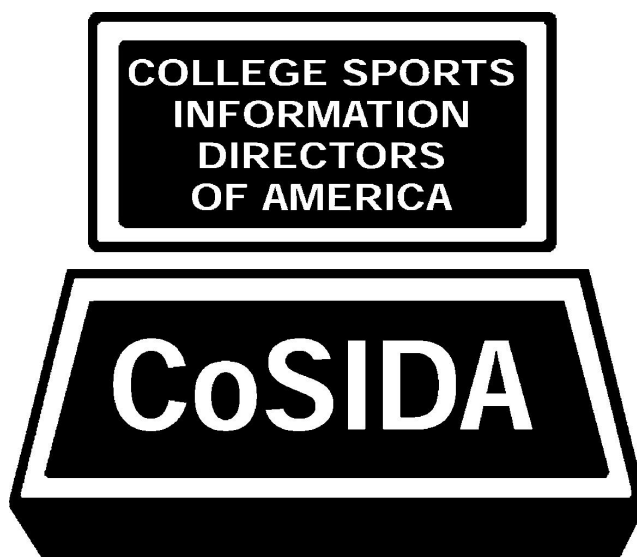


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SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

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Silencing soccer moms and dads

September 20, 2006

Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar! All for soccer, sit down and ... well, shut up.

That's right, soccer moms and dads. It's Silent Saturday. That means no questioning the referee, no second-guessing the coach, no berating your own child and no arguing with parents of the opposing players. Oh, and no cheering.

Silent Saturday (or Sunday, depending on which of your weekend days is dictated by the youth soccer league schedule) is a national movement aimed at restoring decorum on suburban sidelines. Typically a once-a-year event, its rules are simple: Show up, applaud politely, keep your mouth shut. Some leagues even supply lollipops to give those loose tongues something else to do. It's all a response to overzealous adult behavior at youth sporting events and no, that is not an imaginary problem. We just don't see how muzzling the mommies and daddies is going to stop it.

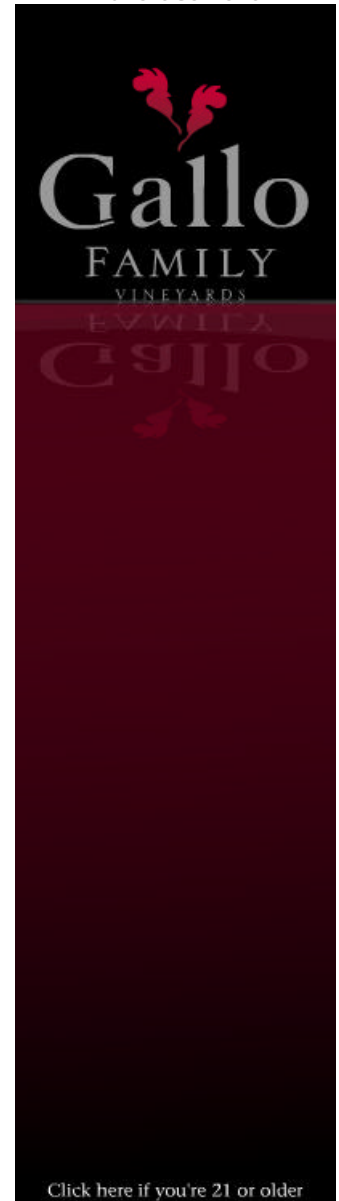
Organized youth sports aren't supposed to be about winning--they're supposed to be about sportsmanship and fresh air and fun. Ask the coach of any pee-wee league team what the score is, and he or she will earnestly profess not to know. The parent's role is to shout "Great job!" every time his or her youngster gets a foot on the ball, or tries. When it's over, everyone has a juice box and goes home happy. No winners, no losers.

Eventually the players learn to count, and this happy little delusion is over. They want to win. At this point, the adults are supposed to make sure the youngsters learn not to take things too seriously, but this is precisely when some adults tend to come unglued.

A few weeks ago, a youth football coach in Stockton, Calif., was charged with attacking an opposing player. Two years ago, a Brick, N.J., woman attending her daughter's soccer game was arrested and charged with assaulting a rival player. (We can't resist pointing out that this happened on Silent Sunday.) Closer to home, the Big West Catholic League, which includes elementary schools in Cook and DuPage Counties, just canceled its volleyball and basketball playoffs because of a series of bad parent episodes. All serious infractions with serious consequences. We're sure the kids, and hopefully the adults, got the message.

But what is the message behind banning cheering of all types, even for a day? The kids may tell you they don't hear it anyway, but just make the mistake of saying, "Good try, honey!" instead of "Good try, Jason!" and you'll find out otherwise. They want and need the support. Parents who know how to cheer loudly and appropriately should be encouraged to model this behavior for their kids--and for the other parents.

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Article Last Updated: 9/20/2006 05:15 AM

Walsh talks of life, football and his epitaph

By Dave NewhouseSTAFF WRITER
Inside Bay Area

STANFORD — This is Bill Walsh's stage of life for repose, only he can't find much time for rest and relaxation. At 74, he hasn't slowed down.

Walsh, the architect of the San Francisco 49ers' five Super Bowl victories, has his hands full at Stanford.

He got the renovation of Stanford Stadium well on its way before new athletic director Bob Bowlsby arrived this year. Walsh then gave up his interim AD position but stayed on as a special assistant to Bowlsby.

That's just one of Walsh's responsibilities on The Farm. He described the others last week in a wide-ranging interview that included his one major football regret, some family matters he has kept private and his own epitaph.

Q. It's said senior citizenship isn't for sissies. Would you agree?

A. Not if you're still an energized person, and you still have enthusiasm for life and what you're doing, a reason for getting up every morning. But if you begin to withdraw from everything, and wind down and sit in front of a television, then it can be depressing.

Q. Hasn't back surgery shortened your height by an inch and a half?

A. Oh, yeah. I've had two serious back surgeries. But, right now, I think I'm OK. I can't play tennis anymore. I play golf, if you want to call it that. I walk, and I use the pool at home with paddles and fins — a workout — as long as the weather is warm.

