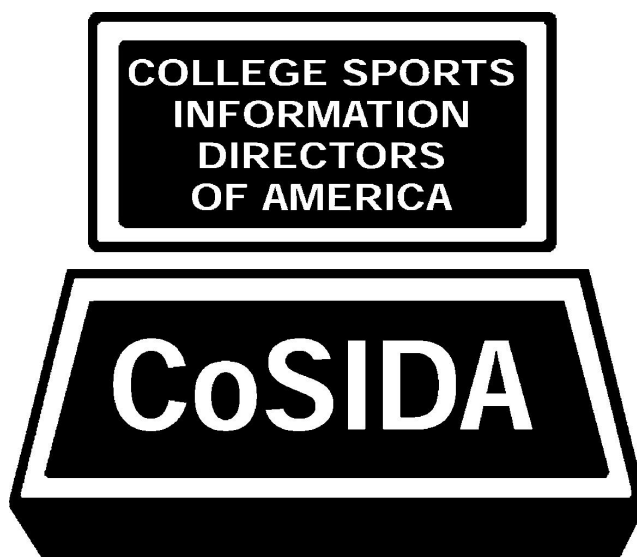


CoSIDA NEWS

Intercollegiate Athletics News and Issues from Around the Nation



OCTOBER 4, 2006

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Article published Oct 4, 2006

Oct 4, 2006

Lundquist is play-by-play 'goodness'

Verne Lundquist lives an exciting, starry life. Sitting atop a CBS tower, he made the call on the most electric shot in Masters history, a sidwinding 2005 "flash my Nike" chip-in by Tiger Woods at the 16th hole, triggering the extraordinary golfer's fourth championship at Augusta National.

But "Oh my goodness!" does Verne get shortchanged. His body of at-the-mike work should put the 66-year-old Texan's name alongside Al Michaels, Bob Costas, Joe Buck, Dick Enberg, Jon Miller and Jim Nance if we're talking today's play-by-play wizards.

That's the Lundquist catch phrase. "Oh my goodness!" is bellowed at moments of exotic athletic performance, much as Enberg will go to "Oh my!" and the late baseball announcer Harry Caray often used "Holy cow!" Verne let go with a "goodness" after Florida quarterback Chris Leak's uncharacteristic 45-yard run against Alabama.

Saturdays in the fall, Verne works Southeastern Conference football alongside analyst Gary Danielson. They have back-to-back Swamp dates - Florida's most recent win over the Tide, plus a return this weekend to see helmets crash between the Gators and LSU.

This morning, Lundquist is likely strolling alongside the Yampa River in Steamboat Springs, Colo., a Rockies wonderland where he and wife Nancy live. Verne figures, "Other people must say, 'There goes that crazy dude again, talking to himself' but what I'm doing is memorizing the three-deep rosters of the Tigers and Gators." One woman understands. Nancy, whom he first spotted in 1980, served for years as Verne's spotter on CBS assignments.

His mumble-stroll along the Yampa is called homework, a Lundquist staple. After 45 years as broadcaster, he skips no steps. Verne still has a spotter, J.P. Shadrack, alongside in the CBS announce booth, but the old pro relies more on his own instincts and work ethic. Shadrack, two years out of college, is a baseball play-by-play announcer for Jacksonville's Class AA franchise.

For six seasons, Lundquist did a duet on SEC games with Todd Blackledge but earlier this year ESPN hired away the former Penn State quarterback. Danielson, a QB from Purdue who played 12 NFL seasons for Detroit and Cleveland, gave up an ABC gig to join Verne.

LSU-Florida will be their fourth game; third featuring the Gators. Chemistry class is coming along nicely. Danielson makes quick, often-tough assessments. That's his job. When the Gators struggled in the first half against Bama, he pounded them with "Florida's corners might be a bit suspect" and "You can have all the fancy formations but in the SEC you'd better block and tackle ... right now, Alabama is badly whipping the Gators up front." Also, Gary reported, "It's



Verne Lundquist announces SEC football games. (Photo courtesy of CBS)

been whispered around that Florida has been getting a little soft."

Now, you Swamp bulls, let's not retort, "Well our Gators showed him!" An analyst works with what has already happened. At the time, Florida was being handled, physically and mentally. That would dramatically change, the unbeaten Gators muscling up to become 28-13 bosses and retain their No. 5 national ranking.

During the 3 1/2 hours, Danielson would say, after UF defender Reggie Nelson returned an interception for a game-clinching touchdown, that it was caused by Alabama quarterback "John Parker Wilson's sloppy footwork."

Fair assessments, I think.

Working from a 10-yard-wide box on the media level of The Swamp press box, CBS has its two talkers and seven other personnel including spotters, statisticians, a camera operator and production aides. Danielson often gets info in an ear from his personal helper, Naples neighbor Gary David Mouton.

So, you think TV talking heads have a glamour life? At times they do but last week, Lundquist made a 10-hour, two-change flying trip to get from Steamboat Springs to Gainesville. At halftime of Tide-Gators, he stuffed down a hot dog. Five hours later, Verne's next chow was a room-service cheeseburger. Then he gets a 4:30 a.m. wakeup call for a 6:30 takeoff on the way back to Colorado.

