

Tunnel Vision

Written by {ga=paulcousineau}
Friday, September 21 2007 7:00 PM -

In Paul Cousineau's latest column, he hits on the East Coast bias displayed by ESPN, as they pretend the Yankees/Red Sox AL East battle is the only subplot worth covering in baseball as the playoffs approach. In addition to whoever wins the East being meaningless (both are in), Paul says that he'd like to see a little more coverage of all the great races in the NL, and of the two other really good playoff teams in the American League.



Correct me if I'm wrong after being bludgeoned over the head with the "Panic Button in Boston" talk, but the Red Sox and Yankees are really just playing for the AL East pennant, aren't they?

They're both virtually assured of being in the playoffs and who they play will be determined by the final records of the Tribe and the Angels – not the order in which they finish in the East, right?

Which is to say, whoever wins the AL East will play the team (Cleveland or Anaheim) with the worse record, while the Wild Card will play the team with the better record.

Can we get the same kind of media coverage for THAT race?

I doubt it.

Does anyone even remember that the Twins overtook the Tigers for the AL Central title last year and that the Tigers were the Wild Card?

Is this any different?

I suppose it's compelling in that it would represent a HUGE turnaround from the

Tunnel Vision

Written by {ga=paulcousineau}

Friday, September 21 2007 7:00 PM -

events of most of the season in the AL East and plays into the inferiority complex of New England, obviously nobody wants to back into the playoffs (wait, didn't the Cardinals and Tigers do that last year), and both teams figure into the conversation for Home Field advantage, but if the idea is to make it to the playoffs, both teams have essentially achieved the goal.

The way that the race is being covered, you half expect Bucky Bleepin' Dent to be added to the 40-man roster for the Yankees to bury the Red Sox on the last day of the season.

But...the Red Sox will make the playoffs, and won't face the Yankees in the first round, so what's the big deal?

It's not even that the Indians and Angels aren't being covered, as both of those divisional races are over and lack any kind of real pennant intrigue outside of the aforementioned best-record race, it's the glaring lack of coverage of EVERY legitimate race in the NL.

Are the races in the NL THAT boring (they're not) that the same attention can't be devoted to Milwaukee (who hasn't been to the postseason in 25 years) and the Cubs (who, well, you know that story) or how the Mets are falling apart and the Phillies are backing up Jimmy Rollins' preseason comments that the team in the NL East to beat plays in Philadelphia? How about the oft-overlooked West, with an extremely young D-Backs team trying to stave off the brilliant pitching staff of the Padres (of their 20 shutouts, 1 hasn't involved the bullpen...1!).

This East Coast bias will never change and maybe this is the most interesting storyline to most of the nation, but I wish that the idea of just covering sports and not sensationalizing sports became the focus of ESPN these days.

A friend had an excellent point a few weeks ago when discussing the downward spiral of ESPN. He accurately compared ESPN, and specifically SportsCenter, to devolving the sports equivalent of Entertainment Tonight...all fluff and very little meat, covering the "hot topic" of the day or the most salacious story instead of simply reporting the happenings of the sports world with no agenda or "talking head" telling me what I should think.

Tunnel Vision

Written by {ga=paulcousineau}

Friday, September 21 2007 7:00 PM -

When was the last time that you watched SportsCenter, or Baseball Tonight, for the news of the day and were completely satisfied with the tone and focus of the program?

5 years ago?

10 years ago?

Unfortunately, this will remain the status quo in Bristol until another sports entity (FOX Sports or even STO) realizes that a void exists for even-handed, rational sports coverage without the palaver getting in the way.

In the meantime, enjoy the Red Sox-Yankees "Fight to the Finish" coverage for the next week (ignorant to the idea that both are in the playoffs and are just playing for a division title) on a television near you.