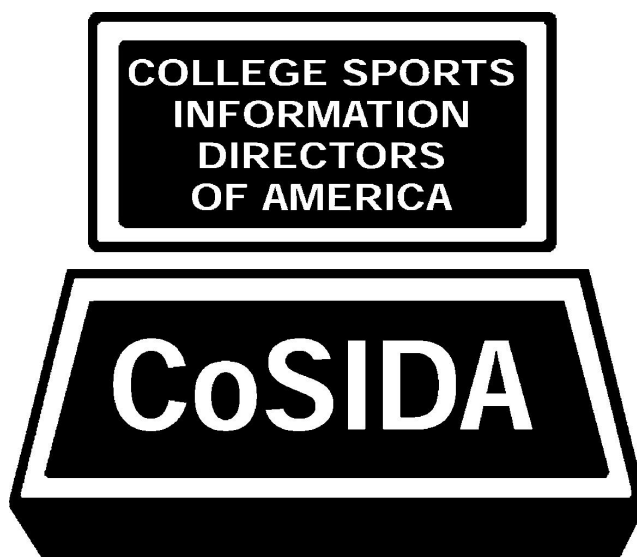


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BCS scenarios taking shape

By [TONY BARNHART](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Published on: 10/23/06

If nothing else, the Texas-Southern Cal classic in last January's Rose Bowl made the critics of the BCS shut up for a while.

For at least one offseason, there was peace in the valley between those who support the BCS and those who hate it.

It appears that peace will be short-lived.

With six weeks to go in the regular season, there is only one BCS scenario that is even close to being non-controversial. The rest look like nightmares.

Here are but a few for your consideration:

BCS projections

We could wait until some more games are played, but where's the fun in that?

- Orange:** Clemson (ACC champ) vs. West Virginia (Big East champ)
- Sugar:** Florida (SEC champ) vs. Notre Dame (at-large)
- Fiesta:** Texas (Big 12 champ) vs. Tennessee/Auburn/Boise State (at-large)
- Rose:** Michigan (at-large) vs. California (at-large)
- BCS championship:** Ohio State (Big Ten champ) vs. Southern Cal (Pac-10 champ)

Peace in the valley scenario

- The game:** Ohio State-Michigan winner vs. Southern Cal

•**How it happens:** If No. 1 Ohio State and No. 3 Michigan are undefeated Nov. 18, you can book it. The winner will be in the BCS championship game. If Southern Cal wins out to finish 12-0, the Trojans can point to a

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nonconference schedule that included Arkansas (6-1), Nebraska (6-2) and Notre Dame (6-1).

•**Who's mad:** A 12-0 Big East champ, West Virginia or Louisville, will argue a little, but not much. All of the computers and all of the humans will have USC ranked higher. This is the least controversial of all the possible scenarios.

Nightmare scenario No. 1

•The game: Ohio State vs. Michigan (Yes, you read that right.)

•**How it happens:** West Virginia loses to Louisville on Nov. 2 and then Louisville loses at Rutgers on Nov. 9. Southern Cal loses to California on Nov. 18. On that same day, No. 3 Michigan and No. 1 Ohio State play a game for the ages. Michigan wins on a late field goal or, even worse, a bad officiating call. Michigan moves to No. 1 but Ohio State picks up the sympathy vote and drops only to No. 2.

•**Who's mad:** Everybody but Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany. The Rose Bowl, which normally gets the Big Ten champ, will have to be treated en masse for depression.

Nightmare scenario No. 2

•The game: Ohio State-Michigan winner vs. West Virginia-Louisville winner.

•**How it happens:** Southern Cal loses and the West Virginia-Louisville winner picks up steam in the polls and the computers and finishes ahead of

once-beaten Florida or once-beaten Auburn.

•**Who's mad:** SEC fans, who figure the BCS owes them one after shutting out 13-0 Auburn in 2004. The argument will be: Is a 12-1 team playing an SEC schedule more worthy than a 12-0 Big East team? At least Louisville played and beat Miami (31-7), but with each passing week that win is looking less and less impressive.

Nightmare scenario No. 3

•The game: Ohio State vs. Auburn

•**How it happens:** Southern Cal loses to California. Michigan gets blown out by Ohio State and No. 4 Auburn runs the table impressively against Ole Miss, Arkansas State, Georgia and Alabama. Under this scenario, Auburn, at 11-1, could play for the BCS title without reaching the SEC championship game.

•**Who's mad:** Everyone in the Big East and all the people who believe that if you don't win your conference you shouldn't be eligible to win the BCS championship.

Nightmare scenario No. 4

•The game: Ohio State vs. Florida

•**How it happens:** Southern Cal and West Virginia lose in November. Ohio State blows out Michigan. No. 6 Florida wins out and finds itself matched with Auburn in the SEC championship game in Atlanta. The Gators win impressively to avenge their only loss of the season and finish 12-1. The pollsters and the computers reward Florida for playing one of the toughest schedules in the country.

•**Who's mad:** Louisville, which is sitting there at 12-0 with wins over Miami, West Virginia and Rutgers.

Nightmare scenario No. 5

•The game: Ohio State vs. Notre Dame

•**How it happens:** Ohio State beats Michigan by more than two touchdowns. Southern Cal loses to California. Auburn loses at Alabama. West Virginia loses at Louisville. Florida loses to Arkansas in the SEC championship game. Louisville loses at Rutgers the week after beating West Virginia. Notre Dame will be 10-1 when it goes to Southern Cal on Nov. 25. Brady Quinn gets a hot hand and beats the Trojans by a couple of touchdowns. The voters and computers go out of their minds and put the 11-1 Fighting Irish in the game.

•**Who's mad:** Michigan, which will point out that they tattooed Notre Dame (47-21) on Sept. 16. If Texas finishes at 12-1 and wins the Big 12 championship, the Longhorns will point out that their only loss was to No. 1 Ohio State.

The TV folks at Fox will be giddy. It was the game Fox wanted when they took the BCS away from ABC.

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Alcohol policies brew defiance

Students balk at UGA, UF efforts to curb underage, binge drinking

By [VIRGINIA ANDERSON](#), [ANDREA JONES](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Published on: 10/22/06

Empty beer cups, cigarette butts and hundreds of students line University Avenue in Gainesville. It's Friday night before homecoming, and bars with names like Sloppy Gator (slogan: "No matter what, no questions asked until 2 a.m."), Gator City and The Swamp beckon.