Born in Duluth, Minn., he was soon the son of an Austin preacher man and would graduate in 1962 from non-football power Texas Lutheran. Verne did local radio before becoming the Dallas Cowboys network voice (1972-84). His worldly TV opportunity with CBS came in 1982.

Twenty-two years later, Verne has done a wealth of NFL games, mostly with analysts Terry Bradshaw and Dan Fouts. The four-time Super Bowl champion quarterback from the Pittsburgh Steelers invited Lundquist to be his presenter when Terry was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Some of Verne's more memorable jobs involved describing figure skating at three Winter Olympics, college basketball with analyst Billy Packer and, of course, big golf. He works that picturesque par-3 16th at the Masters as well as the 14th hole on CBS telecasts of PGA Championships and also does the Kraft-Nabisco LPGA major.

He's not your stereotypical TV pretty boy. Kind of chunky, with hair more thin than hard-sprayed, Lundquist has the air of a good, solid, deep-voiced, heavy-knowledge bartender. So pull up a stool, pour yourself a cold one, and enjoy the next act of Verne and Gary.

Contact columnist Hubert Mizell at mizell3@cox.net

'Miracle' revives a career

Faith helps player overcome arm injury, beat slim odds of playing again

DAN ITEL

Statesman Journal

October 4, 2006

MONMOUTH -- Catching up with Josh Vanlue five years removed from his days as a star quarterback at South Salem High School is like listening to an old veteran weave tall tales.

Because from the day Vanlue left high school, things went about as far from planned as things can go.

Now, after three arm surgeries and attempts to play college football at two schools, Vanlue can finally take a deep breath and smile at his miraculous return.

"It's been a rough four years," he said.

Vanlue has landed at Western Oregon University, where he is a 22-year-old redshirt freshman backup quarterback. The 6-foot-5, 240-pounder also happens to be sixth in the nation in Division II in punting with a 42.4 yard average for the Wolves, who are 4-0 and off to the school's best start since 1997.

"I always had a dream to play college football," Vanlue said. "I grew up a lot in those four years."

But it wasn't easy.

The journey started on a dark, rainy November night in Pendleton after Vanlue's Saxons had just lost in the second round of the OSAA Class 4A state playoffs to the Buckaroos.

It was the final game of a senior season in which Vanlue led South Salem to the Valley League championship and was named the league's co-offensive player of the year with 2,648 yards and 33 touchdowns on 138 of 256 with just 10 interceptions.

But the recruiting trail wasn't easy for Vanlue, who was snubbed after visits to Hawaii and Idaho State. He instead opted to play at Foothill College, a junior college in Los Altos, Calif.

The first day of spring practice there, Vanlue tore up his arm for the first time.

Determined not to let his career end there, he returned to Salem and rehabbed for a year and a half. He even helped coach the South Salem freshman team.

Upon his return to Los Altos, Vanlue shockingly suffered the same injury, also on the first day of practice.

Vanlue came back to Salem for surgery again, this time scratching his head wondering what the heck did he do to deserve such a fate. This time, Vanlue was in the process of rehabbing with the thought of trying baseball at Chemeketa Community College when the stars aligned in a good way for him.

South Salem head coach Scott DuFault connected with Greg Barton, a Portland-area coach who holds a highly regarded passing camp. Barton had Vanlue up for some workouts and liked what he saw.

Suddenly, Vanlue was a hot commodity. He said Michigan State, Wyoming, Kentucky and Idaho all came calling. Vanlue headed off to Lexington to try out for Kentucky's team, swayed by the Oregon connection of head coach Rich Brooks, the former Ducks coach.

Vanlue excelled through spring workouts. And by the time fall practices rolled around, Vanlue had not only earned a scholarship but was competing for the starting job.

"It was always my dream to play quarterback in the SEC," Vanlue said.

But then the stars got all out of line.

A week and a half before Kentucky's opening game against Louisville, Vanlue was warming up and heard a pop in his arm. The injury was so bad this time that he lost all feeling in the limb.

"Especially after I got hurt in Kentucky, I just sat around for awhile and thought 'What was going on here,' " Vanlue said.

He talked with Brooks and realized there would be no place for him on the team, so it was back to Salem again.

Vanlue then decided to draw on his faith.

"That's when I had it out with God," Vanlue clarifies.

And he decided he wanted to give it one more shot. He was turned away by three doctors, each one saying he was crazy for even thinking about another comeback.

But then he connected with one at OHSU in Portland who said he would operate. But the prognosis was not encouraging: the doctor said Vanlue would have a 0.1 percent chance of ever throwing again and that it would be at least a two-year recovery.

Vanlue came out of the surgery, where part of his forearm muscle was cut away, apparent now to the naked eye, and immediately the stars realigned.

Two weeks before Western's camp started last year, Vanlue ran into special teams and defensive line coach Tim Bowman at Applebee's. And before he knew it, head coach Arne Ferguson was asking Vanlue to try out.

—"I just felt like it was finally a home," Vanlue said. "I appreciate (Ferguson and Bowman) for giving me a chance when probably nobody else would."

Vanlue spent a redshirt season last year, working his arm back to where it was.

"It took some time for his arm to come around," offensive coordinator Ryan O'Malley said.

Vanlue brought that same work ethic he had in high school while trying to make a spot on a college team. And unlike a typical freshman, Vanlue knows how fleeting opportunity can be.