Q. Other than that, is your life fulfilling?

A. It is, but my life is much more challenging than other people's, because my wife, Geri, is severely handicapped (from a stroke seven years ago). I care for her at night, and I have two different women watching her during the daytime. Geri goes to therapy, she's courageous, she has a zeal for life, and she's still active in things.

And our son Steve died in his 40s of an illness we lived with for 10, 12 years. But right to the end, he was working for ABC as a reporter in Denver.

Q. What exactly is your job status at Stanford?

A. Besides assisting Bob Bowlsby, I'll be doing fund raising, holding seminars with the coaches, working with them on any problems they have. And I'll be working with athletes. So I'm busy. It's ideal for me. I couldn't ask for a better role at this stage.

Q. Does the new-look stadium suggest a Stanford football rebirth?

A. We certainly have the facilities. It's just a matter of fielding a winning team. That's very difficult because the admission requirements are high, and they're getting higher. Our pool of athletes is very narrow compared to the opposition. Your typical Pac-10 team of 85 scholarship players, maybe five could qualify at Stanford, and they're probably kickers.

Q. You've achieved so much in football, but is there something you missed accomplishing?

A. I should have coached (the 49ers) longer. We had a great team, which was demonstrated with more Super Bowl wins. I was emotionally and mentally worn out (in 1988). If I had taken a break for a month and stayed in Hawaii, I could have kept coaching.

Q. Do you see progress with Mike Nolan's 49ers?

A. The team is very well-organized and plays intense football. (Alex) Smith looks like an NFL quarterback. There will be days when he's disappointing, but he's right in a league with all the really good quarterbacks.

But the 49ers should never have lost Chike Okeafor, who's a really good defensive lineman. Plus some other (former 49ers) are playing around the league. I wouldn't relate all of this to Mike Nolan. Some of this was done before he arrived.

Q. Which is a perfect segue to Terry Donahue, your hand-picked choice to run the 49ers' daily operation. That idea blew up. Why?

A. It was premature for him to be named general manager. I had that in mind, but not that quickly. He wasn't ready after two years, but Terry thought he was. Had he received more training in the personnel department, he could have started in the (GM) job with more knowledge. So it didn't turn out well.

Q. What about your first NFL employer, the Oakland Raiders, who hired you in 1966? How will they do under Art Shell?

A. That was a woeful demonstration of football (a 27-0 loss to San Diego) in the first game. The team can come back from that, and they will come back. How far back, I don't know. Their quarterbacking has to be resolved, and there are some personalities on the team who are still a problem.

Q. Who is the greatest football mind you've met?

A. Sid Gillman is the greatest mind. There's also Blanton Collier. In today's football, Tom Moore at Indianapolis has as fine a football mind as anyone I know. He is revolutionizing football with his offense. He is the single most dominating offensive force in the NFL.

Q. Where has the NFL improved the most in the 18 years since you coached the 49ers?

A. The NFL has been on the cutting edge of football as it evolves with the rules and with policies relating to trading and free agency.

Q. Where has the league regressed the most?

A. The game isn't where it was because the athlete, in a general sense, isn't nearly as team-oriented. He's not willing to sacrifice for his team ... he's trying to play out a role he sees highlighted on television — demonstrating and strutting.

Q. If you could be NFL commissioner with unlimited powers, what changes would you implement?

A. Some rules aren't interpreted very well — pass interference and defensive holding. And there's hitting out of bounds that's not being penalized. As far as policies, there is a need for more football people making decisions, because the league's becoming domi

nated by ownership.

Q. From all your time in the NFL, if you could draft just one player from throughout the league, whom would it be?

A. It would have to be Joe Montana. He was the greatest quarterback, and the catalyst for five world championships.

Q. Who was your biggest 49ers draft disappointment?

A. There were two (a first- and second-round pick in 1987): Terrence Flagler, a Clemson running back, and Jeff Bregel, a USC guard.

Q. What is the proudest moment of your life?

A. When I was named to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, I was embarrassed. I didn't think I deserved to be at that level. As years passed, I've grown to accept it.

Q. You're a well-read history buff. In a worldly sense, what milestone would you like to see occur?

A. There are some political things, but I don't think they will happen. We need to have open dialogue with other nations, and not worry about whether we lose or save face, or who's more powerful and who isn't. And quit agitating and provoking over and over and over again.

Q. What would you like written on your gravestone?

A. "He lived a full life. He loved others, and others loved him."

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Wins improving Big East's image

By Rick Starr

TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. - In the Big East's push for prestige as a football league, nothing beats results.

Big East teams have combined for a 16-5 record against teams from other conferences in the opening three weeks of the season.

Critics who once believed the Big East wasn't worthy of a BCS berth have gone underground.

"From top to bottom, I think the Big East is off to a pretty good start," West Virginia coach Rich Rodriguez said. "There's even less criticism if we do well in our non-conference games."

Rodriguez predicted before the season that the Big East would be a conference on the rise.

"The reason I say that is when you look around the league, there's been a commitment to the facilities and to the coaching staffs, and that's the start," he said. "The Big East is kind of in a rebirth mode. Hopefully, that will take off."

Rodriguez became an unofficial league spokesman in the months after West Virginia's 38-35 victory over SEC champ Georgia on Jan. 2 in the Sugar Bowl.

"I know I'm biased, but there's not much difference between Big East teams and the other BCS conferences," he said. "I think we're right there in the middle. We've just had to overcome a lot of negativity the last couple years. It takes some quality wins to do that."

Big East teams are coming off another solid performance last week, in which the No. 4 Mountaineers (3-0) and No. 8 Louisville (3-0) knocked off their ACC opponents. Syracuse beat rebuilding Illinois of the Big Ten, South Florida pounded Conference USA rival Central Florida, and Rutgers stopped Ohio U. from the MAC.

"You don't hear people bashing the Big Ten or the ACC when the Big East beats them in a non-conference game," Rodriguez said. "I'd like to see all that stuff subside."

Louisville embarrassed Miami, 31-7, despite playing without both of their Heisman Trophy candidates -- quarterback Brian Brohm (for the second half) and running back Michael Bush (for the entire game). The Cardinals knocked the Hurricanes out of the polls.

