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The New York Times

December 14, 2006 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

A Father's Love Keeps Shining Through Pain

BYLINE: By **SELENA ROBERTS.**

E-mail: selenasports@nytimes.com

SECTION: Section D; Column 1; Sports Desk; SPORTS OF THE TIMES; Pg. 1**LENGTH:** 906 words**DATELINE:** MONTREAL

The moment of silence was startling. Usually, you hear a beeper or a restless child or a vendor's footsteps or a tipsy wisecracker. Something.

But not a sound echoed at the Bell Center on Tuesday night, not the click of a hockey stick or the twitch of a skate blade, as a photo appeared on the screen above the ice.

With a tall ship's mast in the background and calm sky overhead, a camera captured the profile of the Canadiens icon Bob Gainey. He projected a firm jaw, wore the floppy hat of a vacationer and, with his right arm, curled his 25-year-old daughter tight to his chest. His eye met the distance.

Laura Gainey looked into the lens and stole the frame. A vision of dark hair, dark eyes and a deep dimple in her smile, she was happily tucked next to her father's chin. The two were in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in June, ready to set sail for a trip on the three-masted Picton Castle.

She knew the ship, from ropes to galley. She was a crew member. In the dark of last Friday night, amid high seas, a rogue wave swept her off the deck of the Picton Castle about 500 miles from Cape Cod. Officials called off a search for her on Monday evening.

In a single snapshot, during 40 seconds of silence, you could absorb the emotional arc of Bob Gainey's life because you knew every detail, every epiphany and pain, behind that photo of a father and daughter.

He has been a public figure for more than three decades. Longevity is not always flattering for superstars. Personal vices devour some, hubris isolates others. And some disappear into an athlete's afterlife, last seen on their trading cards. With Gainey, there is no disconnect, no version of the loyal player that doesn't jibe with the devoted man.

"Look what he has been through," said Guy Fortin, a Canadiens fan on St. Catherine Street Tuesday afternoon before the team played Boston. "The way he has handled everything, I think, is the way we all hope we would: with dignity. Like he played."

In effect, the exposure of Gainey's private sorrow has been a public inspiration. It's the paradox of a visible life embraced and endured gracefully by a discreet man.

For days, with everyone on this side of the Canadian border consumed by the disappearance of Laura, Gainey's past was gently reopened on the airwaves and front pages by longtime hockey writers like Red Fisher of The Montreal Gazette.

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Here was Gainey, his life on a loop. In 1973, he was the shy rookie from Ontario who had shoulders as square as street corners. Within a few years, he was the newlywed who married the lovely Cathy Collins, a spirited gal and the 15th of 19 children. He was the fabled future Hall of Fame player who led the Canadiens to five Stanley Cup titles and the fixture who played for Montreal his entire 16-year career.

Gainey became a widower, though. One fall day in 1990, in his first season as coach of the Minnesota North Stars, he received a message to call home. As he told The Dallas Morning News nearly a decade ago, his daughter Colleen, 5 years old at the time, answered the phone crying.

"Mommy's asleep on the bathroom floor, and I can't wake her up," Colleen told him. "What am I going to do, Daddy?"

Cathy Gainey had fainted. Maybe it was a virus or a cold, she thought. Doctors discovered a malignant brain tumor.

"He's on the verge of tears a lot," Cathy once said of her husband. "You're seeing what he's feeling. He can leave me and then focus himself at the rink. Then he comes home, and he's focused on us. You know how secure that makes me feel? He's my strong arm."

In 1995, after endless operations and radiation treatments, Cathy died at age 39.

Gainey was a single father. He had to raise Stephen, Colleen and Laura on his own. All three internalized their mother's long illness and death differently. Colleen slipped into a deep depression. Laura lost herself in a cocaine crowd. Gainey, describing the crisis to The Morning News in 1997, said he had dragged his daughter out of a house where he thought drugs were being used. Twice, in one weekend.

He couldn't help her by himself. He checked her into rehab. As one Canadiens official mentioned, Gainey attended 12-step meetings with her whenever she asked.

The Gaineys recovered together. But now, three years after he returned to his beloved Montreal as the Canadiens' general manager, Gainey is immersed in grief over "our darling Laura," as he described her in a statement.

Gainey has taken a leave of absence. But Canadiens Coach Guy Carbonneau -- who played with Gainey in Montreal and for him with the Stars -- has been talking to him every day.

