

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN

Instant replay has no place dragging out college football games



Southern California's Dwayne Jarrett, right, outruns Notre Dame's Ambrose Wooden on Saturday.

Last weekend's epic thrillers rank among game's best days ever

Upon further review, instant replay is a bad idea.

It is ironic that the best game of the year, more like the best game of the new century, took place without the use of instant replay.

Southern Cal's 34-31 victory against Notre Dame was thrilling from start to finish.



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Because the Trojans were the visiting team and with Notre Dame being an independent, Trojan coach Pete Carroll was given the option of whether replay would be used. Believing that replay disrupts the game, Carroll chose against it.

The experiment began in the Big Ten last year and was adopted by nine of the 11 major Division I football conferences, including the SEC, for use this season. The

NCAA will soon decide whether to make instant replay a permanent fixture of the game.

Let's hope they do not.

The most common mantra of those supporting replay is that it is about "getting it right." I find this laughable, because the NCAA fails to institute a playoff system for determining a true national champion. They want to get individual plays right, but they can't even make sure they get the entire season right.

Southern Cal is pretty familiar with this concept. After finishing the 2003 season ranked No. 1 in both major polls, the BCS computers chose to rank them third, thus locking them out of the national championship game. The Trojans were forced to share the title with LSU that year.

Another major issue I have is the same one that Pete Carroll has — it disrupts the flow of the game. Televising a game disrupts it enough, and replay threatens to make it unbearable. Television is a must for college football fanatics, but

a line has to be drawn at some point. Imagine the following scenario: A team scores a touchdown, then kicks the extra point, cue commercial, after commercial the team kicks off to the other team, cue another commercial (this actually happens quite often), after this commercial, play resumes, then cue an instant replay review.

Another flaw with replay is that it still does not ensure the correct call is made. In the final quarter of the Georgia-Vanderbilt game Saturday, Georgia quarterback D.J. Shockley threw a pass to receiver Bryan McClendon that McClendon obviously trapped against the ground. The play was called a touchdown.

In the West Virginia-Louisville game, West Virginia attempted an onside kick while trailing 24-14. Before Louisville receiver Jimmy Riley could catch the ball, he was leveled by West Virginia players, the ball popped loose and West Virginia recovered. The referees failed to enforce a rule that states a player must be given the opportunity to field an airborne

ball. West Virginia went on to score, later winning the game in overtime.

College football has done just fine without instant replay for well more than a hundred years. The NCAA should find other ways to ensure the game is played fairly.

How about just making sure the referees know the rules and have their glasses on?

Week six of college football was one of the best in recent memory. The Southern Cal-Notre Dame game lived up to its billing as an epic battle between two tradition-rich programs. On Friday night, 56,000 people showed up in Notre Dame Stadium for the pep rally. The atmosphere during the game Saturday was electric, and Matt Leinart's last-second touchdown put him right back on track for a potential Heisman repeat. The Trojans are now likely to remain undefeated heading into the final week of the season for the inter-Los Angeles battle against UCLA.

Week 6 also proved to be a milestone for other teams trying to remain undefeated.

Penn State, a week after a strong win against Ohio State, fell to Michigan in the Big House, 25-27, on a last second touchdown pass by Michigan quarterback Chad Henne.

Alabama struggled against Ole Miss before kicking a last-second field goal to win 10-7.

UCLA trailed Washington State 21-0 in the first half. UCLA quarterback Drew Olson threw for five touchdowns passes for the Bruins, who rallied for a 44-41 overtime win, which included a 17-point fourth quarter.

Week 7 matchups:

Texas vs Texas Tech: Vince Young and the second-ranked

Green's Top 10 College Football Picks

1. Southern California
2. Texas
3. Virginia Tech
4. Georgia
5. UCLA
6. Alabama
7. Texas Tech
8. LSU
9. Penn State
10. Notre Dame

Laura-Joyce Gough / THE GAMECOCK

Longhorns face their toughest test since defeating Ohio State in week two. Texas Tech

averages more points per game than many basketball teams.

Prediction: Texas 47 Texas Tech 35

LSU vs Auburn: Auburn has returned to form since stumbling against Georgia Tech in week one. LSU is coming off a huge win against the Florida Gators. The winner will challenge Alabama later in the season for a spot in the SEC championship game in Atlanta.

Prediction: Auburn 27 LSU 21

Alabama vs Tennessee: It has been several years since

Alabama was the higher ranked team heading into the annual "third week in October" rivalry against Tennessee. Tennessee's offensive woes continue after being exposed by Georgia two weeks ago. Alabama is trying to find a playmaker to replace injured wide receiver Tyrone Prothro.

Prediction: Alabama 17 Tennessee 12

UCLA vs Oregon State: UCLA had been the surprise of the Pac Ten this season. Oregon State at 4-2 presents a difficult challenge for the Bruins. Many points will be scored.