While the Big East is off to a 12-5 start against Division I-A opponents, the league is 1-2 against teams ranked in the Associated Press Top 25. That includes Cincinnati's 37-7 loss to No. 1 Ohio State and No. 14 Iowa's 20-13 double-overtime victory over Syracuse.

The Big East has two teams ranked in the top 10 for the first time since 2003 in West Virginia and Louisville.

The league also boasts some of the nation's most potent offenses. West Virginia leads the country in rushing offense (348.7) and ranks second in scoring offense (46.3). Louisville is tops in both scoring offense (50.7) and total offense (563.7), and Connecticut is fourth nationally in rushing (272.5).

Rutgers ranks fifth in scoring defense (7.7), and Louisville is third among all defensive units against the run (34.0).

The Big East also has its share of individual stars, starting with a pair of running backs ranked in the top five nationally. West Virginia's Steve Slaton is third in rushing (167.7), and Rutgers' Ray Rice is fourth at 166.3 per contest.

Rick Starr can be reached at rstarr@tribweb.com or (724) 226-4691.

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Published Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Column: Feeling Robbed by Refs? Tough

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP Sports Writer

There is outrage in Oklahoma and Louisiana. Fans of OU and LSU feel cheated, robbed, victimized even - all over a few disputed calls that went against their beloved Sooners and Tigers in huge losses Saturday.

A little advice to those anguished souls: Get over it. Refs don't lose games, teams do, and your teams blew it.

First, a recap of the supposed atrocities.

The Sooners took it on the chin twice from the officials at the end of their 34-33 loss to Oregon.

Trailing by six with a little more than a minute left, the Ducks recovered an onside kick. At least that's what the officials ruled.

It certainly looked like Oregon touched the ball before it went 10 yards, which by rule would have given it to Oklahoma. It also appeared that the Ducks interfered with the Sooners players who were trying to field that bouncing kick within the first 10 yards, which is also against the rules.

And finally, the officials appeared to be too quick to award the ball to the Ducks when the guy who came out of the pile with the ball was a Sooner.

Bad job by the officials, and it got worse when the Sooners were flagged for pass interference moments later on a ball that might have been tipped at the line. Even if the pass wasn't tipped, the call was questionable.

Pac-10 commissioner Tom Hansen said the league will review both the onside kick and the pass interference.

After those two calls, Dennis Dixon found Brian Paysinger wide open behind the secondary with 46 seconds left to give Oregon the lead. Oklahoma had one last chance and Garrett Hartley's 44-yard field goal was blocked.

The game is already going down as one of the most infamous in Sooners history. Highway robbery!

Really?

On three occasions, the Sooners drove inside the Oregon 10 and settled for field goals. The Ducks piled up 501 yards against an Oklahoma defense that was supposed to be one of the best in the country but is now ranked last in the Big 12.

Even Adrian Peterson knew the Sooners were in trouble if they had to rely on their defense to make a big stop.

"I was just praying we would get that onside kick," Peterson said. "Once we didn't get it, things got really ugly from there."

How about this, Oklahoma? Punch in couple of those red-zone opportunities or cover someone every now and then instead.

As for LSU, the Tigers trailed Auburn 7-3 late in the fourth quarter of yet another intense struggle between the Southeastern Conference heavyweights.

Facing fourth-and-8 from Auburn's 31, LSU's JaMarcus Russell threw down the middle to Early Doucet near the goal line. Zach Gilbert grabbed Doucet and drew a flag that would have given LSU a first down inside the 20. But before the ball reached Doucet, it was batted away by a diving Auburn safety Eric Brock.

Because the ball was tipped, the officials picked up the flag. But here's the catch: "You can have pass interference before the ball is tipped," said John Soffey, the Big East coordinator of officials, on Sunday. Soffey didn't see the Auburn-LSU play and wasn't commenting on it specifically, just the rule.

On the replay, it appeared the contact came before the tip.

"It wasn't going to be a call that was going to be overturned so we just had to move on and try to make other plays," Doucet said.

And move on LSU did. The Tigers got the ball back, drove into Auburn territory and came up a few yards short when Brock stopped Craig Davis at the 4 on Russell's last-play pass. That was the fifth time LSU drove into Auburn territory and came away with nothing.

So a question for LSU fans. Isn't it unreasonable to simply assume the Tigers would have scored a touchdown if the pass interference had been upheld?

Bad call. Tough break. But LSU lost because in terrific defensive struggle, Auburn's D was a little better.

IRRITATED BALL COACH: The first three weeks of the season have Steve Spurrier exasperated.

South Carolina improved to 2-1 on Saturday with a much tougher than expected 27-20 win over Division I-AA Wofford.

The Ol' Ball Coach summed it up this way - "I'm not going to get mad about it," he said. "We won. Could've been worse. We could've lost."

The Gamecocks' other win came against lowly Mississippi State and they play even-lowlrier Florida Atlantic this week. South Carolina is a good bet to go into its home game against Auburn on Sept. 28 with a 3-1 record.

But the Gamecocks, who have scored 42 points in three games, including a shutout loss to Georgia, won't have a chance against No. 2 Auburn with the way they've been playing.

And Spurrier knows it too.

"Somehow or another, we haven't got the message (across) how to win games," he said.

MUDDLED ACC: Miami has problems, and so does Florida State.

Still, a Hurricanes-Seminoles rematch in the Atlantic Coast Conference title game isn't far-fetched idea.

Virginia Tech hasn't played anyone - yet - so who knows how good the Hokies are. Clemson and Boston College are solid but play a lot of close games. Georgia Tech? Totally unpredictable.

And you can forget about the rest of the ACC.

As bad as the Hurricanes and Seminole have looked in the first three weeks of the season, they still could be the best the ACC has to offer at the end. Which wouldn't say much for the conference.

Ralph D. Russo covers college football for The Associated Press. Write to him at russo(at)ap.org.

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Possible bias of conference-affiliated officials concerns fans, teams

Posted 9/20/2006 1:10 AM ET

By Vicki Michaelis, USA TODAY

The question inevitably is at the forefront. When college football fans enter a stadium for a non-conference game, "You always ask, 'Where are the officials from?'" said Mike Gottfried, an ex-NCAA Division I-A coach and ESPN analyst.

