

■ In my opinion

SHAWN MILLER
FULL-COURT PRESS

ESPN's bias leans in East's direction

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You suck!

That is what I would say to Lee Corso, Kirk Herbstreit, Chris Fowler and the rest of ESPN's "College GameDay" given the chance.

The Oregon/USC game was not chosen as the host site for Saturday's "College GameDay." Not only would the University benefit, but so would the city and the Pacific-10 Conference.

What are the reasons for not visiting Eugene Saturday for a conference opener featuring the two-time defending champions and top-ranked USC against the quick-striking, dynamic Oregon Ducks offense?

Ummm ... the game doesn't feature a marquee ... never mind. It does include the No. 1 team in the nation. Maybe it is because Corso doesn't know where Eugene is. Nope, he asked that question in 2000, the only time "GameDay" visited the state.

It certainly isn't for a lack of excitement or explosion, as both offenses are averaging more than 40 points and nearly 500 yards per game.

And don't give me crap about the economy and bringing hope to Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. It's a terrible thing that happened and my prayers are with everyone that has been afflicted, but how disgusting is it when it is used as an excuse and/or as a public-relations move.

Instead of a trip to the sunny Pacific Northwest, the show will be broadcast from Baton Rouge, La., where LSU hosts point-spread-killing Tennessee.

I bet the top reason for "GameDay" spending Saturday in Louisiana is to allow Corso extra time to come up with those catch phrases such as, "Yo" and "Not so fast, my friend."

There have been rumors floating about the verbal agreement that ESPN had with the two schools, stating that if both were undefeated at this time the show would air from Eugene.

Whether that is true isn't the issue; the real topic is the lack of respect the Pac-10 receives from the national media. For years, West Coast teams have had to put up with poor rankings, minimum coverage and a general bias. That trend has slowly shifted with the emergence of USC as a national power, but nonetheless hasn't evened out.

Of the 18 games listed on last year's tour schedule, only three games were broadcast west of the Midwest. Besides the two in Los Angeles, the show visited Utah in week 12. So far this season, the trend continues without a visit to the West Coast.

Had "GameDay" visited the Duck state, it would have given the world a front seat to the embarrassment that USC is about to feel. Actually, with all kidding aside, the game should be closer than most media outlets suggest. I wouldn't be surprised to see the shocker pasted all over the covers of various newspapers — just not on "College GameDay."

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