

Bowls and the B(C)S

1-2-2008

Richard C. Crepeau

University of Central Florida, richard.crepeau@ucf.edu

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/onsportandsociety>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

 Part of the [Cultural History Commons](#), [Journalism Studies Commons](#), [Other History Commons](#), [Sports Management Commons](#), and the [Sports Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Crepeau, Richard C., "Bowls and the B(C)S" (2008). *On Sport and Society*. 789.
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/onsportandsociety/789>

This Commentary is brought to you for free and open access by the Public History at STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in On Sport and Society by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact lee.dotson@ucf.edu.

SPORT AND SOCIETY FOR H-ARETE
Bowls and the B(C)S
JANUARY 2, 2008

The New Year in Sport has begun with the usual deluge of bowl games. Watching all those January 1 games is like eating too much chocolate, leaving one queasy and disoriented by sometime late in the Rose Bowl.

Luckily, the National Hockey League offered considerable relief with its Winter Classic in Buffalo. The outdoor game featuring Buffalo and Pittsburgh in Ralph Wilson Stadium in Buffalo had 71,000 plus in attendance in the midst of a snow storm with temperatures hovering at the 32-degree mark with variable, and at times gusty, winds. There was in turn snow, sleet, a rain and snow mix, and what was called "snow grains" by Ed Olczyk, one of the several commentators used by NBC. Olczyk's descriptor resonated immediately with me, and I am sure with anyone who has ever lived in a winter climate.

Indeed the entire game and snow experience resonated with me. Playing hockey outdoors is not a great idea, particularly in a snowstorm or in the sleet. It is however an event that could produce more nostalgia than New Year's Eve itself. I can remember those Minnesota days in January and February when the outdoor rinks could be found in nearly every public park in the city of Minneapolis.

Playing in the snow was a wonderful and at times frustrating experience. The snow blowing in your face and accumulating on your stick and on the ice, not to mention your eyebrows, produced a sense of heightened exhilaration. As the snow accumulated on the ice, the puck began to move in slow motion and come to a stop before it reached its appointed destination. Passing became an occult experience. At some point, depending on the rate of snowfall, the game had to be stopped. Each player would then take one of the shovels that were kept near the rink and begin the process of pushing the snow to the side. The game then resumed and the process would be repeated as necessary until the game had ended or until toes began to freeze.

You certainly didn't want to play under these conditions all the time, but there was something quite invigorating about the experience. After the game yesterday in Buffalo the players expressed similar feelings. They knew the conditions were not ideal, but for all of them the game took them back to their

childhood in the back yard, at the public parks, or on the lakes, those pre-tech facilities for hockey.

When Pittsburgh got the first goal of the game one minute into play, it came on a turnover created when a pass died in the neutral zone as a Buffalo player miscalculated the snow effect on the puck. It was a moment of great nostalgia. And at the end of the day when Sidney Crosby skated in on the goalie in the shootout at dusk with the snow swirling in the air, few could argue the point that this was a great day for hockey and memory.

Meanwhile back at the bowl games there was some excitement and considerable tedium. The college game has now turned into a marathon dance with games running beyond the four-hour mark. This is largely the function of two things: Longer commercial breaks and the fact that the game clock stops at the slightest provocation. It now takes over four hours to play sixty minutes of actual football, which of course includes time in the huddle as well as time returning to the huddle. For all those football fans who insist that football has much more action and excitement than baseball, I can only wonder what game they are watching.

There was excitement in a few bowls with the Michigan/Florida game offering the most. In addition to the excitement spread over four hours, there was the fact that the Heisman jinx found the Gators Tim Tebow. Put a target on your back and generally someone will find it. We now also know that Heisman doesn't rhyme with Capital One, Citrus, Orlando or Tebow.

Reading the Orlando newspaper accounts of the game, Lloyd Carr is the story. Mountains of praise are being heaped upon Carr as a class guy, a great coach, a molder of men, one of the great coaches of all time, a winner, and on and on. These of course are not the primary reasons he was forced to resign as head coach at Michigan shortly after losing to Ohio State for the whatever consecutive time.

The other Tim Tebow story that appeared in the Orlando paper on New Year's morning on the front page concerned the popularity of Tebow's jersey. The sale of Gator merchandise has been pushed over the \$6M mark and into the top three nationally behind only Texas and Notre Dame by massive sales of Tebow's jersey. Tim Tebow gets not a penny of the revenue generated for the University of Florida athletic enterprise and for Nike. This no doubt will help in the building of Tebow's character and offer him clear life lessons from his football experience.

Once again, the hypocrisy and greed of the NCAA in maintaining the amateur myth in the face of massive commercial exploitation of athletes is out front for all to see. It all culminates with the BCS Championship Game next week, which is NOT the National Championship game. The only National Championships in football have already been decided before Christmas.

The LSU/Ohio State game is the BCS Championship and to call it anything else is to take the "C" out of the BCS.

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.

Copyright © 2008 by Richard C. Crepeau