College football officials are hired and trained by conferences. They work games under those conference labels. So when officiating comes under fire, as it has for Oregon's 34-33 home victory Saturday against Oklahoma, concerns over bias are raised.

"I don't think there's any question when you're going on the road, and I don't care where it is or who you are, you run into some of those issues," Michigan coach Lloyd Carr said in a teleconference.

Pooling officials regionally or nationally, thus removing conference ties, could ease some of the issues, according to Carr and other college football insiders. "Certainly it's an argument that needs to be explored, and if they could do it, I think it would be one of the real positive things that we could do to make the game, from an intersectional standpoint, fairer," Carr said.

Up for debate this week is whether Oklahoma got a fair shake. Generally, for non-conference games such as the Sooners-Ducks, the visiting team has its league officials working, which is set up in the game contract between schools.

"The general notion has been the visiting school has been going into hostile territory. They won't have the fan base the home team does. It's sort of like, at least give us an officiating crew we're familiar with," said Dave Parry, supervisor of officials for the Big Ten.

But the Pacific-10, of which Oregon is a member, has a policy that its officials work games in its home stadiums.

Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said Tuesday that the Sooners would consider canceling their game at Washington in 2008 if the Pac-10 doesn't change that policy. OU President David Boren on Monday asked the Big 12 to pursue a change in the policy.

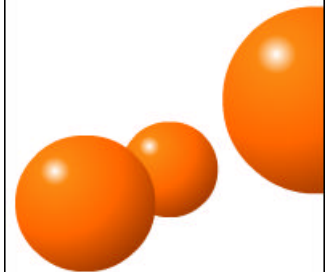
The Sooners had two crucial calls go against them Saturday. Both were reviewed at the game under college football's new instant replay system.

The first came during an onside kick that gave the Ducks possession. The second was a pass-interference call that came a play before Oregon's winning touchdown.

On the onside kick, Pac-10 Commissioner Tom Hansen said Monday that the ball was touched by an Oregon player before it traveled

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the required 10 yards; therefore, Oklahoma should have been awarded possession. Stoops said Tuesday that he saw the same thing on tape.

A report in *The (Portland) Oregonian* said replay official Gordon Riese did not have had access to some ABC replay angles. Pac-10 spokesman Jim Muldoon said the league concluded more angles were available, but "we felt he had ample video to make a better decision." Muldoon also said he had plenty of time to decide.

On the pass-interference call, Stoops said video showed Oklahoma defensive end C.J. Ah You tipped the pass, which should have negated the call. "It's unfortunate, with all the technology today that's out there, that the situation was what it was," he said.

No one is calling for a repudiation of instant replay, though Barry Mano, president of the National Association of Sports Officials, recommends college football upgrade to the NFL system. In the NFL, officials on the field, rather than just replay officials in a booth, review video and either uphold or change the ruling themselves. "It's a very tenuous situation, frankly, for the officials down on the field" in college football, Mano said.

Although he said any notion that officials sway calls in favor of their conferences is "fiction," Mano is in favor of establishing regional pools of college football officials. "To remove the labels ... the perception that something could be going on ... would be a good idea," he said.

Mano and Gottfried suggested college basketball's system for assigning officials as a possible model. In basketball, some conferences have joined to form pools and officials can work for multiple leagues.

The Big Ten's Parry said the idea of pooling officials has "probably been more seriously discussed the last couple of years more than ever before." He said the idea has been building "steam" among commissioners, official coordinators and even, to some extent, officials themselves.

Some doubt it would be a panacea.

"You know what? Once you create those regions, they're going to be identified when somebody goes from that region to another region. What if you have a national pool? You're going to be identified: Are you a Western official, an Eastern official, a Southern official or Northern official?" said Gerald Austin, Conference USA's coordinator for football officials. "I don't know that you can relieve that bias."

NCAA REPLAY RULES

The NCAA rules regarding instant replay fall under Rule 12 in the 2006 edition of *Football Rules and Interpretations*. This is the first season a uniform replay system has been applied. The objective of replay is to allow for specific types of officiating calls to be immediately reviewed and, if necessary, corrected. A replay official must have indisputable video evidence for a call on the field to be overturned. :

Reviewable plays governed by a side line, goal line or an end line include:

- a. Scoring plays, including a runner in possession of a live ball breaking the plane of a goal line.
- b. A pass ruled complete, incomplete or intercepted at a side line, goal line or an end line.
- c. A runner or pass receiver ruled in or out of bounds. If a runner is ruled out of bounds, the play is not reviewable.
- d. Recovery of a loose ball in or out of bounds in the field of play or an end zone.
- e. A loose ball touching a side line, goal line or an end line.

Reviewable plays involving passes include:

- a. A pass ruled complete, incomplete or intercepted anywhere in the field of play or an end zone.
- b. A legal forward pass touched by an ineligible receiver.

- c. A legal forward pass touched by a defensive player.
- d. A fumble ruled on the part of a potential passer. (Note: If the on-field ruling is forward pass and the pass is incomplete, the play is not reviewable.)
- e. A forward pass or forward handing ruled when a runner is beyond the line of scrimmage.
- f. A forward pass or forward handing ruled after a change of possession.
- g. A pass ruled forward or backward when thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. (Exception: If the pass is ruled forward and is incomplete, the play is not reviewable.)

Miscellaneous reviewable plays include:

- a. A runner judged to have been not down by rule. (Note: If a runner is ruled down, the play is not reviewable.)
- b. A runner's forward progress with respect to a first down.
- c. Touching of any type kick by any player.
- d. The number of players participating by either team during a live ball.
- e. A scrimmage kicker beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is kicked.
- f. Clock adjustment when a ruling on the field is reversed.
- g. A fumble recovery by a Team A player during fourth down or a try and before any change of possession.

No other plays or officiating decisions are reviewable.

Contributing: Jack Carey, Thomas O'Toole

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http://www.usatoday.com/sports/college/football/2006-09-20-replay-controversy_x.htm

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College football discusses regional, national refs pools

Posted 9/20/2006 1:11 AM ET

By Vicki Michaelis, USA TODAY

Creating regional pools or a national pool of college football game officials, which would remove their conference labels and therefore the perception they are biased, is perhaps an idea whose time has come, some league officials say.

