

THE GAMECOCK

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IN OUR OPINION

Fans should shrug off Lou's latest guesswork

Let's not get carried away.

When former Gamecocks coach-turned-ESPN-analyst Lou Holtz predicted last week that USC will beat Georgia on the road this season, it caused a stir in Columbia — where weary fans are scrambling for some indicator of the season to come.

Steve Spurrier brushed off the prediction when reporters asked him about it last week, and if Gamecock fans are smart, they'll do the same.

After all, this is the same Lou Holtz who told the Bulldogs to "bring it on" in a news conference last year, then watched from the sidelines as the Gamecocks blew a 16-0 first-half lead.

Sure, the Bulldogs aren't what they were last year. They've lost All-SEC defenders from the line, their linebacking corps and the secondary.

David Greene, Georgia's stand-out quarterback, is now taking snaps in the NFL, and so are marquee receivers Fred Gibson and Reggie Brown.

Don't take a win against the Bulldogs for granted.

Add to that Spurrier's record against the Bulldogs — he was 11-1 against Georgia in his 12 seasons with the Florida Gators — and the game's as good as won, right?

Well, not exactly.

Don't forget Carolina has a few obstacles of its own it has to overcome this year. The Gamecocks are learning a new offense, and starting quarterback Blake Mitchell has completed only nine passes in his college career. True freshmen fill the top three tailback slots. Not to mention that the guys have, well, had some trouble off the field in the offseason.

A win against any SEC team should never be counted automatic, and — after the past three seasons — Georgia coaches could write a book on beating Carolina in close games.

So don't take a win against the Bulldogs for granted. Instead, focus on cheering for the Gamecocks against UCF next week. Then concentrate on whatever comes next.

IT'S YOUR RIGHT

Exercise your right to voice your opinion. Create message boards at www.dailygamecock.com or send letters to the editor to gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu



CORRECTIONS

If you see an error in today's paper, we want to know. E-mail us at gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu.

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Strom's cardio theater running on empty

Television dependence reaches all-time low with treadmill-vision

I hate TV. The evil little box is everywhere — historically, the first step toward our becoming multimedia zombies.

The tipping point in all this is taking place over at the Strom, having just opened a cardio theater that allows exercisers to watch TV while working out.

For me, it's the last straw for a campus and country that sheepishly fawn over the pretty picture box and all its stylish offspring.

What's the status of TV zombieism? Let's see, I've got a TV on my ceiling for when I wake up, a TV behind my bathroom mirror, a TV at the bottom of the toilet so I don't miss those few precious seconds while turning and squatting and a TV behind the towel rack. I've also got a separate monitor so I can watch myself watching TV.

One step closer and you'll be devouring human flesh — your own. No time to take your eyes off the screen. Need food now. Mmm. That's TV zombie-ism.

Television is a soul-sucker, and I, for many years, suckled its teat like a brainwashed boob.

Moving last summer to off-campus digs where cable wasn't included in the bill was the greatest thing that ever happened to me.

Money became more of an



STEVEN VAN HAREN

Fourth-year mechanical engineering student

obstacle, and TV would've become an inadvertent sin tax.

I finally understood why many New York smokers would kick the habit after paying \$12 for a pack of cigarettes. Thank God crack can't be legislated!

So here comes TV culture rearing its ugly head at the Strom.

I love the place, but there's a difference between the fitness-minded who use TV as the cherry on top of their chiseled routine and stylish sprinters who use TV as a crutch to work out.

The latter come to the gym in make-up. They spend money on pre-tattered exercise clothes with memories already installed at the factory. More time to watch "Who Wants to Marry This Half-Eaten Sandwich?"

I wish I could forget how much of a crutch TV was for me.

I couldn't enter a room in my house without turning it on. It placated me.

You'll know the feeling; it's almost impossible to leave the damn thing off.

Luke, my outdoorsy engineering buddy and catalyst for this column, would probably look at a TV and not know how to work the damn thing. Such

naivete is refreshing. Experiment: Lock up your TV for one day.

Dammit, removing TV from your dorm room and your life is probably the best thing you could do.

No more MTV, the most painfully glossed-over, insipid, rancid, lip-lined, Rainbow Brité puddle of pop-driven pig drool. No more Lifetime.

Funnily enough, USC's cable selection includes two Lifetimes — not quite long enough to forget "Television for Battered Women." I'm convinced these channels make you dumber.

But most of all, you might find a desire to go outside and detach from all this televised tripe.

The Strom has it all wrong: TV is not the inspiration to get on a treadmill and run — TV is what I'm running from. I'm running from people who'd rather sit on their asses watching "Room Raiders," a veritable 30-minute lobotomy.

The cardio theater will probably become a popular staple at the Strom, and those stalwart regulars who came before TV access reared its head will enjoy a nice little perk.

Those dependent on TV to work out, and live, will continue to feed a boring, mind-numbing lifestyle.

Their kids will get digitally devoured, and their passions will be shot to hell at an earlier and earlier age.