Ferguson decided to take a chance on Vanlue despite the injuries because of his drive to play.

"No. 1 is his character," Ferguson said, "and he's a great quarterback. He has a lot of talent."

Vanlue said he was rejuvenated following the surgery, and this fall he has made major strides.

"I saw my doctor and he said it was an absolute miracle that I was at this point," he said. "It's healing. I have all the feeling back in my hand. I just give all the praise to God. Without him I wouldn't be here."

Vanlue worked his way to as high as No. 2 on the quarterback depth chart. He is currently No. 3, but O'Malley says the second and third spots are interchangeable.

"Josh is a great, great person," O'Malley said. "Obviously, his integrity and the type of person he is has gotten him through. ... We have all the confidence in him to be out there on Saturdays."

Punting came about out of necessity. The Wolves didn't have a true punter on the roster, and coaches had seen Vanlue, who also was a first-team punter in high school, kicking the ball around in practice.

"And all of a sudden, I'm the punter," he said. "It's fun."

Vanlue still said he worries sometimes when his arm gets sore, but those times are getting fewer and fewer.

"It's fixed, hopefully," he said. "At this point, you can only control what you can control."

Vanlue doesn't plan on resting until he is the starter.

"I'm not satisfied with just being the punter," Vanlue said. "I definitely see a future here and an opportunity. The journey is not over yet."

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The Columbus Dispatch

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL BIG TEN

Coaches don't like 12 games without bye

Wednesday, October 04, 2006

Bob Baptist

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Given their druthers, most Big Ten coaches would not play a season the way they are this one.

They would have started a week earlier, played all nonconference games before Big Ten play and retained the off week they lost when the NCAA, on behalf of its cash-strapped members, approved a 12 th game beginning this year.

There's no looking back, however, only ahead, and some coaches are not thrilled with what they see coming.

"Twelve games are here for eternity," Purdue coach Joe Tiller said yesterday, "until, of course, we go to 13."

Ohio State bites the bullet this week. Last year, the first Saturday in October was a bye for the Buckeyes between Big Ten games against Iowa and Penn State. This year, they play host to Bowling Green between trips to Iowa and Michigan State.

"I would just as soon start a week earlier, perhaps have a bye, and certainly have the Big Ten games all in a row," coach Jim Tressel said. "If we can't get started a week earlier, then I'd just as soon go 12 straight."

Every Big Ten school is playing 12 consecutive weeks except Purdue, which is playing 13. The Boilermakers elected to spend Thanksgiving in Hawaii preparing to play the Rainbows.

"We went from 11 games with one week off last year to 12 games without a bye," Penn State coach Joe Paterno said. "That's a tough year for these kids if you're playing in a tough league physically."

Extending the Big Ten season past Thanksgiving is one way the off week could be restored if the NCAA opts not to kick off future seasons a week earlier. But the Big Ten traditionally has finished the weekend before Thanksgiving, and most coaches don't want that to change.

"The good weather being in the beginning of the season more than the end, I'm not for extending the season," Tressel said. "One of the things we have in the Big Ten that I think is a bonus to our student-athletes is that 10 years out of 11 we finish the Saturday before Thanksgiving. (The players) have been working hard all year, and I think it's great for them to have Thanksgiving at home and enjoy that."

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Illinois coach Ron Zook typically finished the weekend after Thanksgiving when he coached at Florida and said it was "kind of neat."

"You have your team together, you practice Thanksgiving morning and you've got games on (television the rest of the day)," he said. "If I had never done it, I might feel the same way, that you wouldn't like it. But I know this: I'd rather play after Thanksgiving and have an open date than not have an open date."

Zook doesn't mind having a nonconference opponent interrupt the flow of the Big Ten season, if the bye is not an option.

"It takes a little bit of pressure off when you step out of the conference," he said. "When you're wound tight for eight straight weeks, that's a long time, and these guys have a lot going on, more than just football. If you could just take a little pressure off, I think it helps."

Michigan coach Lloyd Carr, who has been on staff at the school for 27 years, for the most part is a staunch traditionalist. He said the NCAA going to 12 games was a "tipping point" for him regarding one of his beliefs.

If making more money is the sport's top priority, he said, "It's time for a college football playoff. I know it's going to happen at some point. For me, it would be the sooner the better."

Told that college presidents oppose a playoff because of the additional class time players would miss in December and January, Carr was blunt.

"When we went to 12 games, there wasn't much concern for academics," he said.

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Time for Big 12/SEC/ACC challenge

By Berry Tramel, The Oklahoman
October 4, 2006

College football has a dirty, little secret. Over the past 20 years, the game's culture has changed.

In the 1970s, few major schools dared play an inferior opponent. In the 2000s, few major schools dare not.

In 2006, every BCS conference is playing less than 50 percent of its non-league games against lower-status opponents.

The Big 12 is the worst offender, playing only 23 percent (11 of 48) of its non-conference games against fellow BCS schools. The SEC is at 29 percent, the ACC at 31 percent, the Big 10 at 32 percent, the Pac-10 at 43 percent and the Big East at 45 percent.

The culture must change. We must get back to competitive games and level playing fields.

And here's my idea to kick off such a massive change: a Big 12/ACC/SEC challenge series.

