
ESPN Classic

Posted by Tubby Isaacs - 11-05-2008 12:27

How good is this channel? At the moment there are supertime highlights of a day's play from an old test match. This week it's England v Pakistan, 1987. Not sure which but presuming it's the one that goes down to the wire with England failing to score a quick 120 or so- Bill Athey was apparently in the vicinity of the middle when the run rate dropped.

Last week, there was an England v West Indies test from 1976. I was struck by how good a batsman Tony Greig was. I also got to see Alan Ward bowl, and he was pretty sharp. If anything the Windies bowled quicker at Ward than at Greig, particularly Roberts coming around the wicket.

Wonderful stuff.

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Tubby Isaacs - 15-05-2008 22:25

This is going to be like the art thread, though without Amor de Cosmos or a suitable foil.

Today it was the 1972 Ashes, with a very quick Dennis Lillee, a moderately quick John Snow and a swingy Geoff Arnold. Tony Greig and Snow couldn't catch. The caption told us that D'Oliveira was "unsung". Ian Chappel was out caught hooking his first ball.

No sign of Massey.

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Gyuri - 16-05-2008 00:26

Tubby,

I'd have loads of great things to say about ESPN classic (especially their replaying of old college football rivalry games prior to that year's resumption of the rivalry), but, sadly, am at a loss when it comes to cricket. I'm just happy that I realized you were writing about cricket (you were, right?).

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Inca - 16-05-2008 00:30

I usually take it for granted that Tubby is talking about cricket.

I know on the old board a lot of approving posts from people in the UK about ESPN Classic. The American one has some good stuff sometimes, but it's really predictable and boring overall. There's always old bowling (bowling!), the college football never really ventures beyond the big teams or conferences, and you can tell that they're restricted by what they can get the rights to (so no old baseball or NFL games). That, and pap like "5 Reasons You Can't Blame." But I'm happy that they're still showing "Cheap Seats."

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Gyuri - 16-05-2008 01:19

I don't mind the focus on big college football schools, probably b/c (a) I'm a Penn St. fan and like to watch their old games, and (b) it's always fun to see pro players in their college years, and that's more likely to be the case with big schools.

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Inca - 16-05-2008 03:18

I guess it's more what big schools they show. It's usually SEC or Big Ten teams, and hardly ever any Pac-10 games. That, and every single classic UCLA-USC game I've seen on there has been a USC win, when everyone knows the greatest game in that series (and the greatest college football game, in my in no way biased opinion) was the 1996 game.

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-05-2008 06:06

Tubby is talking about cricket.

The Italian version is hit or miss, but can have some great old football and cycling. Ursus minor and I watched some of the 1968 Euro semi-final the other day.

They also show the "Great Sporting Rivalries" series that sometimes turns up on Arte. This week's installment was Kip Keino v. Jim Ryun. An amazing bit of that for me was that Ryun admitted that he had no clue as to the impact of the altitude in Mexico City until a few months before the Games; his coaches had told him that it was "all psychological".

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Tubby Isaacs - 16-05-2008 11:15

All sports are welcome.

Some old American Football from the (UK) golden age of about 1982-90 would be very welcome indeed.

Joe Theismann fakes John Riggins, looks long to Downtown Charlie Brown... and shotgun to Art Monk for his 400th reception of the week!

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Re:ESPN Classic

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 16-05-2008 12:49

I don't get ESPN anymore, but when I did I enjoyed watching Penn State victories from my childhood (1983 Sugar Bowl, 1987 Fiesta Bowls, various wins over Notre Dame in the 1980s), but I acknowledge that they show a pretty limited selection of games from a fairly limited selection of schools. I too noticed that USC always seems to win on ESPNC.

I imagine, however, that they've found that the draw more viewers by showing teams that have a large nationwide alumni-base, as opposed to appealing to hardcore football fans that want to revel in the genius that was on display in the 1989 Air Force-Colorado State game (or whatever. I just made that up.)

Since my main interest in sports is sartorial, my main focus in watching old games is to make observations about the uniforms and the gear that the fans have.

I enjoyed watching the Reds 1990 World Series again. That always seemed fairly "recent" in my memory, but looking at the uniforms they wore it seems much longer ago. They were still wearing the early-1970s model tight polyester jobs and the caps were goofy. They sort of bulged out at the top of the front. Weird.

It's also remarkable how a mere 20-25 years ago, hardly any fans had team clothes of any kind and if they did, it was often sort of shoddy - like plastic-mesh back caps and screen-printed sweatshirts that and began to fade and were too small after one washing.

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