"I'm sure Bob watched" the moment of silence, Carbonneau said. "I'm sure he was touched."

Wherever he was. It's the public-versus-private conundrum again. Gainey isn't more vulnerable to heartbreak than anyone else, only more visible.

"You have to respect his privacy," Canadiens left wing Sergei Samsonov said. "At a time like this, you let him be."

And when he returns? Inside the nurturing hockey culture -- an oxymoron to anyone outside Canada -- the sport doesn't breathe or smile, but it is a love that will never leave you.

Who knows how Gainey is grieving right now? Who knows what he sees in the picture of himself and Laura aboard the Picton Castle? But in the silence of Bell Center, most witnessed a revered legend who, over the years, has maintained his grace as a husband and father, too.

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GRAPHIC: Photos: At right, Bob Gainey with his daughter Laura in an undated photo. Below, Montreal players observed a moment of silence Tuesday night. (Photos by Top, Montreal Canadiens, via Associated Press Canadian Press, via Associated Press)(pg. D1)

Laura Gainey, 25, was swept off a yacht by a huge wave off the coast of Cape Cod last Friday night. Her body has not yet been recovered. (Photo by Associated Press)(pg. D11)

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Commissioner Drops the Ball but Maintains His Grip

BYLINE: By **SELENA ROBERTS.**

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The control gremlin skulking inside Commissioner David Stern over the past two seasons had threatened to turn the N.B.A. into his version of MySpace.

My league, my uniform. No more do-rags under wide-brimmed caps -- no hip-hop attire off the Phat Farm, please -- to offend red-state sensibilities.

My league, my age limit. No more 18-year-old millionaires capable of starring in "MTV Cribs" without serving a cameo as a collegian first.

My league, my tolerance. No more unruly antics by jaw-dropped perpetrators because of this year's zero tolerance for incredulous whistle whining.

My league, my ball. No more leather basketballs, only new synthetic ones concocted by Spalding that feel a lot like a Gucci wallet bought from a man in a trench coat.

This time, Stern had gone too faux. On the one issue that was not rooted in image, players voiced universal outrage with the switcheroo ball. Steve Nash had marks resembling paper cuts on his fingertips from it, and Jerry Stackhouse felt disrespect in his mind from it.

"The ball is everything," Stackhouse said last week after his Mavericks beat the Nets. "Why wouldn't you consult us?"

Such a question has an underbelly to it. This issue wasn't all ball at all. The league's decision to introduce it without input was seen as a dismissive power play to players already feeling as if they had been stripped of their individuality by cultural uniformity codes.

Harmony through homogeny, that's been the perception.

"Who is being homogenized?" Billy Hunter, the executive director of the players union, said in a telephone interview, adding, "If there is a problem, it's always a black problem."

The deurbanization of the N.B.A. is a strategy. The league has adopted a suburban outreach program to comfort its corporate base and expanded its global push to highlight internationally gifted teams.

What happened to the league's No Star Left Behind concept? Long before the Pistons-Pacers fan fight at the Palace in 2004, the Be Like Mike blueprint was failing when the next Jordans on the conveyor belt were not apolitical and tailored and repeat-ring owners, but tattooed and opinionated and repeat consolation stars. They weren't M. J.s, but A. I.s.

"I truly believe if the league could airbrush out every tattoo, they would," Stackhouse said, a reference to how an in-house league magazine once tried to Photoshop Allen Iverson. "And that's not right."

It must be jarring to the Stackhouse Era -- when players witnessed the league's star factory in full gear as it pumped out Vince Carters -- to watch the N.B.A. be so suddenly selective about celebrity.

Suspicion about the league's intentions isn't unfounded or isolated, but the anger over player exclusion hadn't fomented until the ball became a ticket to galvanization. All players, from black and white, Euro to Hispanic, were linked like paper dolls in a common gripe.

So Stern responded with savvy: surprisingly, but smartly, he apologized last week -- for the ball, that is. In a rare burst of conciliation over the introduction of the spongy Spalding, Stern validated the players' feelings of abandonment over the issue that bound them by, in effect, uttering two words: my bad.

"I consider myself as someone working for my players," Stern said when reached last week. "I wouldn't do anything to minimize them or disrespect them."

