

# Braves Pitcher To Do Time For Comments

By Adam Gauthier  
STAFF WRITER

With the official start of the Major League Baseball season less than eight weeks away, Atlanta Braves relief pitcher John Rocker will be remaining at home for an extra month. Rocker, 25, was suspended and fined \$20,000 on January 31 for comments that he made in an interview with Sports Illustrated. In the article, which was released in November 1999, Rocker made racial and ethnic remarks about foreigners, homosexuals and minorities.

Major League Baseball commissioner Bud Selig said that Rocker would be suspended until May 1 and would also have to undergo sensitivity training. In December, Rocker was ordered by the Atlanta Braves head office to undergo psychological testing for the comments that he made.

Major League Baseball players' union have made it clear that they intend to fight for an appeal to Rocker's case. This is believed to be the longest suspension in baseball history that is not related to

a drug charge against a player. This is also the longest suspension granted since 1977 when Texas Ranger, Lenny Randle was suspended for 30 days for striking Texas manager, Frank Lucchesi.

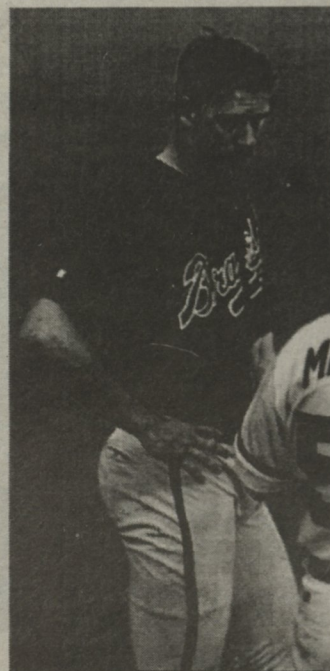
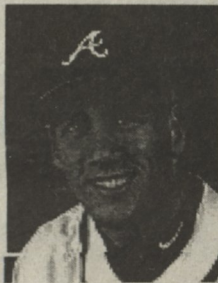
Since the article was first released, Rocker has been trying to plead his case through the media. Rocker appeared on the ESPN's Up Close to have a sit down interview with Peter Gammons in January. Rocker stated that the comments he made had to do with his experience in New York City. While pitching at Shea Stadium (and Yankee Stadium) in October, he said that he would never want to play for a New York team. He began to provoke the New York fans and soon objects were being thrown at Rocker when he came out onto the field. Rocker said that the comments came to mind when the Sports Illustrated interviewer asked him what he thought about the fans of New York.

Rocker has denied being a racist and has said that some of his best friends are minorities but not all believe what Rocker has to say. Home run king and former Atlanta Braves player Hank Aaron has stated that the Braves management should trade or release John Rocker. Others have stated that Rocker should be given a chance to explain himself

to his most important critics: his teammates.

The Braves players that have spoken out about Rocker have said they want to hear what he has to say for himself before they make any decisions about accepting him back into the clubhouse. The Braves owner, Ted Turner has stated that Rocker was "stupid" to say what he did but will leave the matter up to the team. The acceptance or denial of his teammates could decide how long John Rocker remains an Atlanta Brave or a Major League pitcher.

Rocker can begin his spring training on April 3 and will be allowed to pitch in the minor leagues until his suspension is over on May 3. Several people in the Braves organization and Major League Baseball have said that Rocker will have a difficult time trying to rebuild his tarnished image with all those involved in the game of baseball especially the fans.



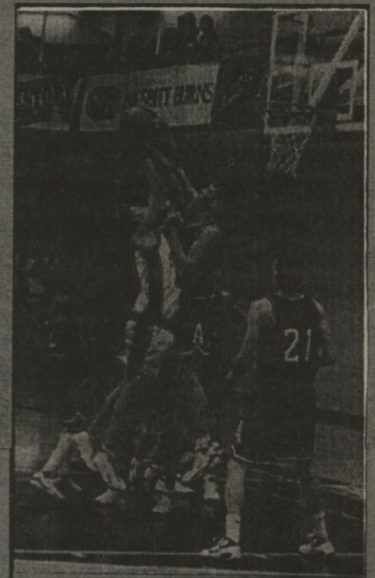
# Men Drop Two to Axemen

By Marc MacDonald  
Sports Editor

The UPEI Panther Men played home to Nelson Division leading Acadia this weekend. Playing first on Saturday the men were able to use successful offensive play that eluded Acadia for most of the first half. By the end of the first half UPEI led 48-40. In the second half things fell apart for the Panthers. Acadia tied it up and took the lead early and things continued to go downhill for the Panthers. Forward Chris Smith suffered a concussion after he received an elbow in the face. With 5:52 remaining in the game UPEI still had not received any fouls but within two minutes they picked up 6. Starters Scott Morrison and Jimmy Morris both fouled out adding to the Panthers difficulties. The final score in the game was Acadia 84, UPEI 77. AUA player of the game was awarded to Acadia's Richard Breton who lead his team with 24 points while Mark Seaborn had 23. Leading the Panthers was second year forward Dave Love who scored

22 points.

The match up on Sunday was less close as the Axemen controlled the scoreboard from the outset. Acadia was up 19 points at half and won the game 83-56. Mark Seaborn and Michael Messenger each had 17



points leading Acadia with Messenger picking up the AUA player of the game. Jimmy Morris lead UPEI with 19.

Next weekend UPEI will face the Axemen in Acadia and then finish off their season against last years National Champions the Saint Mary's Huskies on February 26. This will be the final game for captain Scott Morrison.

