NewsBank inc.

Ex-vendor makes pitch for Sox job - Boston Herald (MA) - August 18, 1997 - page 31
August 18, 1997 | Boston Herald (MA) | Jill Radsken | Page 31

Dave Kerpen, the Fenway vendor fired last month for his over-the-top style of hawking Coke and Cracker Jack, is heading back to Fenway Park this afternoon to see if he can save his job.

Meanwhile, the Kansas woman who was accidentally struck by a coin during one of Kerpen's performances, said she was surprised to hear that the 20-year-old Boston University student was terminated. In fact, she said she didn't even fault him for the incident.

"I didn't think of blaming the vendor," Valerie Chouinard said, in a telephone interview from her Wichita, Kan., home. "We were mad at the person who had thrown the nickel."

Chouinard was hit hard on her cheekbone with a nickel last month at Fenway Park possibly when rowdy fans began throwing money to Kerpen in response to one of his signature moves - balancing three Cokes on his head. The nickel did not bruise or break the skin, and Chouinard had no other injuries.

Her husband, Kenneth, sought out a police officer and, later, the head of Red Sox security to report the incident and find the fan, not to have Kerpen punished. Kenneth Chouinard, a Worcester-area native who recently moved to Kansas, said Kerpen's between-innings schtick was "was hilarious."

But what has happened to Kerpen was no laughing matter. The Herald first reported Aug. 6 that Kerpen was fired. The elementary education major - whose antics have been wildly popular at the Bruins and Celtics games at the FleetCenter - has been fighting with the help of his union for job reinstatement at Aramark food service.

"Make no mistake, I still want my job back, but I understand that might not be a possibility," said Kerpen.

News of Kerpen's firing has prompted a groundswell of popular support. The phone lines on Howie Carr's WRKO radio talk show lit up last week as Kerpen took calls from fans and well-wishers. Radio station management also offered him a job in its promotion department.

This morning, Kerpen is a scheduled guest on the "Matty in the Morning" show on KISS 108. Tomorrow, he will chat with WAAF 107.3 morning man Greg Hill.

"I'm glad people have been supportive," said Kerpen. "It's been helpful during a difficult time."

Officials who fired Kerpen seem to be scrambling in the wake of the publicity. Two separate reports that may be discussed at today's meeting describe incidents that took place on April 29 and June 27, but are dated Aug. 5 - the same day a Herald reporter called Aramark to inquire about Kerpen's termination.

The Herald has also received letters and calls from supporters, asking, "What can I do to help?"

An irate Gregory Lynn of Wayland wrote: "This particular move is indefensible. . . . They should (reinstate him), and they should ask him to throw out the first ball at a game."

Photo Caption: CRUNCH: Dave Kerpen liked to entertain fans while hawking snacks at Fenway. Herald file photo by Justin Ide

CITATION (AGLC STYLE)

Jill Radsken, 'Ex-vendor makes pitch for Sox job', *Boston Herald* (online), 18 Aug 1997 31 ‹https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/0EB41DE30ED409FB›

Copyright 1997 Boston Herald