For seniors, graduation homestretch looms

Getting ready to go out into the real world not as hard as it appears

So this is it. The start of the 2005-2006 academic year is the beginning of the end for my fellow seniors and me. The light at the end of the tunnel is coming into view, and maybe to some that view looks good, but to me it's not so grand.

Unfortunately, there's no turning back the clock — time has swept me up like a stampede and is moving me toward the end whether I like it or not. Even though that light and that view are 10 months away, I have discovered that in life the future might take forever to pass, but the past seems like a mere second.

Already it feels like the pressures of the real world are creeping up on me, like ninjas or boogiemens. They get up right behind me and whisper in my ear, "You've got to start studying for the GRE or the LSAT." "You need to find a job and a place to live after college" and "You're going to have bills to pay, bills, bills, BILLS!"

Whew, that was scary. That's OK, though — it's only an editorial, only an editorial ...

Anyway, to be a little serious, I'm sure most of us worry about the exact things I mentioned



JOHN RABON

Fourth-year English student

above. A lot of people are totally prepared already. They've been living on their own, paying their own bills, looking forward to great jobs and already have a handle on this whole "life after college"

thing. The rest of us, however, are going to be getting the first taste of life come May when we walk across that stage and say goodbye to our undergraduate life.

One of the challenges I look forward to mastering in the coming year is cooking. I've rarely ever had to cook a meal for myself. This is just part of what I'm doing in preparation for my post-undergrad life.

My senior year, the way I see it, is the time to start getting ready for what awaits beyond. It's time to start studying up on how to pay my taxes, how to find a good job and how to make a good score on those graduate school tests. It looks like a big hill to climb, and it is, but all the tools are out there to make the path just a little easier.

I fully intend to take advantage of the Career Center this year, looking for help with filling out applications, typing

resumes and interviewing for jobs. I know that with their help, some cookbooks and some good advice from people I trust, I will be able to make that giant leap off the graduation stage and into my future.

By the time we leave here, so long as we're prepared for it, we can handle anything thrown our way.

One thing I like to remind myself is that life can't be so hard because everyone is doing it.

Let's get ready for the real world, but make certain to enjoy every day we have remaining in our year. Savor the memories and take every opportunity to make the best of our fourth year. It's a wonderful time, like a runner who can see the finish line ahead — we're in the homestretch of our degrees.

It's not a time for slacking, and it's not a time for worrying — now is the time we must give everything we have to come in first. When we're done, we'll look back and feel that college only took a second to pass, but the feeling we carry with us will continue on forever.

Submission Policy

Letters to the editor should be less than 300 words and include name, phone number, professional title or year and major, if a student. E-mail letters to gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu. Letters will be edited. Anonymous letters will not be published. Call the newsroom at 777-7726 for more information.

Who says you have to buy those textbooks?

Getting class material from the library proves good pocketbook saver

Most fees and expenses involved with getting a college education are unavoidable. As much as students might resent higher tuition costs and esoteric technology fees, we have to pay them. It is not my intention to complain about these costs (not even the \$45 convenience fee for using your Visa or MasterCard). I merely wish to emphasize that no amount of complaining will change the amount we pay. Buying textbooks, however, is a completely different ballgame.



SHAWN CALLIHAN

Graduate student in geography

Textbooks also represent necessary purchases, but with a little more wiggle room. Freshmen will most likely head over to the Russell House and purchase their books for perhaps \$400. However, as freshmen lug nearly 200 pounds of textbooks back to their dorms, they will probably start to wonder if there isn't a better way to do it. Some solemnly vow that next semester they will pay less for their textbooks.

For some, that quest becomes an obsession. Comparison-shopping is the most obvious way to find the cheapest used textbook available — but buyers beware. This semester I decided to compare the used prices on my "Introduction to Linear Algebra" book at two stores. At the first store, the book cost \$79.99. At the other, \$89.99. I marched triumphantly back to the first store the next day to buy my textbook and save \$10. Then came the shocker — the first store had increased the price on my textbook to \$89.99! In spite of my efforts, no money was saved and a little more time had been wasted. More savvy students will surpass my meager efforts by spending hours scouring Internet booksellers for the best deal.

A few years ago I tried a different tactic. Why not team up with another student in my class and go in on the book together? This technique can be rewarding, especially if you have class with a roommate. For me, the results were less than encouraging. For the first half of the semester this worked well, but I ran into difficulties when the other person stopped coming to class. I still felt obligated to share the textbook with this person, but that meant regular trips to visit someone I hardly knew. For me, the hassle exceeded the financial savings, and I have never tried it again.

Fortunately, I discovered a superior tactic next semester that I continue to take advantage of. I only share it now because, as a graduate student, I have nearly reached the end of my textbook-buying days. One day as I wandered through the library, I stumbled upon a copy of the very same textbook I had purchased for a class a year ago. Curious, I decided to search for some of the other books I had recently purchased. The library had all but one (note: I went to a different university for my undergraduate studies, so I cannot vouch for USC's library resources).

Come next semester, I triumphantly went to the library and checked out my textbooks. I had finally beaten the system! In celebration, I got five parking tickets that semester.