With that, Stern unhitched the union's circling wagons. In a New Coke moment, he took ownership of the new-ball debacle. He played it just right. It was calculated, but it was still good to see Sergeant Stern give a little after two seasons of ordering his players to be so neat and tidy he could bounce quarters off them. On issues of wardrobe, he had become a head seamstress enforcing John Stocktonesque game-short hemlines and Pat Sajak-esque bench attire. On issues of age limits, he had moonlighted as a bar bouncer by checking IDs at the league door.

He asserted his bossiness as the hammer sponsors craved. He went on an authority binge. Commissioner Hospital Corners can ease up now.

To the players' credit, many of them experienced epiphanies of introspection after the Palace melee left each N.B.A. player attached to a violent image, if only by association.

Most of the players have moved beyond the Kobe Bryant-inspired Me Generation of the late '90s to a more earthy set of luminaries in the new millennium: LeBron James and Dirk Nowitzki, Chris Paul and Dwight Howard. All have proven that humility and street cred are not mutually exclusive hoop qualities.

Who is Sports Illustrated's Sportsman of the Year? Miami's Dwyane Wade. Who is giving millions back to the community? Philanthropists like Dikembe Mutombo.

It is the N.F.L. that is on a wild tear of miscreant behavior. The Cincinnati Bengals have the makings of a team photo from mug shots. And, in a league on a hot streak of steroid offenses, N.F.L. juicers make the perfect holiday gift.

A couple of incidents aside, the N.B.A. is in an image renaissance.

"I am beaming from ear to ear," Stern said, adding, "They're good guys."

So why pile on with more rules?

"David's rule changes have just irritated the players," Hunter said. "He has put them in straitjackets and made them robots."

He allowed for a little wiggle room last week in his version of MySpace. His league, his ball, but the player's call. Stern's reaction was a shrewd way of diminishing the union's big stick, but at least he accepted opinions different from his own. Perhaps Stern's contrition was a first step toward harmony as desired, not homogeny as perceived.

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GRAPHIC: Photo: Commissioner David Stern apologized last week for approving the new ball without player consent. (Photo by Carl Costas/The Sacramento Bee, via Associated Press)

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Big-Time College Sports May Be Due For an Audit

BYLINE: By **SELENA ROBERTS.**

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DATELINE: JACKSONVILLE, Fla.

It was a five-star slumber party. By 7:30 p.m. Friday, Florida Gator players were wandering the hallways of the Sawgrass Marriott Resort and Spa with pillows tucked under their arms.

They weren't wearing their pj's but identical blue warm-ups. They weren't painting each other's toenails, but, and this is unknown, the fellas might have indulged in an oxygen facial to polish up their game face.

As it was, the lugs were lying on the floor of a hotel ballroom for a players-only movie, stretching out after feasting on endless silver platters of man food in the ballroom next door.

It beats the dorm and Domino's. What's an expense budget when more than \$1.2 million a season is dedicated to the team's travel? The University of Florida is located only 80 minutes from Alltel Stadium -- where the team held off Georgia, 21-14, in yesterday's annual border scrum -- but the Gators rode the extra mile a day before the game to relax a half-hour away in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

The team effectively turned a school day into a spa day.

How does the luxurious splendor of high-end college football square with the purpose of higher education?

The Tax Man wants to know. In what amounts to a moral audit, Representative Bill Thomas, Republican of California and the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, recently sent a letter to the money-grab artists at the non-profit N.C.A.A., asking it to justify its tax-exempt status with some barbed questions:

With corporate sponsorships, lucrative TV deals and millionaire coaches with no academic duties, Thomas asked, "What actions has the N.C.A.A. taken to retain a clear line of demarcation between major college sports and professional sports?"

Given that federal taxpayers have no interest in which universities generate visibility and contributions through athletic success, Thomas asked, "Why should the federal government subsidize the athletic activities of educational institutions when that subsidy is being used to help pay for escalating coaches' salaries, costly chartered travel and state-of-the-art athletic facilities?"

With Texas, the defending Division I-A football champion, graduating 29 percent of its players compared with 74 percent of the university's student body for the class that entered in 1998, Thomas asked, "How well is the N.C.A.A. accomplishing its tax-exempt purpose of maintaining the athlete as an integral part of the student body?"

The N.C.A.A. added an extra football game to the schedule and lengthened the basketball season, so Thomas asked, "How do these proposals help athletes improve academic performance?"

Excellent questions. But what's the political point of frisking the N.C.A.A. for loaded pockets?