And many University of Florida students vow that this party — this drinking — tradition is far from being shut down by their party-pooper school president, Bernie Machen.

"I'm going to drink because Bernie Machen doesn't want me to," said Nathan Easley, 22, of Jacksonville.

As Florida and the University of Georgia prepare for their annual football showdown next weekend in Jacksonville, officials from both universities hope new policies designed to curb underage and binge drinking pay off. This will be the first Georgia-Florida game since the schools enacted tougher policies on alcohol, and since SEC Commissioner Mike Slive and UGA President Michael Adams asked the media to stop referring to the game as The World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party.

But many students aren't buying it.

At both schools, students are angry — defiant, even — about the universities' efforts to curb alcohol abuse, which continues to grow. As many as 44 percent of college students are considered heavy drinkers by at least one account.

Students, though, believe the presidents are trying to turn the game into a tea party and their campuses into temperance unions.

At homecoming festivities in Athens last week, late in the morning before Georgia's battle with Vanderbilt, Emma Vogel, a transfer student at UGA, said she recently took the online alcohol test now required of all incoming students.

Did it make her think?

She held up her Miller Lite and grinned. "Oh, obviously," she said.

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Other students in Athens and Gainesville scoffed at the schools' efforts.

"Half the fun in college is learning how to drink," said Steve Fowler, 22, an engineering major at the University of Florida.

An unpopular campaign

The schools are trying to change a heavy drinking culture that exists at nearly every college campus across the country. But students in Athens and Gainesville appear relatively unfazed by reports of deaths, DUIs, rapes, assaults and other charges associated with excessive drinking.

At the past two Florida-Georgia games, a UF student has died in what authorities considered to be alcohol-related incidents. Last year, Tommy Brown of Merritt Island, Fla., was beaten to death after he wandered off from his friends. In 2004, David Ferguson, a UF student, died after falling off a parking garage over the weekend.

Such incidents, many students said, are due to a person "not knowing their limits." All it takes is a little know-how to avoid a disaster, some said.

"Ninety percent of the students want Bernie gone," said John Harrison, who graduated in June from UF with a degree in economics. "They can say whatever they want, but they are not going to change anything."

"We embrace getting drunk," said Andy Smith, another recent UF grad in town for homecoming.

Those attitudes show the magnitude of the challenge facing college presidents as they confront college alcohol abuse.

"There are presidents who get fired for this," said Machen as he sat in the president's mansion only minutes before Florida's homecoming parade two weeks ago. "We know this isn't popular."

Idea not lost on everyone

Not all students disagree with the presidents. At a huge gathering the night before

the Florida-LSU game, hundreds of students gathered at the Baptist Collegiate Ministries for a cookout that included burgers and soft drinks, a band and a rock-climbing wall.

"Underage drinking is a huge problem at UF," said Nicole Teal, a freshman from Jacksonville. "I'm glad he's doing what he is."

Students need to know that they can have fun without getting drunk, said Stephen Van Bever, a sophomore from Palm Bay who said he does not drink.

But they won't necessarily pay attention to the college administrators, Van Bever added. "I think it's a noble cause, but if you're not going to drink, you're not going to do it because of the online surveys," he said, referring to the newly required online courses.

Nearby, police sergeants Joe Raulerson and Greg Armagast said they think parents could — and should — do more to teach limits to their children before they go off to college.

"I've arrested students who just look at me and say 'You can't do this,' like they can't believe someone is telling them no," Armagast said. "They don't know their boundaries. So we end up enforcing those boundaries."

Craig Foster, 22, a UGA senior from Rome, doesn't think his school's new regulations are a bad idea. He and his buddies finished up a half-dozen Budweisers from their tailgate on North Campus and talked about UGA President Adams.

Foster, who studied at Oxford University in Britain over the summer, said he understands

where Adams is coming from. "He's trying to make UGA better," Foster said. The family-friendly zones, in particular, are a good idea, he said.

"I hope I'll have my own family one day and it will be nice to have a place to bring them," he said.

An uphill battle

Bars encourage the problem, administrators believe, with drink specials such as Ladies Nights, when drinking is free for women, two-for-one deals, shots of liquor rather than mixed drinks, and allowing 18-year-olds inside but not properly checking IDs when drinks are ordered.

Outside bars, drinking party games such as Beer Pong, Flip Cup, Friday Afternoon Drinking Club and funnel drinking make the excessive drinking a college-aged version of musical chairs.

Students are quick to note that they've had some powerful role models for excessive drinking, citing alumni and other visitors to campus on game days.

Machen has sought help in the Florida Legislature to pass a law that would limit drink specials in Gainesville.

"That didn't work," he said. Members of the alcohol lobby "took us into a room and said, 'This won't pass. We won't let it.' "

UF has made some strides locally, with some Gainesville bars signing a "hospitality covenant" that promises they will diligently enforce the drinking age.

UF also succeeded in getting the bars to close at 2 a.m. For years, many bars had stayed open all night. In more recent years, closing time was 4 a.m.

Social responsibility

UGA's Adams has said he was disgusted after last year's game against Auburn, a night game that left the campus looking like a huge Dumpster on Sunday morning.

It was his idea to ask the media to drop the joking references to the annual Georgia-Florida game as The World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party. And UGA this year set aside family-friendly, or alcohol-free, tailgating areas.

Still, the drinking continues. After Georgia's homecoming game with Vanderbilt, bands started playing along fraternity row and the houses filled with staggering students all along Milledge Avenue.

In front of one house, a young man lay face down on a blanket, his boots neatly lined up behind him. Cars honked as they passed.

Students said Adams' efforts are not a deterrent.

"It's a football town," said Sean Bright, a 20-year-old from Lawrenceville. "You're not going to change

In Gainesville the morning of the LSU-Florida game two weeks ago, drinking was rampant. UF senior James Garner proudly held up an appliance he made for tailgating. It was a modest contraption, a large red funnel and a long piece of tubing connected by screws.

But Garner added a special touch to this funnel — a valve that keeps cold beer in the funnel for a few seconds until a guzzler is ready to drink it.

A compatriot held the funnel full of beer above Garner's head, Garner knelt to place his mouth lower than the funnel, he turned the valve and — voila — he had a belly full of beer in less than two seconds.

"I'm on my 10th beer already," he said.

Overcoming such practices is daunting, but both presidents said they can take the heat if it helps change the drinking culture on their campuses.