We have these series in basketball; they are needed in football. The Big 12, the Southeastern Conference and the Atlantic Coast Conference are obvious picks for the challenge because of their similarities: each has 12 teams, each has a league title game.

These are the leagues that can pull it off.

And the best news of all, some powerful people endorse the plan.

Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione said he could find no flaw in the idea. Sooners coach Bob Stoops and Oklahoma State AD Mike Holder both signed off on it.

"That's good," Holder said. "I like that idea."

Television would love the idea.

"Oh, yes," said Jeremy Langer, Fox Sports director of collegiate sports. "Anything that strengthens our non-conference inventory is something we'd be interested in."

The Big 12 already has kicked around a Big 12/SEC challenge weekend. Open the season over the Labor Day weekend, Thursday through Monday, with each Big 12 school playing an SEC foe.

The Big 12 athletic directors decided not to pursue such a plan, and Castiglione admits it's a tough sell to convince some of his peers to stiffen their schedules.

"The rub is to try to get enough votes in each conference," Castiglione said. "A number of schools have fought a notion of that type."

Heck, the Big 12 a couple of years ago merely requested that its members play at least one legitimate non-conference foe a year. This season, the Big 12 plays as many Division I-AA opponents (11) as fellow BCS league members.

So it is a tough sell. But it's worth it.

Here's the plan. Every Big 12 team would play an SEC foe and an ACC foe every season. Same with the SEC and the ACC.

The schedules would be properly constructed to give each superpower a game against another superpower (Texas-Miami, Oklahoma-Tennessee) and each rum-dum a game against another rum-dum (Vanderbilt-Baylor, Duke-Mississippi State). The other game for each team in the series would try to balance out the schedule difficulty.

http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/cda/article_print/0,1983,BDC_22976_5041414_ARTICLE-DET... 10/4/2006

Long-time rivalries would be preserved. Florida State-Florida. Clemson-South Carolina. Georgia Tech-Georgia. Old rivalries could spring up, like Arkansas-Texas. A school like Iowa State, which plays a doberman in Iowa every year, would be cut some slack in the challenge difficulty.

The challenge series works on every front, for a variety of reasons:

Scheduling. Schools' hunger for victories and home games, plus the new 12-game schedule, have made it a seller's market. Lower Division I-A teams hold the big schools hostage for huge payouts, which now are soaring well past \$500,000 and zooming quickly to a cool million.

"There is an increasing level of difficulty in finding teams that will come in and play," Castiglione said. "It's getting tougher and tougher and tougher."

Television. Frankly, I don't know how the Big 12 keeps its networks from storming the league office. Many a September Saturday is void of even one decent matchup involving a Big 12 school, much less the three needed to satisfy the contracts.

"It's a concern," Langer said. "The Big 12 has made some strides. But as a whole, there tends to be a philosophy to schedule an easier game. From a television standpoint, it does make it difficult on us. People want to watch good games. It puts us at a disadvantage."

Academics. Castiglione warns that stricter admission requirements are coming to the major conferences in a couple of years. Players that can't get into the Big 12 can still get into a Southern Miss or a Toledo. So those teams will be tougher to beat but will offer no greater reward when you do.

Playing teams most similar to you — in tradition, budget, academics — always is a better path.

Cultural. The challenge could be a solid step toward a more equitable playoff than the one-and-done format we have today.

Everything about the current two-team playoff is geared toward a soft schedule. Strength of schedule was dropped from the BCS formula a few years ago; losses still are deducted from the point total. A team like West Virginia could reach the 2006 title game merely by winning one tough game.

Form this challenge, and pressure increases on poll voters not to rubber-stamp teams that win with weak schedules.

Form this challenge, and the message would be loud and clear that the true national championship goes through these three leagues.

Form this challenge, and college football's culture starts swinging back towards fair fights.

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TODAY'S FOCUS: HR + DIVERSITY

NCAA exec carries torch for diversity to nation's campuses

By Julie Cope Saetre

Indianapolis Star correspondent

When the NCAA created its Office of Diversity and Inclusion in 2005, Charlotte Westerhaus was a natural to step in as vice president of the division.

Since joining the National Collegiate Athletic Association in August 2005, Westerhaus, who previously was director of equal opportunity and diversity at the University of Iowa, has spent about 80 percent of her time traveling. She meets with university presidents, athletic directors, coaches and student athletes to discuss how to improve diversity and inclusion in intercollegiate athletics.

Those issues are key, she said, not just within an organization, but within any kind of team working toward a common goal.

"Inclusion is a climate where everyone brings their talents to the table," Westerhaus said. "So a mission for a team is to win. And you bring your talents that support winning. But you also bring your individual attributes -- your cultural background, where you were raised, your race and your gender -- which shape who you are. So how do you bring the skills that can help the team win, and the skills that make you *you*, to help your team become successful? That's inclusion."

Westerhaus recently spoke with The Indianapolis Star about her background, her first year on the job and why all that travel is crucial to her mission. Here are excerpts from that interview:

Question: What brought you to the NCAA? Had you been involved with sports previously?

Answer: I was in high school prior to 1972, and that was the enactment of Title IX, which opened up a lot of opportunities for women -- and, of course, my daughter -- to be involved in athletics. But I was involved at the universities and (with) their interpretation of and compliance with Title IX.

