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The BCS and Florida Election Officials

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Now that the state of Florida has released its incompetence and corruption from behind the facade of palm trees and beautiful beaches the true story behind the voting at the BCS can be told. The same people who control the voting in Palm Beach County, and indeed those who exercise the imprecise art of counting in Florida, are the same people who control the mysterious BCS voting on college football.

The forces behind the computers are Florida election officials. Now all is explained. This is why there is no "C" in the BCS.

The confusion over who is two, three, four, or whatever, is qualitatively no different than trying to figure out which circle to darken on a Palm Beach County ballot.

Think about it. In the BCS rankings last week Florida State was ranked in front of Miami. Each team had lost one game, and indeed in the case of Florida State the one loss was to Miami. This is why clearly Florida State should be ranked ahead of Miami. How could this be?

First, has anyone ever seen the actual BCS ranking configuration. Reliable sources tell me that this system carries the popular name of the double-butterfly cocoon. It features a series of arrows and circles placed in a semi-circle spread over four folded panels with arrows arrayed in such a way as to intersect one to three times thus making it impossible to know which team's rankings are determined by which combination of factors in the BCS system. The multi-colored spread sheet is without peer in all the digital world.

This unique, well maybe not so unique, design allows the people who run the BCS to determine the rankings according to their own priorities and at the same time leave the impression that this is "a totally objective process" run according to a borderline rational process "of weighted mathematical factors designed to scientifically determine the relative position" within the weekly rankings.

If at times this fails to reflect rational human judgement, as in the Florida State/Miami situation, it is not the fault of the people at the BCS. Rather it can be accounted for by "the marginality of human rational thought which often falls short of predetermined computer generated reality."

In short the scientific method when applied in a computer controlled environment is far superior to such a method generated through the molecules of the human brain. Something that the founding fathers of this great nation understood intuitively.

To go back to our real world example. Miami because it beat Florida State must expect to be ranked behind the Noles. This is precisely why Washington, which also has only one loss and who beat Miami, is ranked behind both Miami and Florida State. Once again the logic is impeccable.

One of the other one-loss teams is Oregon, the only team to beat Washington, and so of course this leaves Oregon ranked behind the Huskies in the BCS system as well as behind Florida State and Miami. It is only fair.

The only real confusion in using this model comes when you consider that Virginia Tech has only one loss and that was to Miami. In that case shouldn't Virginia Tech be in a dead heat with Florida State in the BCS rankings? Well, I suppose one could argue that, but then to do so would be to demand consistency, "the hobgoblin of little hard drives," as Emerson once noted, just before he was bought out by Bill Gates.

So in the end how can we explain this system. After watching the election returns over this past week is there any doubt? The BCS must be a Florida managed consortium designed by the same geniuses who handle the Florida elections. From system design to simple mathematical functions such as counting, the brains behind the Florida election processes must be the brains behind the BCS.

If you find this explanation faulty or inadequate, then how about this. The BCS has created a pseudo-objective pseudo-scientific system designed to hide the harsh realities of the college football bowl system. What counts is television ratings, alumni spending power at mid-winter festivals, and conference power within the BCS. The rankings of the BCS are precisely determined by whom the powers that run the BCS want them to be, and that is all cloaked in an array of computers and what someone recently called "fuzzy math." There is almost no need to play actual football games which in fact only serve to cause confusion among the public.

This system relieves any official within the BCS or within the intercollegiate athletic power structure of any responsibility for any irrational decisions that might be made. All decisions are rational by design and therefore by definition.

So let's not have any lawsuits. Let's cut the whining. The computers have spoken. Do the math, count the votes, and move on to New Year's Day. There is no more need to pretend that there is a "C" in the BCS, just as there is no need to argue that in Florida "your vote counts."

And if all else fails in the election, let's have Steve Spurrier take command and run Gore and Bush in and out of the White House in the same manner he now runs his quarterbacks in and out of the game.

On Sport and Society this is Dick Crepeau reminding you that you don't have to be a good sport to be a bad loser.

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