"This is not about abstinence," Machen said. "It's about social responsibility. The kids who come to these schools are the best and brightest kids in the nation. They can do anything in the world. I just want to help them avoid a mistake they'll regret for the rest of their lives."

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— THE — ANN ARBOR NEWS

Yes, there are a few things more important than football

Sunday, October 22, 2006

It was Friday night and the University of Michigan football team was at the hotel, where it always is the night before a big game. Lloyd Carr, however, was at the hospital visiting Bo Schembechler, who was complaining.

The old coach had gotten a scare earlier in the day. Bo had either blacked out or become short of breath taping a television show and been taken to William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. From there, he was transported to the University of Michigan Medical Center for tests.

But this was later and Bo was feeling better, good enough to tease the nurses and complain that his doctors might not let him watch the Iowa game because of the potential stress on his heart.

"I said, well, Bo, there are a few things more important than this football game tomorrow, and staying alive is one of them," Carr said Saturday night, chuckling. "But he wasn't buying into that.

"I don't know whether he got to watch it or not."

Less than 24 hours later, Carr's team improved to 8-0 with a 20-6 victory over Iowa.

If Bo watched, he did it on a television sent over by Big George's Home Appliances, one local institution helping out another.

In the end, this team did what it's done all season, grinding down another opponent with relentless defense and Mike Hart's running.

Five sacks. Just 41 rushing yards allowed. Hart pounding out 99 rushing yards in the second half. Not as flashy as some teams, but dominant.

There was one point where it felt like Iowa could take the momentum, after Chad Henne threw a pick deep in Michigan territory in the third quarter.

The defense smiled and held for 1-2-3 and a field goal.

That hard part's over now. It's going to happen, a No. 1 vs. No. 2 meeting with Ohio State and the absolute insanity that will accompany it.

Maybe the national title game. Maybe even a perfect season.

If there are other coaches who could have done as good a job with this team, who could have cleaned up the wreckage of 7-5 and turned it into the fuel for greatness, they number very, very few.

And none of them could have told the Schembechler story with as much warmth and affection. Lloyd Carr loves that old man, and he loves this team and place in a way that doesn't happen often in the bottom-line business of college football.

None of that mattered a year ago, but it should have. And that needs to be said.

As the losses mounted, things got a little crazy, and the lunatic fringe won out for a few months. Suddenly the 1997 national title and a Hall of Fame coaching career didn't matter so much.

Carr was old, the game had passed him by, they said, pushing for a forced retirement party.

He deserved better.

Not to be above criticism, Carr would tell you that himself, just as he'll tell you 7-5 isn't good enough at Michigan.

But he deserved to have been spared the worst of it, the fire Carr nonsense on the Internet and nasty T-shirts and shouted comments from the stands in his own stadium.

He deserved better because he's a damn fine coach and has never embarrassed you on or off the field.

But more than that because he's been a part of this place longer than almost everything else. Because he loves Michigan and is one of the last real links to the Schembechler era.

The kids always got all that. A lot of them talked before this season about how the criticism of Carr bothered them, especially Jake Long.

They don't really know Bo any more than Tom Harmon or Bob Ufer.

To them, Lloyd Carr is both Michigan football and the best coach in college football.

They're biased, of course, but as this season slides by week after week, they're proving their point. There was an air of celebration after Saturday's win, even for the ever-focused Carr. If you're not excited, he said, there's something wrong with you.

"It's hard to have more fun than I've had," he said, smiling a little. "These guys, these coaches and players, they've been delightful, and really they've been that way going back to January.

"To come into this season and respond the way they have, it's fun to watch them. It's fun to see guys who really care about each other, and work as hard as they do, and pursue one goal. That's fun to watch."

They're No. 2, and No. 1 is waiting.

Bo seems to be OK.

The hard part is over, for now.

It's an easy time to forget that, yeah, there are a few more things important than this football game.

But it's something we'd all do well to remember the next time the pieces don't come together quite so wonderfully.

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Athletic tail still is wagging the academic 'Dawg' at beloved UGA

By Dick Yarbrough

COLUMNIST

Terrific. I spend all my waking hours defending the academic integrity of my beloved alma mater, the University of Georgia, the oldest state-chartered university in the nation, located in Athens, the Classic City of the South, and now this: The NCAA has issued its yearly report on how many athletes earned their degree within six years of enrolling.


Dick Yarbrough

Our men's basketball team ranks second-to-last among 318 Division I men's basketball teams with a measly 9 percent graduation rate. The UGA football team was dead last in the Southeastern Conference with a 41 percent graduation rate.

There are a lot of "yeah, buts" in those statistics regarding the years covered by the rankings. The numbers go back to the late '90s, and the current athletes are doing better in today's environment, but the fact that it even happened should embarrass anybody who loves the University of Georgia.

But alas, a large number of Bulldog supporters don't really care. The majority of people who show up at Sanford Stadium dressed in red and black each Saturday and woofing their heads off didn't even go to Georgia. Why should they care if any of the so-called scholar-athletes graduate or can even read or write? They just want to win, baby, win.

Perhaps that is why uber-Athletic Director Michael Adams, who also doubles as president of the university, decried the results but said he intended to keep admitting athletes who otherwise wouldn't qualify to attend the University of Georgia, because "We still have to compete in the (Southeastern Conference)."

Somehow, I am not comforted by his statement. I suspect the faculty isn't either. I had thought we were in business to provide our students a superior education so they could compete in the real world, not the SEC.

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Recall that Adams' brand of logic led him to bring his good buddy from his Pepperdine days, Jim Harrick, to coach the men's basketball team. We all know what a rousing success that was, particularly since we got Harrick's son and noted educator Jim Jr. in the bargain. Young Harrick will go down in the 3Rs Hall of Fame for his famous exam that included a question on how many points does a three-point shot account for in a game. (On second thought, given the basketball team's graduation rate, I must presume that some of the players missed the answer.)

In his enthusiasm to deflect blame from this mess that happened on his watch, Adams and his palace guard took a predictable shot at arch-nemesis Vince Dooley, insinuating that when Dooley was athletic director "the philosophy was 'athletic eligibility,' not graduation. That philosophy has changed."

Now, Adams says he misspoke and that he was wrong also in saying that the academic counseling program had been moved out of the athletic department to the provost's office. Dang, being uber-athletic director isn't as easy as it looks.

The sad fact is that the athletic tail still wags the academic Dawg in Georgia. The governor got his shorts in a wad over a negative headline in the Atlanta newspapers following the Bulldogs' loss to Tennessee, but hasn't said much about the abysmal graduation rates. The Board of Regents is a political joke, and they won't do squat.