NCAA Division I-A conference commissioners discussed that possibility at their fall meeting Tuesday in Chicago, said Rick Chryst, chairman of the Conference Commissioners Association. He characterized those talks as "an extension" of previous discussions. "I sense a strong seriousness about assessing our current environment," said Chryst, the Mid-American Conference commissioner. He said no specifics were discussed.

The environment is highly charged this week. Monday the Pacific-10 issued a one-game suspension to the officiating crew and instant replay officials who worked Oregon's 34-33, final-seconds win against Oklahoma at home Saturday. Pac-10 Commissioner Tom Hansen said "errors were clearly made and not corrected."

Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said Tuesday that the Sooners would consider canceling their game at Washington in 2008 if the Pac-10 does not change a league policy that requires its officials be used at games at Pac-10 school stadiums. Pac-10 spokesman Jim Muldoon said "because of all the controversy," the policy probably will be on the agenda when league athletics directors meet next month.

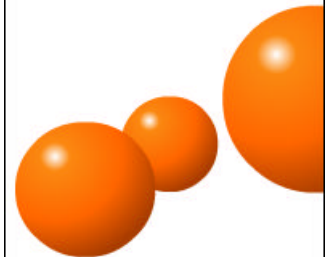
As for regional or a national pool of referees, Muldoon said, "We would be interested in exploring it."

Any new system would have to be approved by the conference commissioners, who oversee Division I-A football. "There should be a national discussion" about pooling referees, Big 12 Commissioner Kevin Weiberg said. "Conference affiliation can sometimes create an unfair perception of their work." Big East associate commissioner Nick Carparelli said his conference "has always been in favor of moving toward some type of national officiating program."

Big Ten officials supervisor Dave Parry supports the idea. Tommy Hunt, supervisor of football officials for the Atlantic Coast Conference, said he would favor a national program but warns that staffing and training could be unwieldy and adds, "I don't think it's going to happen."

Contributing: Thomas O'Toole, Kelly Whiteside

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College gridiron official says fans should lighten up Advertisement

Updated 9/20/2006 1:17 AM ET

By Thomas O'Toole, USA TODAY

Calling fan involvement "almost out of hand" when it comes to college football officials, the Atlantic Coast Conference coordinator of officials said Tuesday that spectators are taking a game too seriously.

"I wish the fans would back off a little bit," said Tommy Hunt. "It is called a football *game*. It's not life and death.

"You ask some of the people who have been in the Middle East, like my son. He says, 'You want to see something serious, see this planeload of coffins. This is serious.'

"I don't want to belittle the game. The game is important. But fans should understand officials don't care who wins."

Gordon Riese, who lives in Portland, Ore., was the replay official for the Oregon-Oklahoma game. He works for the Pacific-10 Conference and did not overturn a call on a disputed onside kick after replays appeared to show host team Oregon illegally recovered.

Riese and the on-field officials were suspended for a game by the Pac-10. Riese also told the Associated Press he has received harassing phone calls from fans and at least one death threat. "A few of our replay officials have told me they feel more pressure in this job than they did (as officials) on the field," said Pac-10 spokesman Jim Muldoon.

Hunt said he regularly receives angry e-mails, letters and phone calls from fans regarding officiating issues. But he says a death threat to an official is rare.

"It makes me angry, and it makes me feel bad for that individual who is a person that doesn't do this for a living," Hunt said of the threat to Riese. "It's an avocation that he's loved for years.

"People get two things mixed up: They get good mixed up with perfection. The guys on the field are good. They aren't perfect. ... The fan involvement is almost out of hand. I get calls and letters every day from fans. Some I take, and some I can't take."

Spokesmen for four other conferences say they know of no other instances where a field official received a death threat. That includes the Pac-10, where Muldoon says more than 1,000 angry e-mails have been sent to the league office over the Oregon game. Southeastern Conference media relations director Charles Bloom said he has received 50 angry e-mails since the league affirmed on Monday a controversial ruling by officials to wave off a pass interference call in Auburn's 7-3 victory against LSU last weekend.

Hunt said officials often are subjected to taunts and thrown objects. Game officials routinely receive security escorts to and from the field. "Fans will throw things at you, spit at you, cuss you," Hunt said. "It's because you put on that uniform and that hat, and (fans) think they are privileged to do that.

"Security is tight. You never know who that kook will be."

Hunt said fans need to accept one thing: "People are under the impression that officials on the field care who wins the game. I promise

you, they don't care. I know these people. I've been in it 50 years. I have never, never been on the field with a guy who to my knowledge cared who won the game. That implies lack of integrity."

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From the issue dated September 22, 2006

Congress Broadens an Investigation of College Sports**A House committee scrutinizes athletes' academic problems, and the commercial activities of the NCAA and conferences**

By BRAD WOLVERTON

A Congressional committee that oversees legislation affecting nonprofit organizations has broadened its inquiry into college sports in recent months, say nearly a dozen college officials who have participated in the investigation.

In July aides to the U.S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee spoke with several academic officials at one university about whether athletes there were receiving inflated grades and if the sports program was contributing to the university's educational mission. This summer the committee interviewed officials from the National Collegiate Athletic Association about its business dealings and whether it deserved to keep its tax-exempt status. Committee aides have also talked to conference officials about their leagues' activities and educational purpose.

Ways and Means staff members started questioning athletics officials in January about whether certain revenue generated by athletics programs and the NCAA should be taxed as unrelated business income. Lawmakers are concerned that big-time sports programs are evolving into entertainment businesses that are only marginally connected to the tax-exempt purposes of colleges and universities, according to college officials interviewed by the aides.

If the House committee's inquiry leads to legislation requiring colleges, conferences, or the NCAA to pay taxes on their athletics revenue, it could cost colleges hundreds of millions of dollars.

A spokesman for the Ways and Means Committee declined to comment on the investigation. But during the past two years, the committee has conducted general oversight of nonprofit organizations and held seven hearings on a range of nonprofit taxation issues, including whether nonprofit hospitals and credit unions deserved to keep their tax exemptions. Since 2004, members of Congress have passed several laws curbing tax abuses by nonprofit groups.

