

## Local Politics Matter

# A Some Point ...

## You Have to Take the Ball



I am a huge sports fan, so I have to admit that I tend to use sports analogies more than most. Having said that, what is going on in terms of our response to the deadly COVID-19 assault has me thinking about another situation in sports that remains seared in my mind. It was the 1994 NBA finals when the New York Knicks faced the Houston Rockets. I was not a fan of either team, so I really didn't have a dog in the hunt, but I was a big Patrick Ewing fan, so my loyalties swayed towards the Knicks. This also happened to be the year that Michael Jordan decided to try his hand at baseball so a finals series without Chicago added a little spice to things. The series was very competitive and came down to the final game. Houston had the home court advantage so with the series tied 3 games apiece the final game was played at the

Summit in Houston Texas. Houston ended up winning the Championship in a very close game. I can't remember the game but the image that will always stay in my mind is John Starks of the Knicks missing shot after shot after shot. Keep in mind Starks was a key player for the Knicks but on this night, he made 2 of his 18 shot attempts. It was obvious from the start that Starks was not on his game. To miss 16 of 18 shots in any NBA game is literally unheard of but to do it in game 7 of the finals is particularly galling. When you consider that the Knicks only lost by 6 points you must think that if Starks had delivered an average night the Knicks would have been champions. As you might imagine Starks caught a ton of heat for his poor performance, but my

question was how Pat Riley let this happen. Pat Riley a future Hall of Fame Coach sat on the bench while John Starks literally folded before our eyes. He must have seen like everyone else that it wasn't going to happen for Starks on this night, yet he sat, and left Starks stranded to fend for himself. Like any prideful athlete Starks never stopped believing that things would turn around. I have always said that athletes win or lose sporting events but there are always a handful of games that a coach can win or lose. In this case the game was on Riley and he failed miserably. At some point the coach must take over and lead the team to victory. He must change the momentum of the game even if it means taking the ball from his star player's hands. Now back to today. Here we are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic and we have a President who is in way over his head. Like John Starks on that fateful night of June 22, 1994 Donald Trump's game is nowhere to be found. From the start of

the pandemic he has been at least five steps behind. It is obvious that our President doesn't have what it takes to lead us to victory. He is taking shot after shot and simply can't get anything to drop. Like the New York Knicks' quest for a championship this story will end on a very sad note. Watching President Trump come out day after day and struggle to read from a scripted document is as painful as it was watching John Starks rush back to the court after each timeout only to throw up another brick that barely touched the rim. At least with Starks it was only a game. With President Trump it is a life or death situation and we are losing lives at an alarming rate. This is happening as his fellow Republicans sit on the sidelines and watch him sink deeper and deeper into the abyss. We can only pray that at some point before the game is lost, they get off the sidelines and take the ball out of his hands. It simply is not his night.

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