Newspapers across the state have been harrumphing over the situation in Athens on their editorial pages, but many of these same papers have devoted more column inches to who will start at quarterback on Saturday than to UGA's impressive academic achievements. They know that is what the majority of readers are most interested in. To those of us who care deeply about seeing the University of Georgia continue to prosper where it counts most -- the classroom -- it is a losing battle.

So the hell with it. If we are going to continue to dumb down UGA, at least get enough unqualified "scholar athletes" enrolled so we can beat Tennessee, Florida, Auburn, Georgia Tech -- and Vanderbilt -- all in the same year. Then the effort will not have been in vain.

If you agree, I'll get our uber-athletic director working on that immediately.

Dick Yarbrough is a North Georgia resident whose column appears Saturdays. You can reach him at P.O. Box 725373, Atlanta, GA 31139; e-mail, yarb2400@bellsouth.net; Web site, www.dickyarbrough.com.

Originally published Saturday, October 21, 2006



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Write your own news?

ADVERT

Star's plan to get more content from readers stirs controversy

By Anthony Schoettle aschoettle@ibj.com

Is it a cost-saving move or a response to reader demands?

That's the question hanging over a plan unveiled recently that calls for The Indianapolis Star to use more reader-submitted material on its news pages.

The new policy has rankled staff members who fear the move will undermine the credibility of the state's largest newspaper—and ultimately threaten their jobs.

Architects of the strategy, on the other hand, say the move will protect the Star from the newsroom layoffs that have roiled other major publications across the country.

The change comes as part of a strategic shift at the Star that industry experts believe is a reaction to sagging revenue, as major advertisers evaporate because of corporate mergers.

"The reporters are right to be concerned," said Joseph N. Boyce, a retired senior editor with the Wall Street Journal who now teaches journalism at IUPUI. "This could be seen as a way to provide content on the cheap. If there is a reduction in staff due to this, I would seriously wonder about the competency of that management."

Though the Star hasn't laid off news staffers, some say the newsroom already is understaffed because managers have not filled vacant positions. Star copy editor Judy Wolf, treasurer of The Newspaper Guild-CWA, said she fears the new policy may perpetuate that practice.

Star staffers estimated newsroom employment has decreased 10 percent to 15 percent in the last five years. Star management declined to divulge how many people staffed their newsroom.

"Submitted news is seen as filler for lack of staff, and that's a prime concern, because that reflects on the quality of the news report," Wolf said. "It's the do-more-withless kind of thing, and I think that shortchanges the readers."

But Star Editor Dennis Ryerson said the addition of more local news and readergenerated material is an effort to preserve jobs by attracting readers with the content they increasingly demand. Getting and keeping readers, he said, will in turn attract more advertisers and prevent layoffs.

Ryerson pointed to major layoffs at a number of metropolitan newspapers, including The Akron (Ohio) Beacon Journal and Dallas Morning News, as an impetus for the change.

"More and more newspapers are focusing on local news," Ryerson said. "Those that aren't are feeling the heat. Newspapers have not adapted to the changing lifestyles of people, and I won't let that happen at the Star."

Local news comes first

The Internet and other new technologies and the proliferation of cable television news channels have decreased readers' demand for national and international news in the Star's print edition, Ryerson said. "By the time they read it in the paper, it's often old news," he said.

As a result, the Star will reduce some of its wire-service coverage, a move that has some wondering if the strategy's main objective is cost savings. Ryerson said it's a matter of cutting duplicative services.

"While we focus on local news, we recognize that a metro paper like the Star must have a good wire report and we will endeavor to provide just that," Ryerson said. "But ... since news from The Washington Post and LA Times and New York Times and their contributing newspapers is available on the Web, I don't see as critical a need for all of those services."

Boyce thinks the edict to cut major wire services is coming from the Star's parent company, Virginia-based Gannett Co., which is notoriously frugal.

"Dennis Ryerson can say what he wants, but the decision to cut wire services is a Gannett decision," said Boyce, who also worked at Time magazine and The Chicago Tribune. "Gannett has decided that their chief constituency is their stockholders, not their readers."

At the same time some wire services are cut, local coverage will be enhanced throughout the newspaper. Some sections, starting with the four suburban editions, will include more news and photos submitted by readers. "News from you" sections already are a staple in the new Carmel Star. Much of this news comes to the paper through e-mail or online reader surveys, at virtually no cost to the Star.

The newspaper also will begin using a technique called "crowd sourcing," seeking input about various topics from readers, often through the Internet. Crowd sourcing, Ryerson said, is a way to show how different events affect the community.

The Star also will work to push breaking news through the paper's Web site, www.indystar.com, which could increase Internet advertising as more readers look there for updates.

Also, journalism terms such as "newsroom" and "reporters" are being replaced at the Star by "information center" and "news gatherers" as the organization tries to become more of a 24-hour-a-day news provider.

"We'll be breaking more news online and adding context in print," Ryerson said. "We have to come up with a way to remain a strong provider of information. Our readers aren't living in the past, and neither are we."

Ryerson unveiled part of the plan in an Oct. 1 column. Before it ran, he and Publisher Barbara Henry met with reporters, editors and photographers to explain the changes. Ryerson called the staff "cautiously optimistic," about the plan. Henry was not available for comment.

Ayres, Lazarus effect

Star officials are feeling pressure to make changes and increase readership for good reason, said Bob Gustafson, a Ball State University advertising professor. With the retail market stagnant and major advertisers such as L.S. Ayres becoming scarce, Star advertising likely is seeing a serious dip.

"A boost in readership is certainly one way to help draw advertisers," Gustafson said. "They must feel like focusing on the local news niche is the way to do that."

Gustafson estimated Ayres was one of the Star's top three advertisers before its parent company, May Department Stores Co., was acquired last year by Cincinnati-based Federated Department Stores Inc. Some Ayres stores were converted to Macy's, while others—including two in Indianapolis—closed.

Federated officials said they would reduce Macy's advertising spending \$400 million, or 50 percent, starting next year. Other major Star advertisers, such as Lazarus department store, also have disappeared.

Media buyers said hundreds of new advertisers would be needed at the Star to make up the lost Ayres revenue alone.

"It's going to be extremely labor-intensive to try to fill that void," Gustafson said. "Instead of dealing with one company and one advertising agency, you're now looking at the prospect of dealing with countless and working on multiple ad campaigns to make up that revenue. It will be difficult, maybe impossible, to retain the profitability they had with L.S. Ayres."