A couple of things interested me in the (NCAA) position . . . the newness of it, being on the forefront of a new office dealing with diversity and inclusion. And not just for one university, but for 3,300 universities. It was intriguing.

The second thing is that my husband is a Hoosier. He was born in Indianapolis, he graduated from school in Mitchell, Ind. Our daughter is a first-grade teacher here in Indianapolis (and) a graduate of Purdue University. So this was home, and I think once you are a Hoosier, Hoosiers are Hoosiers through and through.

And I had actually worked at Purdue University, and over the years, had seen the evolution of the business community in Indianapolis. I was seeing, when I came to visit, large conventions here.

Downtown seemed to be reborn. And . . . I was very intrigued with working with one of the leading university presidents in the country, Myles Brand.

Q: You had the chance to come in and build a new department. What were your goals when you took the job?

A: The first thing I wanted to do was listen before I built. There are a lot of voices within the NCAA, among the ranks of our student-athletes, our athletic administrators, our coaches and our university presidents. So my first goal was to listen before we acted.

The majority of my time is traveling. I believe you need to go on-site to university campuses, so I try to strategically pick universities that have been very involved with the NCAA, and I meet the university presidents, athletic directors, student-athletes and coaches. And I am listening.

Also, we have put together a 40-plus committee (the Diversity Leadership Strategic Planning Committee) of athletic directors, coaches and conference commissioners to help my office and the NCAA put together a strategic plan for the entire membership.

Q: That's a lot of travel. But it must be rewarding to meet student-athletes, coaches and the like face-to-face, in their environments.

A: That's exactly the point. To see them in a school environment. When you go on the campus at Penn State, you'll have a different experience than when you go on campus at Indiana University. And you're going to have a different experience when you go to a women's college. And you're going to have a different experience if you go to a college that has a religious background.

They all have intercollegiate athletics, but every campus has its own feel. And that's the only way you can get a real feel and appreciation for it.

Q: One of the Strategic Planning Committee's goals is to enhance career opportunities for underrepresented coaches, officials and administrators in intercollegiate athletics. How are you working toward this objective and measuring its progress?

A: As far as the hiring of coaches in general, the way to measure that is numbers. Are the numbers increasing? And are they increasing in significant ways based on the talent that's out there?

And the talent is there. Right now, the numbers are not good. We know that one of the prerequisites to be a coach is simply to be a student-athlete. We know we have a growing number of female student-athletes, we know we have a growing number of individuals, racial/ethnic minorities, who are student-athletes.

And if the interest is the same -- and we believe the interest is the same -- we've got to make sure the opportunities are the same.

Q: Looking back over your first year, what stands out?

A: First, and probably foremost, is a keen appreciation of how much intercollegiate athletics has a positive effect on our society.

Second, I am hopeful that the media pay more attention to stellar, outstanding student athletes in Divisions I, II and III. Our student-athletes are scholars on campus. They are leaders on campus. Our student-athletes of color graduate at higher rates than students of color. Female student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than female students. So being a student-athlete enhances your educational experience.

We are producing all types of student-athletes who are going to be leaders. They're going to be leaders of business. They're going to be leaders in the government. They're going to be leaders in their communities.

And when I say we, that's the NCAA. It's not just this office. It's all of the various universities, along with the NCAA.

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Oct. 4

Rethinking an Athletic Code of Conduct

Too often in college sports, the police blotter is required reading for head coaches and athletics directors.

Athletes are caught, generally disciplined internally, sometimes kept off the field, and — for the most egregious violations — kicked off the team and out of school. Universities are used to isolated cases of player misconduct, but seldomly does an institution see a rash of arrests in a short period of time.

That's been the case at Ohio University, where 17 football players have been arrested in the local county since January 1. Players were charged — and some convicted — of assault, driving under the influence of alcohol and the illegal possession of drugs. None had been suspended by the head football coach, Frank Solich.

After seeing a report detailing the legal troubles in *The Columbus Dispatch*, Roderick J. McDavis, the university's president, asked Kirby Hocutt, the athletics director, to lay out department-wide guidelines that cover athlete conduct and discipline procedures.

"The issue is when you have the number of incidents that we did over a nine-month period, it's time to stop and ask yourself, is it time to review the procedures in place?" McDavis said. "I believe the rules ought to be standard, across the board."

McDavis said he wanted to leave the details of the proposal up to Hocutt, who was unavailable for comment on Tuesday. Colleges across the country have for years considered how to appropriately punish athletes who violate team or university rules — let alone the law. Among the issues is whether to suspend a player just for being charged with a violation, with the idea that the athlete is unfit to represent the university, or to wait for a conviction to take disciplinary action.

In the past, individual coaches at Ohio have handled what McDavis called "minor first offenses." A second offense generally would be handled by the athletics director. The new guidelines, which McDavis wants by October 31, will give individual coaches less discretion in punishing their players.

McDavis said that after he met with Solich, the coach decided to indefinitely suspend two players who had previously been arrested and kick off anyone else who is arrested this season. (Solich himself was convicted last year of drunken driving and placed on probation.) Hocutt also announced the suspension of two other athletes — a football player and a men's basketball player.

