



Yogi Berra, left, and Casey Stengel  
...Kings of Goofy Comments

## **THE IDLE AMERICAN**

### **When 'Tangs' Get 'Tongueled'....**

**Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury**

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**Errors committed** when speaking sometimes, sadly, result in word entanglements that are simply beyond repair.

None of us is immune. And, getting out of verbal messes can be as difficult as sticking quills back into the goose.

Some folks of national renown are known for their misspoken words, particularly when they open their mouths only to change feet....

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**Two great** examples were prominent in professional baseball.

I reference the late Casey Stengel and Yogi Berra, remembered for countless entangled remarks. They are endless, real morsels to research if you enjoy hearing hilarious verbal foul-ups.

One of Berra's best lines was about a popular restaurant. "Nobody goes there anymore; it's too crowded."...

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**Many similar** "goofs" are found throughout the world of sports, certainly not limited to baseball.

They continue today; a couple are worthy of revisiting, even though one may have been intentional, but probably ill-advised.

Only days separated laughs by NFL TV analysts in Dallas and Philadelphia. Perhaps weary of watching the Dallas Cowboys' meek surrender to the Philadelphia Eagles, veteran sportscaster Jim Nantz said that "the Keystone Cops had taken over." (Sometimes too much truth is spoken. Remarks like this not only irk fans of the Cowboys, but could ignite team owner Jerry Jones. He might order Nantz to find the nearest exit and take it, or the next train, and be under it.)....

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**A few nights** later in Philadelphia, another veteran announcer, Al Michaels, mentioned the crack in the "Liberty Bowl." Millions of viewers wondered if they heard him correctly, then said it again.

There was no mistaking the gaffe.

To his credit, a few minutes later he asked, "Did I say 'Liberty Bowl'? I meant 'Liberty Bell'." Apology accepted....

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**Some professional** athletes are remembered more for what they say than how they perform in games.

One baseballer said he could bat from either side of the plate. "I can bat left-handed and I can bat right-handed," he bragged. "Thank God I'm amphibious."

Another claimed that he has "overcome a lot of diversity."....

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**Many "goofs,"** of course, never make national headlines, but still are enjoyed greatly by locals.

Years ago, a young lady from the news department of an Abilene TV station "filled in" for the sports guy. When she tried to report the baseball scores, fans of the game quickly realized that she wasn't.

She said something like, "New York beat Cleveland, four points to three points, Chicago topped Houston, six points to three points, and Philadelphia won over Atlanta, one point to no points."....

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**I dare** not leave out my late friend, Gene Hendryx, longtime owner of Radio Station KVLV in Alpine, TX.

One day during a stock market report, he cited prices for ewes.

Trouble was, he called 'em "e-wees."

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**During my** growing-up years in Brownwood, twins Jimmy and Eddy Farren, best known for “pickin’ and singin’” around the area, owned Radio Station KEAN.

Remote broadcasting--then called “telephonic reporting”--had just begun when Jimmy “covered” the dedication of a colorful spraying water fountain at the old traffic circle. His voice sparkled with excitement as he described the first gushes from the fountain.

“Folks, if you can possibly do so, come on down here,” he invited. “I’ve just never seen such colorful spewers spewing, and some of the spewers are spewing higher than the other spewers are spewing.” (Okay, so maybe he was a better fiddle player than he was a radio guy.)...

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**I don’t** intend to exempt myself from classic blunders. I had a daily sports show on the other radio station KBWD, during college.

At the close of each broadcast, I said, “Don Newbury, reminding everyone that if you can’t play a sport, you can be one, and a good one.”

One New Year’s eve, I added to the usual closure: “And a happy NEWBURY to one and all.”

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