Ryerson said the new strategy is not a reaction to the loss of specific advertisers, but an effort to reach out to and a more readers.

Newspaper or shopper?

Some industry experts think Gannett officials won't stray too far from reader demands in their efforts to bolster prof

"Newspapers readers' constantly tell [newspapers] they want more local news," said Ray Begovich, a Franklin College journalism professor. "This is a good business decision to attract and retain readers. If I want President Bush's take Korea, I can go to 25 news outlets. But if I want information on local political races, there is only one place to go."

While Begovich agrees with the Star's plan to increase local coverage, he said there is a down side to using reader submissions.

"If readers get the sense that news comes from anywhere besides professional journalists, the paper gets the feel of a shopper," Begovich said. "The integrity of the news product is what sells newspapers."

Newspaper reporters and editors have become too arrogant in thinking all news must originate from newspaper staff, Ryerson said.

"This is just a way to have more information in the newspaper," he said. "We want to be more aggressive about inviting people to help us cover the news."

Ryerson said this approach has been successfully adopted at smaller Gannett newspapers in Cincinnati; Des Moines, and Fort Myers, Fla.

"This doesn't mean we aren't going to do serious journalism," Ryerson said. "We absolutely are. But why should I spend my budget covering neighborhood events when I can be covering a Colts game or a City-County Council meeting?"

Boyce said Star officials also better be serious about fact-checking reader submissions.

"You still have to do what any good journalist does," Boyce said. "Facts have to be checked and corroborated. There are all sorts of accuracy and even libel issues that can come up. This can be a real headache."

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In Sports Highlights, YouTube Is No. 1

The website offers quick access to video clips, but sports leagues worry about copyright.

By Greg Johnson
Times Staff Writer

October 21, 2006

Within hours of last Saturday's brawl between the University of Miami and Florida International University, dozens of football players were suspended and a TV analyst — Lamar Thomas, a former Miami player who seemed to condone the violence — lost his job.

Thomas had boasted to viewers that "you can't come over to our place talking noise like that [or] you'll get your butt beat." Comcast Sports SouthEast edited out his inflammatory remarks before rebroadcasting the game. But Thomas' trash talk continues online, courtesy of Rusty98UM, a Hurricanes fan who transferred his pay-per-view TV footage of the fight to YouTube, where 1.1 million users have watched the unedited video.

As the World Series begins in Detroit tonight, the episode underscores the struggle underway as professional, college and Olympic sports, along with their broadcast partners and advertisers, scramble to stay connected with young, tech-savvy sports fans whose attitude seems to be: Who needs "SportsCenter" when you can find a replay on YouTube, MySpace or hundreds of other websites with free video?

Sports leagues now risk being caught up in the same copyright concerns as Hollywood is with pirated films, TV shows and music. It also raises the question of the value of pay-per-view events if some fans can post copies of them online soon afterward.

Type "NASCAR crash" into YouTube's search engine and it produces nearly 700 videos. "NHL fight" rewards viewers with nearly 600 action-packed clips. And "NBA" produces more than 11,500 offerings, including a 16-year-old fan's slam-dunk highlight reel that has been watched 1.9 million times.

Some sports videos are grainy and have scratchy soundtracks, others are culled from fans' digital cameras or cell phones. But much of the material uploaded to YouTube and its rivals is game footage purloined from media companies that have paid billions in broadcast rights fees.

What's on YouTube? When it comes to sports, it's easier to ask what's not: Arizona Cardinals Coach Dennis Green's news conference meltdown on Monday night after losing to the Chicago Bears is online. So is network video of the first NFL touchdowns by former USC stars Reggie Bush and Matt Leinart. Older events also are chronicled: Mike Tyson bites Evander Holyfield's ear. Tiger Woods sinks the chip shot at the 2005 Masters. Doug Flutie connects on his "Hail Mary" pass. Cassius Clay drops Sonny Liston. Cal beats Stanford with "The Play." Secretariat wins the Triple Crown.

"Technology is revolutionizing the fan experience," said Brian Bedol, president of CBS Inc.'s college sports division. "For a sports fan, it used to be impossible to figure out how to relive memories, see things you've heard about but never experienced. But now, you can actually call this stuff up on demand ... now

it's all sitting there in a digital warehouse and it's accessible."

The Miami-FIU football brawl occurred just days after Google paid \$1.65 billion for YouTube, the two-year old Mountain View firm that uploads 65,000 new videos and screens 100 million video views each day. Sports leagues can't ignore those numbers because Google wants to capitalize on the millions of eyeballs that are glued to "the Mentos guy," Lonelygirl15 or Dennis Green losing it.

The swift migration of sports video to the Web has prompted a flurry of deals involving online powerhouses and old-line media. CBS agreed to provide YouTube with video clips from its news, network and sports shows in exchange for a share in future online advertising revenue.

"This is a mutually beneficial business relationship that allows us to take advantage of the enormous traffic at YouTube and, at the same time, be in a position to better protect our [copyrighted] content," said CBS' Bedol.

Still unclear is how the new online frontier will be policed and who will profit as websites sell ads.

Federal law requires copyright holders to ask that content be taken down — video by video — which is time-consuming and expensive.

"We know that we need to play by the rules within that media community," said Kevin Donahue, YouTube's vice president of content. "We know that we will need partnerships and alliances to succeed."

For years sports leagues have insisted that their footage appear only on their websites or on licensed broadcast partners. Now they are struggling to understand the role of online video where fans can watch their copyrighted video clips — on someone else's website.

The NBA regularly asks YouTube and other websites to take down footage that violates copyright agreements.

But the NHL, which needs to win back fans after a recent, year-long lockout, is leery of coming down too hard on hockey fans. The NHL has asked YouTube to pull lengthy action videos of Russian-born star Alex Ovechkin, who plays for the Washington Capitals; now the site mostly offers short highlight reels.

"We spend millions of dollars to stage the games, we created what's a very valuable intellectual property," said Doug Perlman, the NHL's senior vice president of television and media ventures. "We have a young, tech-savvy fan base. We know they're interacting with our sport very differently than in the past ... which makes it very important for us to strike the right balance."

As for the NFL, spokesman Brian McCarthy said the league is taking "aggressive" steps to ensure its "long-standing policy" of protecting its content. The NFL uses an in-house legal counsel and an outside law firm to police Internet portals. But YouTube and other sites still have plenty of NFL game videos in their digital vaults.