Both McDavis and Hocutt are seeking the advice of the college's Intercollegiate Athletics Committee, a group of faculty members, administrators and students that deals with conduct issues.

Douglas Bolon, chair of the committee, said that based upon the recent arrests, it's clear a change needs to be made. "There's a general consensus that we need to move toward a more standardized approach," he said. "The other approach was more decentralized. Faculty have always been concerned about these issues."

Terry Hogan, the university's dean of students, said that athletes have "historically been held to a higher standard than the average student," because they are subject to both athletic department guidelines and the university's code of conduct for all students.

"[The athletes] are afforded the same rights and are not treated differently," Hogan said.

— [Elia Powers](#)

*The original story and user comments can be viewed online at
<http://insidehighered.com/news/2006/10/04/ohiou>.*

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The Post Online

Wednesday, October 4, 2006

Athens, Ohio

Athletics officials too slow to act

If the crushing hit that Ohio quarterback Austen Everson took in the third quarter of Saturday's loss to Bowling Green left him dazed and confused, just imagine how Director of Athletics Kirby Hocutt and coach Frank Solich felt after the hit the football program took in that day's edition of *The Columbus Dispatch*.

Four days after the university's problems during the past year were featured in *The New York Times*, *The Dispatch*'s Randy Ludlow delivered a second black eye to Ohio by uncovering that 17 Bobcat football players have been arrested in Athens County over the past nine months.

What on earth did Solich and Hocutt think Ludlow wanted to focus on for his article — the team's highest grade-point average since 1997? Only the naïve would believe such a thing.

The first thing that came to my mind was how stunning it was that nearly 14 percent of the roster managed to get arrested in the time it takes for a fetus to develop inside the womb. What took the athletic department so long to nip this in the bud?

The second thing was that this is extremely embarrassing.

What I don't understand is the failure to take any disciplinary action with any of these players. Ludlow's article cites that none of the players had missed a minute of playing time, even though they were convicted of misdemeanors in court.

For crying out loud, NCAA Football '07 — the video game — recommends I suspend my All-American tailback for at least one game after "missing team meetings." Why couldn't Solich step up and lay down the law on these players for things like assaults and drug and alcohol offenses? Obviously, the fear of what would happen to first-time offenders scared the players so much that in nine months, you could almost fill a Major League Baseball dugout with said offenders.

So now we're brought to the present, which consists of Hocutt working with the university's Intercollegiate Athletics Committee to come up with some policy changes — and to think it only took 17 arrests to suspend four athletes and put this change in motion.

The bottom line is that these changes are coming nine months too late. The football team's reputation has been further tarnished, as if getting charged for a DUI and punching police horses weren't enough to do that. The odds are good that if *The Dispatch* hadn't reported this information, the university's reaction may not have been as immediate.

"We're ... going to act to standardize our policy and move forward, and get better, from the situation we are in today," Hocutt promised at Monday's press conference.

Apparently, it took two black eyes from the media for the university to look in the mirror and see that things obviously don't look good. For Ohio's sake, the new policies better bring change — the third blow might be a fatal one.— Jason Fazzone is a junior journalism major who covers the volleyball team and writes a weekly sports column for *The Post*. Send him an e-mail at jf104004@ohiou.edu.

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MEDIA

Turner South set for change in name, format

By [TIM TUCKER](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Published on: 10/04/06

Five months after paying \$375 million for Turner South, Fox Cable Networks has a new name — and a new game plan — for the channel.

It'll be relaunched and rebranded on Oct. 13 as SportSouth, a regional sports network that will be built around heavy doses of Braves, Hawks and Thrashers programming.

It'll be the second Atlanta-based, Fox-owned, all-sports network, joining FSN South. The key difference: While FSN South includes national programming, such as Fox's "Best Damn Sports Show," SportSouth aims to be entirely local.

SportSouth will televise 61 Thrashers games and 45 Hawks games during the 2006-07 seasons and 55 Braves games in 2007. SportSouth's Braves telecasts will increase to 80 games in 2008, when TBS cuts back its telecasts.

Aside from games, SportSouth will emphasize programs focusing on off-the-field, behind-the-scenes "storytelling" about Southern pro and college sports, said Jeff Genthner, vice president and general manager of FSN South and, now, SportSouth.

The new name might sound familiar.

That's because SportSouth, not coincidentally, was the original name of what now is FSN South.

The path from *that* SportSouth to *this* SportSouth involves no small amount of corporate circuitousness.

When launched in 1990, the original SportSouth was jointly owned by Turner Broadcasting and Liberty Media. It changed hands in 1997, becoming part of Fox's lineup of regional sports networks as a condition of Time Warner's acquisition of Turner Broadcasting. Fox renamed the channel Fox Sports South and, more recently, FSN South. Turner Broadcasting proceeded to launch Turner South, largely as a vehicle for Braves telecasts.

Fast-forward to 2006. Fox bought Turner South from Time Warner in May, and as part of the deal got the local
<http://ajc.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Turner+South+set+for+change+in+na...> 10/4/2006

television rights to all Hawks and Thrashers games and most Braves games.

And add this twist: Turner Broadcasting's partner in the original SportSouth, Liberty Media, is in the process of buying the Braves.

Small world.

After considering "800 to 1,000" names for Turner South — Genthner's count — Fox chose one from 16 years ago.