"It is not an insignificant event," said the economist Andrew Zimbalist, author of "The Bottom Line: Observations and Arguments on Sports Business." He added, "Although these politicians are grandstanding in my view, I'd rather have them grandstanding than be silent."

Peacock politicians can be effective. Congress took the stage to shame Major League Baseball and scared it straight into the admission of a drug problem. And as the Ways and Means Committee probes America's nonprofit sector, it may hold the N.C.A.A. accountable to its unholy binge shopping.

"I think all of us in higher education -- the conferences, the N.C.A.A. -- we should be worried about this," said David Williams, a tax lawyer and vice chancellor at Vanderbilt, where administrators have successfully folded athletics back into education. "The tax code is one of the largest pieces of social legislation. You can encourage and discourage certain behaviors.

"I believe the government is saying: 'You've been told time and time again to link athletics to higher education, and we're not seeing that. You're not able to control yourself.'"

It's a deep spiral on a post pattern to the bank. More than 10 Division I-A universities pay their football and basketball coaches a combined \$3 million a year. At Texas, Mack Brown (\$2.6 million) and Rick Barnes (\$1.8 million) exceed \$4 million. At Florida, it's enough to pay Urban Meyer (\$2.1 million) and Billy Donovan (\$1.6 million), but the Gators have also been on the hook for \$2.6 million in severance payments.

"The question is," Williams said, "where is that money coming from?"

The sugar daddies of college sports. Boosters receive up to an 80 percent tax deduction on gifts to the program. Every check writer -- from the Oklahoma State Santa T. Boone Pickens (\$165 million) to the Tennessee benefactor Peyton Manning (\$1 million) -- may be in line for an atta-boy from their accountants.

Peek inside the 990 tax forms at nonprofit booster clubs and you'll discover charity's payoff. At Florida State, not only did Seminole Booster Inc. raise \$42 million in direct public support, according to its 2004 tax documents, but the president of the club was paid \$228,184 in salary.

Booster czars don't just hang up the signup sheets for tailgate casseroles, anymore. They oversee friends of the program who have penthouse tastes. Bull Gators -- the grand pooh-bah of Florida boosters -- can use their nonprofit devotion as a business perk by purchasing a luxury suite for \$48,000 with the sweet bonus of air-conditioning at the Swamp.

What's too much? Is it Texas spending \$150 million for a stadium expansion? Is it Georgia pouring nearly \$7 million into an academic center to prop up struggling athletes? It is the five-star hotel football players at the University of Colorado have been known to stay in the night before a home game?

The excess only serves to loot the soul of higher education. It's enough to make Congress suspicious.

"I think Congress wants to know: Do you look more like a for-profit rather than a nonprofit?" Williams said.

Imagine the market correction if the free money disappeared for the N.C.A.A. That's not a pompom you hear, but the sound of the N.C.A.A. shaking. It has until Nov. 13 to respond to Thomas. So far, the N.C.A.A. has only offered a statement in its weak defense, "The N.C.A.A. disagrees with the fundamental assertion that intercollegiate athletics is not part of higher education."

Just how is a team spa day part of higher education?

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Whiskey Defense: Another Whopper

BYLINE: By **SELENA ROBERTS.**

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LENGTH: 886 words

OUT of good faith or gullibility, folks suspended their skepticism a week ago to witness a courageous athlete with a crumbling hip, to indulge in the delightful journey of a redhead from the Amish land of apple butter and horse buggies as he pedaled through Paris sipping Champagne at the finish.

A toast to Floyd Landis, everyone cheered, the unlikeliest winner in the history of the Tour de France.

Now Landis is asking people to stretch their inner oath of fairness -- or resolute naivete -- once more as he engages in the Whiskey Defense. Now he has slipped into the role of a bar-scene braggart as he talks one day of his naturally high testosterone levels, then blaming a Jack Daniel's binge -- or was it beer? -- for his A-sample spike a night before he charged through the Alps in Stage 17.

"It was very hot," he told reporters after the stage, "or maybe it was the beer I had last night." How many brews? "Just one," he said. "I wasn't giving up just yet."

Then Landis offered a revised version of his drinking tale last week. Maybe it was a few shots of Jack Daniel's to drown his deep funk after spiraling through Stage 16; he doesn't remember.

Whatever the bar tab, he revealed no cotton mouth, no bloodshot eyes, no hangover at all in Stage 17. Just pure-grain adrenaline for the greatest ride since Apollo 11.