Only Major League Baseball has made it clear that its footage shouldn't play anywhere other than MLB.com and its affiliated club websites. For two years, MLB's Advanced Media division has demanded that other websites eliminate protected material.

Each day a half dozen MLB employees scroll through hundreds of Internet sites and order website operators to remove "dozens and dozens" of copyrighted videos, said MLB Advanced Media President Bob Bowman.

MLB relies on human trackers because, "at this point, you can't simply run a [software] script and scroll

through the Internet," said Mike Mellis, general counsel for MLB. "But it's a tough slog because you have to go at it hour after hour."

Even though YouTube's search engine identifies nearly 900 "MLB" videos, relatively few include footage from baseball's licensed broadcasts. "YouTube is a professionally run company and they are trying to accommodate us," Bowman said.

It's not just copyright law at stake; there also are questions of taste. Some videos, including one showing NBA players fighting, have rap soundtracks that reference rape, murder and mayhem, so YouTube cautions viewers that content may be "inappropriate for some users, as flagged by YouTube's user community."

But there are also plenty of clips unlikely to send lawyers to court.

Type "Saint Ignatius and Balboa" into YouTube's search engine and up pops a home video by Bay Area resident Brendan Raher. The short film covers a memorable 1996 high school basketball playoff game between Balboa and St. Ignatius Prep.

Raher made the video as a 10-year anniversary present for his brother, Cassidy, who made nine three-point shots in a row during the win over favored Balboa. "I could only have sent that video to 10 or 20 people at most," Raher said. "But now it's been seen by 1,000 people, which speaks to the nature of having a site like YouTube, where you can share memories or pass them along."

And what about Rusty98UM, the football-fight chronicler?

"My only reason for throwing the video out there was to make sure that everyone had a chance to see what happened, to see who started the fight," said Dan Cruz, 32, an Orlando resident with season tickets to Miami home games. "It just might behoove the leagues to create their own YouTube sites."

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CHRIS DUFRESNE / ON COLLEGE FOOTBALL

With one spot soon decided, the race for No. 2 heats up

Chris Dufresne

October 23, 2006

Goodbye weekend, hello Columbus.

It wasn't separation Saturday as much as it was scattershot, with hopes and dreams indiscriminately crushed and resurrected from South Bend in Indiana to Tightwad Hill in Berkeley.

They give out 85 scholarships at Texas, yet it needed a walk-on kicker to keep its major-bowl hopes alive?

Washington forced overtime at California on that old leather football favorite, the Hail Mary, full of laces.

And Notre Dame, well, let's just say its prayers were answered.

So much was settled, yet so much remains unresolved.

This may be the earliest a potential participant can be projected for the Bowl Championship Series title game, to be played not next month, or the next, but the one after that — on Jan. 8.

Barring a football labor strike, the winner of the Ohio State-Michigan game on Nov. 18 in Columbus will earn a place in the BCS title game.

Incredibly, on Oct. 23, we say this with some conviction.

Ohio State is No. 1 in the country, with Minnesota, Illinois and Northwestern left before it faces Michigan.

Minnesota beat North Dakota State on Saturday — by a point. Illinois lost to a Penn State team described as "lousy" by Scripps Howard spelling bee moderator and Coach **Joe Paterno**. "It's spelled l-o-u-s-y," Paterno said of his Nittany Lions' performance.

Oh, and the Northwestern Wildcats let a 38-3 lead on Michigan State slip away.

And Ohio State is going to lose to which one of these teams?

No. 2 Michigan struggled a bit at home against Iowa, but now gets Northwestern, Ball State and Indiana.

Check please.

The question now is whether the *loser* of the Ohio State-Michigan game could still finish second in the BCS and make it to the title game.

What if Michigan, which moved ahead of USC to No. 2 in the latest BCS standings, beats Ohio State on a last-second field goal? How far would the Buckeyes fall in the standings?

In 2003, No. 1 Oklahoma was thrashed in the Big 12 title game by Kansas State but fell to only No. 2 in the BCS, which allowed the Sooners to play Louisiana State in the BCS title game.

It was known as the "doomsday scenario."

What hath the BCS gods wrought?

If Ohio State wins out, the Heisman Trophy might also be wrapped up on Nov. 18 by quarterback **Troy Smith**. The only question left would be his dinner companions at the Downtown Athletic Club.

Still in play are the battle for No. 2 and the mad scramble for precious BCS bowl berths.

USC, No. 3 in the AP and the BCS and having had a week off, probably will move to No. 2 in the BCS if it wins out, but that's certainly no cinch.

Also clamoring for the No. 2 spot are Auburn, Florida, West Virginia, Louisville and, possibly, Texas.

Last-second wins kept BCS bowl hopes alive for Notre Dame, Texas and California.

After escaping UCLA, the Irish figure to finish no worse than 10-2, which keeps them eligible for Rose/Fiesta/Orange/Sugar bowl consideration.

Texas is now in position to win the Big 12, which probably will put the Longhorns in this season's Fiesta Bowl, to be played a week before the BCS title game at Glendale, Ariz.

Cal's hold-off win over Washington was important because even if the Golden Bears lose to USC on Nov. 18, they could still be the replacement team for USC in the Rose Bowl.

Boise State isn't making any poll friends after struggling to wins the last two weeks, but the Broncos still seem to have a good chance to lock up a BCS bid with a top-12 finish in the BCS standings.

Weekend Wrap

- Things you never thought you'd live to see: Rutgers tied for first place in its conference while Florida State is dead last in its league. Rutgers is 2-0 in the Big East for the first time. Florida State broke out black uniforms for its loss against Boston College. How appropriate.
- Take Chance Charlie. Notre Dame Coach **Charlie Weis** went for it five times on fourth down against UCLA. The Irish were successful on the first four before quarterback **Brady Quinn** was stopped on fourth and one at the UCLA 35, which seemed to clinch victory for the Bruins. Weis likes being the offensive aggressor, most of the time. "But once in a while, once too often there, you almost end up losing the game," he said.

Notre Dame might be overrated but should be 10-1 — with Navy, North Carolina, Air Force and Army coming up — when it plays USC at the Coliseum on Nov. 25.

As for his team's close-call win over UCLA, Weis said, "Good teams win games like that.... Let me tell you something. I'm not going to feel miserable about this win. I promise you. You want to be miserable, fine. I'm going to be happy."