Committee staff members have informed several people that they may hold a hearing sometime in the next year to expose what they see as problems in college sports. While two lobbyists familiar with the investigation say they doubt that lawmakers will organize a hearing this year, one higher-education official believes the committee could be preparing for a public discussion about college sports during next year's college-basketball season.

"This is not a slam-dunk case, but it's sexy because it's big-time athletics and big universities," says Matthew W. Hamill, a senior vice president of the National Association of College and University Business Officers, who has spoken with committee aides about the investigation. "They could do a hearing as a prelude to the NCAA [men's basketball] tournament."

Classroom Problems

The committee's most recent questions center on academic misconduct in college athletics programs and stem from a July *New York Times* article describing how Auburn University football players allegedly earned easy A's in independent-study classes.

The day the article was published, committee aides contacted Jim Gundlach, the Auburn University sociology professor who had investigated the purported problems. Mr. Gundlach says the committee's aides seemed concerned about a former Auburn football player who wanted to major in nursing but whom academic advisers steered into sociology because classes were easier to schedule around football.

Committee staff members asked whether athletes were receiving an academically rigorous education — or just staying eligible to compete, Mr. Gundlach says.

"The committee wanted to see if athletics had reached a point where it is no longer making a positive contribution to the educational experience," he says.

Ways and Means staff members also spoke with Auburn academic officials about the allegations. The university has since demoted the department chair who supposedly gave out easy high grades and developed a new policy for independent-study classes.

Newspaper articles last spring detailing how dozens of high-school recruits were admitted to some of the most prominent college-sports programs after attending bogus high schools also caught the attention of the committee's staff members.

In conversations with athletics officials, committee aides questioned the NCAA's efforts to deal with those and other academic problems of athletes. Since learning about the bogus schools, the NCAA has decertified more than two dozen supposed diploma mills and tightened academic requirements for incoming freshmen.

Over the past few years, the NCAA has also developed a plan to improve athletes' graduation rates by penalizing teams whose students lag in the classroom. Last spring Ways and Means Committee aides asked a representative from the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics how well that plan was working.

The verdict is still out, says Amy P. Perko, executive director of the Knight Commission, whose members have called for stricter academic standards for athletes.

"If the Knight Commission felt that everything was going on as it should be," she says, "there wouldn't be a Knight Commission. We're still concerned about the NCAA's lack of movement on academic-reform measures."

Committee aides also asked if the NCAA was fulfilling one of its basic missions: to ensure that intercollegiate athletics is embedded into the mission and purpose of the university.

"It's an ongoing process," Ms. Perko says. "Division I institutions recognize that more needs to be done to make sure that athletes are an integral part of the student body."

Business Dealings

Over the past nine months, the committee has focused on the finances of intercollegiate athletics. In recent years, many athletics budgets have grown three times as fast as overall university budgets. Some colleges are spending millions of dollars on new arenas, stadium upgrades, and practice facilities. And a handful of coaches

earn more than \$2-million a year, far more than college presidents.

The NCAA's finances have been a central focus of the inquiry, according to several people who have spoken to the committee. Committee members want to understand how much revenue the NCAA brings in, where it spends its money, and whether the association's commercial activities further educational purposes.

In an e-mail message, an NCAA spokesman said that three association officials, including James L. Isch, the group's chief financial officer, had met with committee staff members and had complied with the committee's requests for information, but would not specify what they talked about.

Ways and Means aides also have expressed concerns about the commercial revenue that conferences bring in and how much goes toward education. This summer aides spoke with Michael L. Slive, commissioner of the Southeastern Conference, about how the SEC's activities relate to the educational mission of colleges and universities.

Some conferences have started their own cable-television networks to exploit commercial interests in their games, a move that might have invited government scrutiny, says William C. Friday, former president of the University of North Carolina system and a longtime chairman of the Knight Commission.

"When you see conferences creating their own television networks, how you rationalize that into an educational function with a tax exemption is going to be very difficult to do — because it's strictly a business," he says.

The Big Ten Conference, whose Big Ten Network will go on the air next year, has established a for-profit company through which the network's revenue will flow. The company will pay taxes on any dividends earned by the network, says James E. Delany, the Big Ten's commissioner.

But the lucrative rights fees the conference receives for its games will not be taxed — nor should that revenue be taxed, Mr. Delany says, because it serves an educational purpose.

Many Big Ten universities plan to funnel their share of the network's proceeds into academic programs, including scholarships for students who do not participate in intercollegiate athletics.

The channel will also include programming about academic issues, which Mr. Delany says could help universities demonstrate how their athletics programs are integrated into the academic environment.

And if the network is a financial success, he says, it will prove that the league's universities can raise money in more innovative ways than waiting on government subsidies.

"The federal government and states say they want universities to be more entrepreneurial in the way they develop resources," Mr. Delany says. "We're trying *not* to be a burden on the taxpayer. Why shouldn't we do that?"

PROGRESS OF A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATIONS OF NONPROFIT GROUPS

March 2004:

Bill Thomas, chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, announces plans to hold hearings on the activities of nonprofit hospitals, credit unions, and universities to determine if they deserve to keep their tax-exempt status.

June 2004:

Subcommittee on oversight holds hearing on pricing practices of nonprofit hospitals.

April 2005:

<http://chronicle.com/cgi-bin/printable.cgi?article=http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i05/05a03601....> 9/20/2006

Committee holds hearing as overview of tax-exempt sector.

May 2005:

Committee holds hearing on nonprofit hospitals.

June 2005:

Subcommittee on oversight holds hearing on architectural-conservation easements.

November 2005:

Committee holds hearing to discuss nonprofit credit unions.

December 2005:

Oversight committee holds hearing to examine charities' response to Hurricane Katrina.

January to early spring 2006:

Committee staff members begin interviewing college-sports experts, including a former college president, an athletics director, and critics of big-time sports.

Spring and summer 2006:

Committee aides interview officials of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, a conference commissioner, and a representative of the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics.

May 2006:

Subcommittee on oversight holds hearing to investigate whether certain charities are meeting their tax responsibilities.

July 2006:

Committee staff members speak with academic officials at Auburn University about alleged academic misconduct by athletes.