Prediction: UCLA 42 Oregon State 36

Southern Cal vs Washington: Washington is a far cry from the program that once dominated the Pac Ten. Don't expect the Trojans to stumble against the Huskies.

Prediction: Southern Cal 58 Washington 17

Week 5 predictions: 4-2 Overall: 22-9

Green's Heisman Watch List

1. Reggie Bush
Southern California Running Back
2. Matt Leinart
Southern California Quarterback
3. Vince Young
Texas Quarterback
4. Maurice Drew
UCLA Running back
5. LenDale White
Southern California Running back

Laura-Joyce Gough / THE GAMECOCK

All I know is Kentucky is really, really bad

1. Will Sidney Rice continue his streak of consecutive games with a touchdown reception?

If you're wondering, this question has officially reached superstition status. I honestly feel that if I don't include it and Sidney Rice fails to catch a touchdown pass, it will be my fault. Therefore I will continue to include this question until further notice.

Anyway, Sidney will continue to get more and more attention from defenses each week. Luckily, Vanderbilt is ranked No. 11 in the conference in pass defense. The only team in the SEC that is worse defending the pass than Vanderbilt is Kentucky.

Have I mentioned Kentucky is horrible? What? Two of my previous three columns were dedicated to pointing that out? Oh, OK, thanks.

2. Is this the same old Vanderbilt?

Vanderbilt started 4-0 and had Gamecock Assistant Sports Editor Alex Riley driving the Official Vanderbilt Bandwagon down Assembly Street. Since then, they have been 0-3 with a loss to Middle Tennessee State University. That's a kick in the

5 Questions with Jake Broom

Third-year political science student

VANDERBILT

pants.

Vanderbilt is led by senior quarterback Jay Cutler, who was voted by the coaches as preseason All-SEC first team. Can you imagine how Jay Cutler must feel? Being an All-SEC quarterback playing for Vanderbilt is like being Emeril and getting a job cooking in the GMP. It's like Eva Longoria being in an arranged marriage to Drew Carey. It's like ... OK, I'll stop.

3. Does Homecoming actually matter?

I've never really understood Homecoming. It only serves as a distraction, and other than an excuse to make T-shirts and coozies with things such as "Cocktoberfest" and "Spurs

and Struts" printed on them, I see no point. (Quick tangent: Has anybody ever actually paid money for a coozy? It seems like twice a week, I'm going to the Russell House and somebody is shoving a coozy in my face. Listen, if I wanted a coozy, I'd come get it from you. I don't need anything else separating me from Pandini's. Not you, not your fliers and certainly not your coozies.)

4. Have we found the right combination on the offensive line?

The starting lineup of Jabari Levey, Freddy Saint-Preux, Chris White, Na'Shan Goddard and Jamon Meredith produced the best performance of the year against Kentucky. I think the most important word in that sentence was "Kentucky."

If USC played Kentucky every week, our offensive line would be full of All-Americans.

The only problem is that when Carolina plays teams with above-average defensive fronts, Blake Mitchell looks about as comfortable in the pocket as an emo dude trying on his first pair of women's jeans. (What is the deal with that? I might have to dedicate an entire column to this

phenomenon at some point in time. Don't say I didn't warn you.) If they don't continue the improvement big-time, Tennessee's defensive line might actually eat him alive on national television.

I hope USC has found the right combination, and so does Blake Mitchell's ankle.

5. What will Syvelle Newton do next?

Syvelle Newton has gone from backup wide receiver to backup quarterback to starting quarterback to starting wide receiver to backup quarterback to backup tailback all in a matter of three seasons.

On Saturday, there is a good chance that he could throw a pass, catch a pass, hand the ball off and receive a hand off, all in the same game.

Carolina football hasn't seen versatility like that since Steve Tanneyhill won National Mullet of the Year, wrestled a rabid bear to the death, cured the common cold and led the Gamecocks to a victory all in one Saturday afternoon.

OK, I made that last sentence up.

TURMAN • CONTINUED FROM 6

Vanderbilt is on the slate, and Turman is excited about the contest.

"It's a game that we really want to win," he said. "Especially the seniors; it's our last Homecoming football game, so it's going to be a special game for us."

If the game gets close and it comes down to one play at the end, Turman, who has never backed down from a challenge, knows exactly what he wants to do with the ball.

"Call a dive play, y'know, just a straight-ahead run. Give me the ball and let me run behind a stack of guys. You know, I'm down for that."

When Carolina looks for its fourth win of the season and second consecutive victory Saturday, No. 32 will be, as always, a pillar of stability ready for whatever the Commodores might throw his way.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocksp@vum.sc.edu

ON THE COVER

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