Miracle or malarkey? (The man on the bike, not the man on the moon.)

It is expected that a B sample will be parsed this week by lab techies to determine if Landis's story stands up in a petri dish.

He may be cleared. And what a relief that would be to everyone who has watched Landis's modest Mennonite mother, with her gray hair swept in a bun, with a sweet smile on her face, doggedly defending her son to reporters outside her simple home.

A negative B sample is Landis's path to redemption. A positive B sample would provide another glimpse inside the athlete pathology of lying.

Artful dodging has become a natural reflex to doping allegations. Oh, the stories they tell. Thought it was flaxseed oil, Barry Bonds contended in Balco testimony reported by The San Francisco Chronicle. It was my vanishing twin from the womb, the cyclist Tyler Hamilton said after a blood-doping positive surfaced the month after he won a gold medal in Athens and dedicated it to his deceased golden retriever. It is a lab mystery to me, hinted the sprint great Justin Gatlin in a statement yesterday to disclose his recent positive test.

The doctors' notes that athletes have offered the World Anti-Doping Agency as excuses for failed tests seem written in fiction: it was Propecia, balding athletes say; it was a sleep medication, the narcoleptics contend; it was asthma meds, the wheezing swimmers cite.

"It's the Twinkie Defense: the sugar made me do it," said Dr. Steven Ungerleider, a research psychologist who wrote "Faust's Gold: Inside the East German Doping Machine," when reached Friday. "I think there is an athlete pathology here and an instinctive mentality of, gee, this isn't my fault.

"For a while, we bought into that. But with the WADA code out since 2001, with coaches warned, team officials warned and doctors warned, athletes have been slapped in the head with the knowledge that if anything goes into their bodies, they will be held accountable for it. In 1998 or 1999, with every story, there was room to wiggle. But not in this new age of drug-testing protocol."

What is your tolerance for the new age of doping disclosures?

The Landis predicament isn't only about cycling's need for introspection. It's not the dirtiest sport, just the most visible in its drug flaws.

Landis, by his count, was tested eight times during the Tour and 16 other times this season. Imagine if, say, Major League Baseball -- many of whose players are urine-tested twice a season, and no one is needle-pricked for human growth hormone -- was as vigilant and as transparent in its anti-doping process as cycling.

No wonder loopholes down the line and up the middle still exist in the testing policies of pro sports. If marquee baseball stars beyond Balco were disclosed as drug cheats, could outrage threaten baseball's viability? Would corporate sponsors dare to dart for the doors once and for all? Would other sports be confronted with the same live-drug-free-or-die crossroads as cycling?

It is only a crisis when spectators stop watching. Some believe fans are so resilient in their unconditional love for their sports that there is no amount of scandal or absurd deniability or bumbling mismanagement to dissuade their loyalty.

But fan indifference can happen. Boxing stands as the cautionary tale of how fast a sport can sink into irrelevance with farce and corruption as its cement shoes. And the ratings dominance of "American Idol" over the American Winter Olympians in Turin, Italy, is a reminder of how the public is free to choose what reality TV to believe in.

Deception fatigue has its limits. If Landis's Whiskey Defense fails, if his B sample turns into another dark mark against athlete credibility, the cyclist from the piety and purity of Pennsylvania Dutch Country will be labeled a fraud.

At some point, fan endurance for athletes' tall tales will expire. Only then, with good faith and gullibility exhausted, will the truth be a priority.

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CORRECTION: A sports article on Sunday about the Tour de France winner Floyd Landis, whose colleagues said that even though he failed a drug test his personality did not fit that of someone who would cheat, omitted the name of a contributing reporter in some copies. He was Edward Wyatt.

GRAPHIC: Photo: Floyd Landis said alcohol could be a reason for his positive A sample. (Photo by Jasper Juinen/Associated Press)

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A Bad Seed Is to Blame For the Mess at the Garden

BYLINE: By **SELENA ROBERTS.**

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SECTION: Section D; Column 1; Sports Desk; Sports of The Times; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 805 words

DOES Charles F. Dolan lie awake at night counting his black-sheep son?

Is Big Daddy Cablevision consumed by the lampoon images of James L. Dolan, his rebel child mocked on the tabloid back pages and duped by his celebrity Knick hires?

Does he fret about the family name when his son is cast as a fiscal fool for roster moves or when protesters plan to picket Jim on draft night?