"We wrestled with it," Genthner said. "SportSouth was such a natural, immediate choice, but we had to go through the exercise of learning what resonates with fans."

SportSouth will reach about 8.2 million cable and satellite subscribers in Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina and parts of North Carolina.

SportSouth, which will officially premiere with a Thrashers-Carolina Hurricanes game Oct. 13, will carry far more Hawks and Thrashers games this season (45 and 61, respectively) than Turner South carried last season (nine and 46, respectively).

SportSouth will "evolve gradually," Genthner said. As the channel fills 24 hours a day with locally oriented programming, expect to see reruns of games in overnight and weekday hours.

SportSouth's three programming pillars, Genthner said, will be to "raise the bar on event production," to create a big-event atmosphere around telecasts of major local games and to create original programming "that is in-depth, insightful, access-driven." As an example of the latter, Genthner cites a program currently in the works on Hawks rookie Sheldon Williams' introduction to the NBA.

Find this article at:

<http://www.ajc.com/sports/content/sports/stories/2006/10/03/1004turnersouth.html>

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Downfield Vision

Ohio State, Boise Can't Look Too Far Ahead

October 2 2006

Two teams came out of the weekend with their eyes firmly focused on Bowl Championship Series spots. But January is still a long ways off, so Jim Tressel and Chris Petersen might want to hide the binoculars.

Tressel will have to make sure he doesn't start game-planning now for the Nov. 18 Michigan game. The Buckeyes (5-0) handled a rough September schedule with aplomb, capped by Saturday's 38-17 victory at Iowa. All that stands between them and an all-or-nothing showdown with Michigan: six opponents with a combined record of 14-16.

"How we handle being successful with that 5-0 start is the question," Tressel said. "We're very capable."

Boise State (5-0) also passed what might have been its toughest test, cruising 36-3 at Utah. After TCU lost Thursday, the Broncos became the front-runners to grab an at-large bid in the expanded five-game BCS.

That speculation led to a pre-emptive strike by Petersen. "Don't even ask one question about the BCS," he said after the game.

It'll be a long haul for Boise, which inched up two spots to 20th when the Associated Press poll was released Sunday. A champion from a non-BCS conference needs to finish in the top 12 of the final BCS standings to reach the promised land.

At least the Buckeyes know they have their fate in their own hands. Their hold on No. 1 has never been stronger, growing to 62 first-place votes (out of 65) and 1,622 points. The Top 10 remained unchanged from last week, with Auburn (one first-place vote) at No. 2 and Southern Cal third. No. 4 West Virginia had the other two first-place votes. Florida was fifth and Michigan sixth.

TCU dropped from No. 17 all the way out of the poll after losing to BYU. Boston College re-entered the poll at No. 25.

Bombs Away

Back in the days of Mike Rozier and Lawrence Phillips, it would hardly be considered unusual to see Nebraska rip off three scoring plays of 75 or more yards. Especially against Kansas. The Cornhuskers would finish with their customary 600 yards rushing in a 72-0 blowout.

It was more of the same Saturday. Well, except for the rushing part. And the easy win part. This time, it was Zac Taylor throwing three touchdown passes of 75 or more yards, finishing with 395 yards on just 15 completions (26.3 yards per completion) in a 39-32 overtime win.

"I think it's cause for celebration," Taylor said. "We're 1-0 in conference play. If we had won by 60, we would still be 1-0."

Kansas' Adam Barmann threw for 405 yards and two TDs. ... The footballs were also flying in El Paso, Texas. New Mexico State's Chase Holbrook was 48 of 73 for 505 yards and four TDs, and UTEP's Jordan Palmer was 18 of 26 for 414 yards and three TDs in the Miners' 44-38 victory.

Hurtin' Gators

Two of Florida's key offensive players are question marks heading into the Gators' Saturday showdown with No. 9 LSU. Senior running back DeShawn Wynn had an MRI on his right knee Sunday and the Gators expect the results today.

"They do not believe it's a tear," coach Urban Meyer said. "They believe it's a sprain."

Freshman Percy Harvin, averaging more than 10 yards a carry and 18 yards a reception, missed Saturday's victory over Alabama as he battles a high ankle sprain.

"Percy certainly can't play a full game at tailback," Meyer said. "He will certainly get a few reps there." ... Auburn senior center Joe Cope is expected to miss at least four weeks with a sprained right knee.

Mood Over Miami

Nothing like a 14-13 home victory over mighty Houston to cure Miami's ills.

"They know what the score was and they know we won," coach Larry Coker said Sunday. "We didn't play as well as we can, but that's OK. That's why we're here as coaches, to help get those things right. And when you win, it sets a more positive environment to correct that."

It doesn't get much more positive than planes circling the Orange Bowl, toting banners calling for Coker's ouster. Or the sight of last year's leading rusher, Tyrone Moss, sitting alone on the bench with a towel draped over his head. Coker said he decided "during the game" that Moss wouldn't play.

"This is college football. It's the University of Miami. If you can't have fun playing college football here, you can't enjoy Christmas or Hanukkah or whatever we celebrate at Miami," Coker said.