Quotable: UCLA defensive coordinator **DeWayne Walker** on getting beat by Weis' play calling in the final minute: "That's Charlie. I caught the halo effect. That sucker's got a little halo around him. He's done that a million times."

- Slowing down. After averaging more than 200 yards a game for his first six games, Northern Illinois tailback **Garrett Wolfe** has averaged 35 yards in his last two games. Wolfe was held to 45 yards on Saturday in a win over Temple, which ranked 117th against the run. For what it's worth, Northern Illinois is in DeKalb, Ill., a city recognized as being the birthplace of barbed wire.
- Numbers game. Michigan, Notre Dame, Texas and Nebraska are the four winningest major college football programs with a combined 3,379 victories. The interesting part is that No. 1 Michigan defeated No. 2 Notre Dame this season and, on Saturday, No. 3 Texas beat No. 4 Nebraska.

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More Gray Than Black and White

Thirty-six years after USC played an unintegrated Alabama football team, authors are still trying to gauge what kind of effect the game had on race relations in the South

By David Davis

Special to The Times

October 19, 2006

On Sept. 12, 1970, USC played Alabama on a sultry night in Birmingham. By the numbers, the Trojans prevailed handily, 42-21.

And yet, by all accounts, the Crimson Tide was the big winner.

That discrepancy helps to explain why the game and its impact are so difficult to measure even today, 36 years later. That hasn't stopped a lot of smart people from trying.

In 2005, journalist Allen Barra explored the topic in "The Last Coach: A Life of Paul 'Bear' Bryant," his definitive biography of the Crimson Tide's icon.

This year, sportswriter Don Yaeger has collaborated with Sam "Bam" Cunningham and John Papadakis, two players on the USC team, to publish an entire book about the game: "Turning of the Tide: How One Game Changed the South."

In his new book "Forty Million Dollar Slaves: The Rise, Fall, and Redemption of the Black Athlete" New York Times sports columnist William C. Rhoden also tackles the subject. Due next year: USC alum Steven Travers' take, with talk of a feature film or documentary to follow.

The reason for the game's mystique is black and white and, thus, irresistible to story-tellers. In 1970, Bryant's team was all-white. But after winning national titles in 1961, 1964 and 1965, Alabama had closed the decade with disappointing (for them) 8-3 and 6-5 records.

An NCAA rule that allowed colleges to schedule an extra game for the 1970 season enabled Bryant to schedule home-and-home games with USC, coached by his good friend John McKay. In 1970, the Trojans' starting backfield was entirely African American. Indeed, USC was the first racially mixed team to play the Crimson Tide in Alabama.

In the game, sophomore fullback Cunningham had 135 yards and two touchdowns in only 12 carries. Halfback Clarence Davis, born and raised (until age 11) in Birmingham, had 76 yards in 13 carries and scored two touchdowns. Black players scored every USC touchdown.

Alabama finished the season 6-5-1. (USC didn't fare much better at 6-4-1.) When they met the next year at the Coliseum, the Crimson Tide had two black players, John Mitchell and Wilbur Jackson. The score: 17-10, Alabama in a whitewash.

The tide had turned. With increasing numbers of African American athletes, Alabama became the premier

college football program during the 1970s, going 103-16-1, with a 12-0 season in 1979 and three national championships.

And so, through the mist of time and memory, USC-Alabama has gained mythic stature. To many, the 1970 game has come to represent a milestone in race relations, on par with Jackie Robinson's integration of Major League Baseball in 1947 and the victory of Texas Western and its all-black starting five over Adolph Rupp's all-white Kentucky Wildcats in the 1966 NCAA basketball title game.

The game in Birmingham, these advocates claim, loosened one of the last strangleholds of the racist South and, in so doing, paved the way for a more equitable system.

Alabama assistant coach Jerry Claiborne summarized this sentiment: "Sam Cunningham did more for integration in 60 minutes than had been done in 50 years," he said.

In their books, Yaeger, Barra and Rhoden wrestle with the many untruths and half-truths that have come to surround the game. No, Yaeger reports, Cunningham didn't rush for 230 yards, as the Washington Post breathlessly reported in — pick a year — 1978, 1983 and 1990.

According to Barra, it's highly unlikely that Bryant brought Cunningham into the Alabama locker room after the game and said, "Gentlemen, this is what a football player looks like."

And, no, the game didn't lead to the integration of the university or the football team. The school had begun accepting black students in the mid-1960s (Gov. George Wallace's theatrics notwithstanding) and Bryant already had recruited black players. In 1970, Jackson was sitting in the Legion Field stands watching USC romp. He wasn't eligible to compete then because the NCAA banned freshmen from playing varsity sports.

Nor did Bryant's actions cause other Southeastern Conference teams to integrate, because they already had.

According to a Times' article published before the 1970 game, 41 black varsity players were on SEC rosters.

So, did the game do more for integration than the legal cases, freedom marches and boycotts led by Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights advocates starting in the 1950s? No way. Claiborne's statement only belittles the courageous efforts of many heroic individuals.

Did the game improve the lot of African Americans in the South? Yes, in that black athletes now had more opportunity to earn athletic scholarships at SEC and other Southern schools. Many of these players earned college degrees; many of them — including Jackson — had successful NFL careers.

But, just as the demise of the Negro leagues destroyed black-owned and black-operated businesses and blocked the ascent of black managers and coaches in the majors, so integration in college sports has not meant equality.

The football programs at predominantly black institutions suffered a dramatic talent drop-off. Worse, the power structure of collegiate football remains overwhelmingly white. Since 1970, only one African American has served as a head coach in the SEC — Sylvester Croom at Mississippi State. (Croom played under Bryant at Alabama.)

Currently, in the 119 Division I-A college football programs, there are only five black coaches, including Karl Dorrell at UCLA. Black athletic directors are almost as rare.

As Rhoden put it, "In what would become a model of the new post-integration sports, blacks at the college level were pushed into prominence for their stellar athletic ability, but were not pulled into the executive and coaching pipeline with equal vigor."

So, what exactly happened on that sultry night in Birmingham? A racially mixed college football team from the West Coast went down to Dixie and humiliated an all-white college football team from the South during the height of the civil rights movement.

It's that simple, really. But at the intersection where fact and legend collide, the story has mushroomed into something bigger, epic, classic. The game has become The Game.

Just the way New York City publishers and Hollywood producers like it.

Davis is a freelance writer in Los Angeles.