QUESTIONS FROM CONGRESS ABOUT COLLEGE SPORTS

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means has stepped up its investigation of intercollegiate athletics in recent months. Staff members have interviewed about a dozen individuals or groups this year, including officials of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, conference commissioners, athletics directors, and former college presidents. Here is a sampling of the questions the committee's aides have asked:

Is the NCAA fulfilling its basic purpose of ensuring that intercollegiate athletics is embedded into the educational mission of universities?

Are the NCAA's academic-progress measurements working?

How do conferences and the NCAA distribute their revenues and spend their money — and do their activities have an educational purpose?

How seriously do athletics programs take academics?

Why do football and basketball coaches make so much money, and can anything be done about it?

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Early returns apparently low from NCAA's kickoff change

BY JOHN O'CONNOR

TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Early returns, or lack thereof, are in. John Adams isn't optimistic.

The secretary/editor of the NCAA Football Rules Committee believed this season's reduction of the maximum kickoff tee height -- from 2 inches to 1 inch would cut down on touchbacks and increase the number of kickoff returns. Three weeks into the season, Adams says "I don't really think the tee is making a difference. That's contrary to my prediction."

Statistics reflecting the number of touchbacks in college games won't be available until after the season, according to Adams. But he gets the feeling that there have been as many or more touchbacks this season as in previous years.

Kickers "are just so good, I guess, so strong," Adams said.

The NCAA Football Rules Committee implemented the tee-height reduction as part of its package of speed-up rules. Especially at the Division I-A level, the kickoff that resulted in a touchback had become so common that it was "just a time-eater," in the words of Bridgewater coach Mike Clark, a member of the rules committee.

The game clock now starts when the kicker's foot touches the ball, rather than when the receiving team touches it. Committee members hoped a shorter tee would decrease touchbacks and, in so doing, shorten games to help them fit in three-hour windows networks desire.

Virginia Tech's Frank Beamer and William and Mary's Jimmie Laycock, who together have nearly a half-century of head-coaching experience, don't believe the tee-rule change has affected games.

"I don't mind the idea that, if we were still on grass, you go on and dig your heel in there and put it on ground and kick it there, the old way you used to as a kid," Laycock said. "Doesn't make any difference to me. You work around it some way or the other."

Many kickers in past years had been using 1-inch tees because they felt more comfortable with them than 2-inch tees. In the view of Virginia Tech's Jared Develli, the 2-inch tee increased the possibility of kickers booting the ball higher and shorter than they intended. A lower tee actually helps Develli power the ball into the end zone, he says, rather than decreasing the distance of his kicks.

"I'm not sure what the NCAA was thinking on that," Develli said of the rule change.

He has kicked off 15 times this season. Eleven have resulted in touchbacks, and one of the returns began in the end zone. "It changed nothing," Develli said the tee-height restriction. "If anything, I thought it



The NCAA had kicking tees lowered from 2 inches (left) to 1 inch to reduce touchbacks, but kickers still often drive the ball into the end zone. BRUCE PARKER/TIMES-DISPATCH

would help people put the ball in the end zone."

The kickoff return is often one of the game's most exciting plays, the NCAA noted in a late-August explanation of the rules changes. The 1-inch-tee mandate "will lead to more attempts to return the ball," the NCAA release stated.

James Madison's Jason Pritchard has kicked off six times in two games. Three resulted in touchbacks. Three others were returned from the 1. The 2-inch tee he used while kicking for Atlee High School "kind of opened up the sweet spot on the ball a little more," Pritchard said. But, like Develli, Pritchard believes that just meant that the ball was kicked higher, not farther.

Said Virginia junior kicker Chris Gould, of the rule change: "The NCAA took more hang time out and put more distance on the ball, so to speak."

Kickoff returns are also among football's most dangerous episodes. Players on both sides move at their highest speeds at collision time. They often meet at unusual angles. Blind-side contact occurs.

A touchback is not always the intention of a kickoff. Some coaches, depending on the potential of the return men, would prefer kickers to focus on hang time and ball descent between the 5 and the goal line, or for them to boot a squibbed kick. With quality coverage, the kicking team then may feel its opponent can be pinned inside the 20, where the ball is spotted following touchbacks.

"Ultimately, though, there's nothing better than a touchback," Pritchard said. "It cancels the whole return."

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Staff writers Mike Harris and Jeff White contributed to this story

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Revenue generation bound by principles

April 24, 2006

By Michael F. Adams
University of Georgia

I applaud the notion of NCAA President Myles Brand that intercollegiate athletics departments will have to be sensitive to commercialism and the changing nature of opportunities as we move forward.



Adams

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The dramatic increase in broadcast exposure, particularly in football and basketball but increasingly in other sports, has created the opportunity for both enhancement of the college athletics experience and, I fear, encroachment into areas that have the potential to do great damage to everything that we hold dear about sports on campus.

The pursuit of excellence in intercollegiate athletics is sometimes as much a matter of financial resources as it is putting great coaches together with great athletes. While money alone is not the sole determinant of success, the correlation cannot be ignored, and those institutions that make a full commitment to success in competition are making a concomitant commitment to increased expenditures and, therefore, a need for greater revenue streams.

Additionally, given the rapid change in technology, it is difficult to predict what the sports communication landscape will look like in even five years. We could be watching games on the Internet, on our cell phones or an iPod or similar hand-held device. The proliferation of broadcast outlets may well be an instance of the market getting ahead of the appropriate controls.

Nonprofits of all sorts are seeking legitimate sponsorships. I recently was in the British Museum, and while in that staid and historic institution I strolled through the Weston Great Hall, the Annenberg Reading Room and the Sainsbury Africa Gallery. None of those appellations seemed out of place or inappropriate. Sponsorships such as those and similar sponsorships in athletics venues that enhance the total experience for fans without subjecting a captive audience to overt advertisement are, I believe, an appropriate practice for generating revenue in a manner consistent with the goals of the institution.

The question is not whether decisions will need to be made about commercialism and maximizing available financial resources in collegiate athletics, because in some cases athletics departments are self-supporting and must find the money for their budgets. The question must be what are the guiding principles by which those decisions will be made. Let me suggest three.