For many Hurricanes, it's Visitation Day. ... Auburn coach Tommy Tuberville said it was a drifter, not an overzealous Gamecocks fan, who stole a \$15,000 laptop containing the Tigers' game plan for South Carolina. Tuberville said police in Columbia, S.C., caught the thief on tape. "The police identified him as looking like somebody that they see around the mall all the time," Tuberville said.

Compiled from Courant wire services

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Monday, October 2, 2006

Advertisement: [Kentucky Farm Bureau](#)**UPDATED: 5:56 PM**

WKU regents will vote on I-A football

By Michael Grant

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The Courier-Journal

Advertisement BOWLING GREEN, Ky. - Western Kentucky University's executive committee recommended yesterday to take a proposal to upgrade to Division I-A football to the university's board of regents. The board will vote Nov. 2 on going to the highest level of NCAA football. Pending approval, the Hilltoppers could be playing I-A football as a member of the Sun Belt Conference as soon as 2009.

President Gary Ransdell made a 20-minute presentation, recommending that a I-A move would be in Western's best interest. Ransdell cited several reasons — most of which he had mentioned previously — including raising the university's national profile, access to Bowl Championship Series revenue and pressure from the Sun Belt in which the Hilltoppers play 18 of 20 sports. (Western currently plays I-AA football in the Gateway Conference).

Ransdell's recommendation was followed by 20 minutes of discussion. The most spirited dialogue occurred between Ransdell and faculty regent Robert Dietle who has already stated he will vote against the move. In the end, the committee authorized Randell to "take all actions necessary to effectuate a move/transition" to I-A. That cleared the way for the landmark vote on Nov. 2.

Does this mean I-A football is definitely coming?

"It's really too early to say," regent chair Robert Earl Fischer said. "What we had today was a recommendation to take it to the full board. That's in no way to indicate what the board vote is going to because we didn't ask them to state their positions. Some you could tell from their answers and questions where they may be. But Nov. 2 is a little way off. There is going to be a lot of information that is passed among the board members. We have to wait and see. I'm not declaring anything at this point."

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Published: October 3, 2006

Three jeers for criticism of fans

By Ron Morris

The State

SORRY, STEVE, I have to side with the fans on this one.

South Carolina fans were saluting the extraordinary effort of their Gamecocks following this past week's near upset of second-ranked Auburn. They were not cheering just another losing effort, as USC coach Steve Spurrier said.

"I don't want our fans to boo," Spurrier said on Friday, one day after USC played valiantly in a 24-17 loss to Auburn. "But please don't clap when we come close. I think it sends the wrong message."

Actually, the message was pretty clear from the fans. It was received incorrectly by Spurrier.

The message came in the form of a rousing ovation for USC players as they departed the Williams-Brice Stadium field. First, USC players remained on the field, as is their custom, through the band's playing of the alma mater.

Then, as they departed through the corner of the south end zone, a thunderous applause spread among the remaining thousands of fans. These were fans who earlier in the season had watched less-than-spirited performances by USC against Georgia and Wofford.

Spurrier called out his team following the loss to Georgia for playing "stupid." He said he needed to find players who competed harder on every single play. He did not say it, but Spurrier's implication was that USC played without heart.

So, when the Gamecocks played their hearts out, scaring the daylights out of Auburn, the remaining fans wanted to salute those efforts. Good for them.

"Our players, I don't want them to be content that we came close against a good team," Spurrier said on Monday. "I appreciate the fans thinking that way, but I've never really understood applause after a loss."

Spurrier really picked on the wrong fans. There were ample other reasons to question USC's fan support against Auburn. After Auburn took a 24-10 lead by keeping possession of the ball for the entire third quarter, the stands began to empty.

Then, with rain falling early in the fourth quarter, the crowd thinned further. By the time USC got the ball with 5:24 left and trailing 24-17, no more than 40,000 of the original 74,000 remained to see the exciting finish.

Those fans who cheered after the game are the loyal USC fans, not the front-runners more concerned about beating traffic or getting wet. The remaining fans should be applauded for sticking it out on a Thursday night and for giving a big bravo to their team even in defeat.

Not so, says Spurrier.

"If they want to say, 'Great effort, Syvelle (Newton), that's fine,' Spurrier said Monday. "But we had a bunch of them who didn't have great effort.

"There's a huge difference between coming close and winning. I just don't want our guys to think coming close is decent. That doesn't mean crap."

I can appreciate Spurrier attempting to change the culture of South Carolina football, a culture that long has been all about supporting mediocrity. There certainly exists a lot to be changed, and he is going about it the correct way. Through strong recruiting classes, he is building a solid foundation. He also is demanding that his players be exemplary students and citizens.

More than anything, Spurrier is teaching his players how to win. His message to his team a season ago was that hard work in practice will eventually lead to rewards, and it did. Historic wins over Florida and Tennessee proved that.

Just seconds after that game against Florida at Williams-Brice Stadium, several USC players gave Spurrier a Gatorade bath and attempted to carry him off the field on their shoulders. Spurrier was not happy about it. He said winners reserve those kinds of

celebrations for championships.

Spurrier won an Atlantic Coast Conference championship at Duke, as well as six Southeastern Conference titles and a national crown at Florida. He knows how to win, and he knows how to act like a winner.

In this instance, though, he missed the mark. He should have thanked those faithful fans who stuck around to salute his team for a job well done, if not complete.