inaugural Blackhawks Convention, and NHL Winter Classic announcement press conference with open arms. During that time we asked Mr. Faber on multiple occasions if we could get some one-on-one interviews with Blackhawks' legends and ambassadors like Bobby Hull, Stan Mikita, and Tony Esposito at a time and place most convenient for those gentlemen. He seemed willing to set that up, but he has never gotten back to us regarding their availability or with any means for contacting any of those former players.

At the beginning of the season, and Gary and I were at media day at the United Center, and all was well. We were credentialed for the home opening game as well. After that we were told that radio outlets are only allowed one person per game. Although we were disappointed and saw that other radio outlets were accommodated differently, we went about our business covering the team as best we could.

In mid-November, our credential requests were being denied for some unknown reason. Mr. Faber eventually brought up some ticketing issue that caused the suspension of our credentials. He obviously had a problem with talking with ticket-office people about purchasing tickets. It's new to me that someone in media relations would make a big issue about media people purchasing tickets. Why a media member who has a relationship with someone in the ticket office doesn't have the right to purchase tickets from those people like any non-media person with a similar relationship is beyond me.

We tried to work through this issue but were told that our show would not be credentialed until at least 2009 when our situation would be re-evaluated. I submitted a request through the NHL for a credential to the Winter Classic, but I was denied. Although I was disappointed, I understood the small confines of Wrigley Field and the high demand for media access would make my place at the game anything but guaranteed.

After we tried to set up a meeting with the two of you, we were told that you stood by Brandon's decision up to that point. Then Mr. Faber told us that the re-evaluation of our situation hadn't changed. We would not be credentialed for games the rest of the season, but we could attend practices when we wished. The reason for Mr. Faber's denial of our game credentials changed from that "ticketing issue" to the "format of our show." He deemed that our show's format didn't necessitate our attendance at any games whatsoever. The format of our weekly hour-long show is and has always consisted of sports talk with phone callers, listener e-mails, interviews of other reporters, athletes, coaches, and other sports

personalities, along with audio clips of sports news of the day. Basically our format is no different than any of the other sports shows on the air that are granted access to Blackhawks games.

We don't care to receive special benefits from the Blackhawks or any other team we cover. We do, however, demand equal treatment. We also demand honest, objective, and logical reasons for the manner in which we've been treated and not the obvious singling out and personal vendetta that Mr. Faber has displayed toward us and our show. Ultimately, we just expect professionalism and cordiality from those we work through so we can do as good a job of covering the team and making our show entertaining and informative to our ever growing audience.

We want to meet with both of you to talk about the unfair and unwarranted mistreatment we have received from Mr. Faber and to seek the re-instatement of our credentials. If you refuse to satisfy our request for a meeting, then we will have no choice but to seek legal action against Mr. Faber and the Blackhawks organization with regards to his baseless denial of our credentials and the physical confrontation he initiated against me at practice on March 14. We hope it doesn't come to that, and we can work things out in the mutually respectful manner that we have sought from the start.

Sincerely,

Danny Carlino  
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