- College sports should look like a collegiate enterprise. At the venue itself, there should be a limited number of commercial intrusions. Fans should not be bombarded with ads between plays, between innings and during timeouts; a University of Georgia game is a different experience than an NBA game, and I want that difference to be clear. We have been very conservative about the number of corporate sponsors whose names are displayed on the electronic screens in our venues. Each campus must make its own decisions, but I don't think any of us want our uniforms to look like South American soccer jerseys or NASCAR drivers' suits. The standard is a clear distinction between a for-profit enterprise and a nonprofit activity that supports the mission of the academic institution.
- We should acknowledge that there are limits on what products are appropriately advertised in the context of a college or university activity. Each institution must set its own rules for making those decisions subject to commonly held moral, ethical and decency considerations. At the University of Georgia, for instance, we allow no advertising in any of our venues for tobacco or alcohol products, and consistent with Southeastern Conference policy, we limit alcohol ads on our radio network to 60 seconds per hour. Clearly there are other products that either offend the senses or are outside the bounds of what should be associated with young people.
- I feel strongly that we should not exploit student-athletes to sell or endorse products or services, either explicitly or implicitly. This is a dangerous line that all of us would do well not to cross. Student-athletes are amateurs, not professionals. Their images, numbers and representations should not be used for commercial purposes while they are still in school; decisions they make after their eligibility has expired are theirs to make, but institutions should not ask 19-year-olds to endorse products that they may not use or in which they may not believe, including wholesome, legitimate products and services that may be a part of institutional, conference or NCAA cooperative relationships.

"Commercialism" is a loaded word that generally means what the speaker intends it to mean and is often used negatively about someone else's actions. The combined forces of the need for more money and the rapid increase in technologies for broadcast distribution create the potential for the decision-making process to be driven by the wrong factors. Opportunities for increased commercialism should be viewed as opportunities to support a clearly defined mission for both the athletics department and the institution.

As long as decisions are being made based on those criteria rather than the bottom line, the outcomes will be good.

Michael F. Adams is president of the University of Georgia.

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YouTube Clears Copyright Hurdle

September 18, 2006

By Brian Morrissey

NEW YORK YouTube auteurs will soon be able to use Warner Music selections in their videos—and share in a portion of the resulting online advertising revenue.

The agreement covers for Warner artists like Radiohead and Missy Elliott, and it comes at a time that online music copyright issues on social media sites have been heating up. Just last week, Universal Music chief Doug Morris said YouTube and sites like MySpace owe "tens of millions of dollars" from copyright infringements.

Warner will receive an undisclosed percentage of ad revenue from videos that include any company-licensed content—audio or visual.

The YouTube-Warner pact is one of several the video sharing giant hopes to strike with copyright holders, in part to combat its reputation as a haven for pirated content, from unauthorized clips of *The Daily Show* to lip-synching videos.

Warner said it is embracing this latest new distribution vehicle rather than fighting it.

"Consumer-empowering destinations like YouTube have created a two-way dialogue that will transform entertainment and media forever," Warner Music Group CEO Edgar Bronfman Jr. said in a statement. "As user-generated content becomes more prevalent, this kind of partnership will allow music fans to celebrate the music of their favorite artists to reach consumers in new ways, and ensure that copyright holders and artists are fairly compensated."

Sorting out the complex tangle of rights issues has become more pressing as YouTube moves to create a sustainable, ad-based business model. Last month, it introduced user-initiated "brand channels" as its first major advertising program. So far the company has abstained from inserting ads in video clips.

YouTube said it would implement a "content identification and royalty reporting system" by the end of the year that will allow it to share ad revenue with copyright holders.

For now, YouTube does not share ad revenue with either content creators or copyright holders. Rivals like Revver hope to recruit users to their service by offering them a cut of ad revenue generated.

Warner will also use YouTube to distribute music videos, giving it access to YouTube's growing audience. In August, the site attracted 34 million visitors, up from 3.5 million at the start of the year.

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What US Airways employees are saying

Sept. 17, 2006 12:00 AM

What employees say

Last summer, America West Airlines Chief Executive Officer Doug Parker traversed the country in a day to rally employees of the soon-to-be new US Airways.

The mood was upbeat, especially on the East Coast, where the old US Airways had been on life support. Parker was cheered and treated like a celebrity.

Republic business reporter Dawn Gilbertson made the trip in 2005. She did so again a year later, without Parker, to take the current pulse of employees. She hit the combined airline's major cities: Phoenix, Philadelphia, Charlotte, N.C., Pittsburgh and Las Vegas.

Some workers talked on the record. Many others asked to remain anonymous because of the company's policy against talking to reporters.

Plenty of optimism and praise for Parker remains, but there is also a growing sense of frustration about stalled contract negotiations, executive stock sales, looming seniority battles and the slow pace of truly combining the airlines.

THE ISSUE:

The airline is making money. We deserve and need a raise.

"I guarantee you, if Doug Parker was managing the Arizona Diamondbacks and they had the lowest payroll in the league and started winning, they wouldn't have the lowest payroll for long."

- **Jim Buck**, US Airways pilot based in Washington, D.C.

"They need to let us get back a little bit."

Peter Schroeder, US Airways pilot based in Charlotte.

THE ISSUE:

Executives are profiting from the merger. Where's our piece?

"When Mr. Parker sells all that stock, that is not good PR. It sticks in some people's craw."

Steven Garnett, US Airways pilot based in Charlotte.

THE ISSUE:

One big happy family?

"The East (the former US Airways operation) doesn't realize America West is the one that bought the East. They were gone. They think they bought us because we took the name."

- A Phoenix-based former America West pilot, arguing that basing seniority on date of hire would not be fair because America West acquired US Airways in bankruptcy.

"I think it's pretty unrealistic that they (the America West pilots) can say a guy hired

in April should be senior to those of us that have been here for 15, 16, 17 years."

- A US Airways pilot on furlough

THE OTHER SIDE:

I'm happy to have a job.

"Eighteen months ago, we never knew what tomorrow was going to bring. When I hear people talk about negative things, it bothers me."

- A 10-year gate agent in Pittsburgh

"Not that I'm drinking the Kool-Aid, but if Parker hadn't taken over I wouldn't be doing this right now."

- Philadelphia flight attendant **Michael Kovach**, saying the job security from the merger allowed him to buy a second home to rent out to other crew members who need a crash pad.

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