For years, political power players and mighty sports authorities have been known to phone the remote patriarch with the same opening line: "About your son."

It is always about Jim, about whether he is the right man to run Madison Square Garden, a hallowed place that Dolan handed to his son as an innocent way to occupy him, to keep him out of harm's way.

Who knew the Garden would become a Jungle Jim? Another indignant moment in Jim's immature decade of disarray came to pass yesterday when Larry Brown was finally fired as Knicks coach. Not for his 23-victory season, but for disobedience.

Dolan values sycophantic loyalty the most. (How else to explain the perpetuity of Glen Sather?) Brown was a goner long ago, from the first day he diminished Isiah Thomas's assembled roster of chain letters -- players quickly sent from team to team as if to avoid bad karma.

That little lovegram to Brown from Stephon Marbury last week wasn't a makeup smooch as much as a eulogy.

A Bad Seed Is to Blame For the Mess at the Garden The New York Times June 23, 2006 Friday

Dolan did not process Brown's criticisms as they were intended -- as passive-aggressive digs at Thomas's ineptitude -- but personalized them as insults to his own basketball savvy.

The firing of Brown was not about protecting Thomas -- a transparent manipulator who has been set up as the next coach -- but about Dolan's strategy of self-preservation.

To those Garden employees who exit quietly, who sign confidentiality agreements with a smile, there are healthy severance checks: goodbye, Scott Layden; thanks for playing, Shandon Anderson.

To those Garden employees who dare challenge the inner circle, who step outside of Jim's select playgroup, there is a price to pay. Dolan then uses his wealth as a bully stick: not a sexual-harassment penny, Anucha Browne Sanders; not an extra coaching dime, Coach Brown.

There will be no end to the Garden sagas, only an endless blooper loop, as long as Dolan continues to suit up for work every day, putting on his clown pants one leg at a time.

After all, the circus didn't fold up after Dolan vengefully kept the exiting Jeff Van Gundy locked up in a contract dispute even though he helped force him out. Or when he fired Don Chaney and had him unceremoniously escorted out of the Garden two hours before a game.

And the pettiness didn't stop after Dolan played Olympic scrooge by pouring \$10 million into a campaign designed to show Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and the Jets' owner, Woody Johnson, just who was the coolest billionaire in town.

Delusions of celebrity consume Dolan. At times, sports officials of influence have had private conversations with Jim about ways to raise the profile of his franchise by finding a new face for the organization.

Jim has been known to claim, "I am the face of the Knicks."

Insecurity drives him, but can anyone stop him?

The concerned callers to Charles F. Dolan's office have wanted to know. Always polite, never rude, Dolan takes the calls and simply dismisses anyone's worries with something along the lines of this: You know Jim, he's just head-strong.

Alas, Baby Dolan is here to stay. So much for the family feud that developed last year when Charles Dolan lost a Cablevision showdown with his son.

There is a father-son truce, but there is still tension. The awkwardness will exist as long as the cable daddy is the wizard of the telecommunications world and his son longs to match his status as the maestro of sports entertainment.

Jim Dolan had wealth as a birthright growing up among the Long Island elite, only to lose nearly a decade of his life battling addictions before taking over the Garden.

He arrived immature, with a fistful of Cablevision monopoly money and Crayolas in hand. He wasn't a grown-up, still isn't, a fact reflected in his romper room management etiquette. Charles once envisioned and hatched HBO. Jim has hatched a repeat of "The Break-up."

Every match made in the Garden is doomed to fail whenever Dolan plays a role in the relationship.

And he always casts himself as a star: Dolan vs. Latrell Sprewell; Dolan vs. Patrick Ewing; Dolan vs. Dave Checketts; Dolan vs. Brown.

The conga line of dysfunction at the Garden will go on, uninterrupted, because Charles will never ask his son to hand back the remote.

After all, he is Jim's father first. The Knicks bring his black-sheep son joy, however twisted, and an identity, however ridiculed.

Charles Dolan sleeps at night knowing his son is doing his job, however wrong.

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A Bad Seed Is to Blame For the Mess at the Garden The New York Times June 23, 2006 Friday

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GRAPHIC: Photo: Isiah Thomas, left, will take over as coach for Larry Brown. The two men clashed over personnel decisions during Brown's short tenure. (Photo by Suzy Allman for The New York Times)

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