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SEC vigilant about preventing brawling

By Ron Higgins

[Contact](#)

October 19, 2006

If last Saturday's bench-clearing brawl between Miami and Florida International has done anything, it has reinforced to college football coaches to be on red alert to head off any potential similar situations.

"It's unfortunate that something like this has happened," Alabama coach Mike Shula said. "But it's a great lesson for all of us to make sure we continue to teach our youngsters to do things with class."

The SEC has tried hard to ensure seeds for fights are never planted. League officiating crews are instructed to keep opposing teams from standing in the same tunnel in pregame. Officials also linger to help teams exit the field quickly at halftime.

Coaches are instructed, if possible, not to allow the pregame warm-up activities of their team to interfere with the space of the opposing team on the field. Also, coaches don't want their teams, when on the road, to dance on a home team's logo, which is seen as a sign of disrespect.

"I was involved in some brawls when I was a player at Miami and a coach at Florida State, and most of the time guys get riled up in pregame warmups," Georgia coach Mark Richt said. "We make sure we don't let anybody get near the logo."

"And if I have a kid who gets a personal foul during the game, most of the time I'll take him out of the game so I can talk to him before he goes back into the game. I don't want anything to escalate."

Coaches try hard to see a player's point of view. They understand football is a violent sport.

"We play a game that's very aggressive and very physical," LSU coach Les Miles said. "Players are rewarded for their physical ability and willingness to step into the fray to give punishment and take punishment."

"You have to be combative, but the only place you can do that is between the white lines. That is definitely hard to do at times. Some of the nicest guys I've ever been around can turn and make bad decisions when confronted."

Miles said he has already talked to his team about what his response would be if his team ever got in a major type fight as did Miami. LSU receiver Dwayne Bowe did get in a postgame fight with a Miami player after the Tigers' 40-3 Peach Bowl victory over the Hurricanes.

Florida coach Urban Meyer said he has preached to his team about having respect for the game.

"This game was here before them (his team) and this game will be there after them," Meyer said. "They need to respect that."

South Carolina coach Steve Spurrier said he has told his players that there's a way to handle a situation in which an opponent is playing dirty or trying to start a fight.

"I told our guys that if someone cheapshots you, the best thing to do is get his number," Spurrier said. "So the time you can get a clean hit on that guy, hit cleanly and put a little extra in it. Take a good clean shot at him."

Mississippi State coach Sylvester Croom has an answer for any of his players who commit a personal foul after the whistle.

"Besides having those players do grass drills the next week, I take their (complimentary) tickets from them for the next game," Croom said. "They get four of them. I usually take all of them. It's an automatic punishment with me."

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Andrew Innerarity/Associated Press

Last Saturday's brawl at the Miami-Florida International game was an ugly reminder that sometimes things can get out of hand. SEC coaches say they will use the episode as a way to get their players' attention about on-field fighting.

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Monson: Keeping fans safe at Delta Center big concern for Jazz owner Miller

By Gordon Monson
Tribune Columnist
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated: 10/21/2006 01:13:20 AM MDT

It's a sick feeling that accompanies the thought of a terrorist attack on American sporting events in crowded arenas, filled with thousands of spectators, built to be places where fans can leave the concerns of a troubled existence behind to enjoy the drama of a sports fantasy.

But the thought does not abate.

Nor does the sick feeling.

Even after a plan for radiological dirty bombs to be delivered to and detonated at seven NFL stadiums across the country on Sunday is discovered by homeland security authorities to be nothing more than a stupid hoax.

The threat still exists, regardless of the fact that American sports fans will not allow it to keep them from their games.

Who hasn't at least considered

the vulnerability of fans, gathered in a jam-packed stadium or ballpark with a giant bull's-eye on them, as they work their way through metal detectors and past uniformed security personnel waving wands and checking bags en route to their seats?

All so they can escape the drudgery of a working stiff's life long enough to cheer for touchdowns and slam dunks and three-pointers and home runs, so they can revel in competitive games that are significant only because they so badly want them to be.

It's weird. Already, money and greed and business have invaded the fans' fun little space, sometimes performance-enhancing drugs and off-the-field problems, such as domestic abuse, random episodes of violence, have ensnared players of the games, and intruded on that once-unthreatened realm. But terrorism, the specter of it, is a gnarled collision of a real world gone mad and a dream world no longer fully insulated, at least in theory, at least in the horrified reaches of the fans' bone-chilled imagination.

At the Delta Center, the Jazz spend \$2 million a year to secure, as best they can, that venue and the hundreds of thousands of people who sit in it to watch basketball games and other events.

"There are a lot of little things done," says Jazz owner Larry Miller. "For instance, security personnel are always on the watch for any truck. Delivery guys come and go every day, but any truck that we're not familiar with, we're aware of it. We're careful with whoever comes into the building. We try not to offend anybody, but we have random bag searches. Sometimes, we get a lot of pushback from people going to concerts, but we want to protect everyone.

"We have caller ID on all 300 of our phones, in case of a bomb threat. We've had bomb threats before. We've had written bomb threats. We take them seriously. We just have a heightened awareness at all levels."

At Jazz games, between arena personnel and police officers, Miller says, there are upward of 80 security people on hand. He also urges patrons to watch for suspicious activity of any kind.

"It's important for the public to keep an eye out," he says. "We don't want anyone to be afraid, to fear for their life, but, if something looks like it might happen, do something. I worry about [security]. It's just part of our existence now."

Many major Division I-A football schools have anywhere from 100 to 200 security officers on hand at their stadiums on game day, according to Larry Duffin, director of LaVell Edwards Stadium and the Marriott Center at Brigham Young.

Those officers, under the guidance of the NCAA and the Department of Homeland Security, monitor surveillance cameras, restrict items brought into the stadiums, and close roads in surrounding areas.

"Vehicle access during events is on a strict need-to basis," he says. "[The threat] is something you constantly have to stay on top of. . . With the world we live in . . ."

Yeah, we're sadly fully aware.

Whether we're wholly safe, who knows?

Most of the security issues dealt with in arenas and at stadiums during games are tied in some way to alcohol consumption, not some evil mastermind's crazy plans. That's the routine rowdy reality. But, since 9/11, the threat of something bigger and more sinister around the edges of American sports continues to lurk. Those bag checks at the gate aren't there so much to rout out flasks of strong drink.

They're there to allow us, gathered all together, our competitive buzz, to give us, at least to some measure, a safe escape for a few hours, not just from the drudgery of a working stiff's life, but from the nut bin in which we live.

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