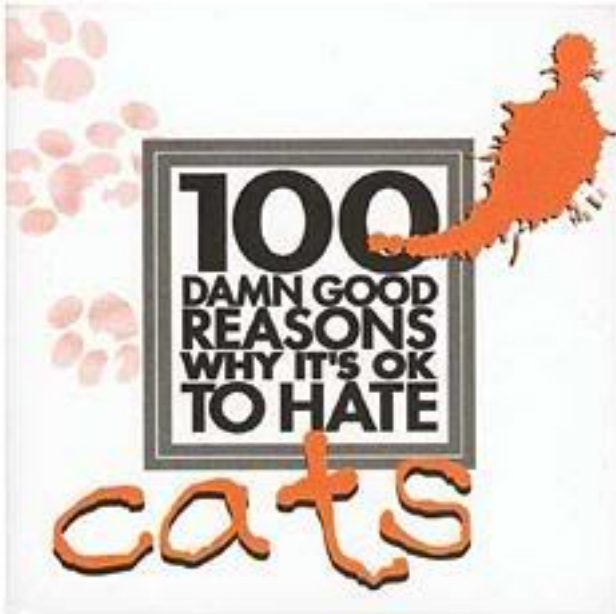


Our weekly dose of comic relief is back as Hiko checks in with his latest installment of Moot. This week Hiko talks about taking down the Christmas tree, he schemes ways to kill his girlfriend's cat without getting caught, he laments about the Buckeyes big loss Monday night, hits on Michigan's new head coach Rich Rodriguez, and calls for the Jags to win outright against the Pats on Saturday night.



OR

Year of the Cat

I finally took down the Christmas tree yesterday.

Normally, I am in no hurry to dismantle that symbol of holiday cheer, and this year was no different. But, I was forced to hasten the death of that green spiky friend due to its continued losing battle to the great evil: my girlfriend's cat, Socks.

Nary a day went by when a stroll into the living room didn't reveal bulbs

and garland strewn upon the floor. Several times, I'd be sitting, happily drinking a cerveza and watching a football game, when the tree would start shaking, as if possessed by an angry dryad, or a woody demon.

It was possessed by a demon: Socks. She had crawled up in it and was attacking it from within.

I have a little battery powered air pump which I use for inflatable mattresses. It now has a second, more vital, use: to scare that stupid feline out of the tree, behind the couch, and then down the stairs, where I can lock it up and leave it for the next 8 hours until my girlfriend gets home, asks if the cat has been locked up all day, and I reply *"Oh, she was in there?"* *I didn't even know.*
"

I don't want to say that I hate her cat, but... **I hate her cat.**

Two days ago, she committed another unspeakable act, knocking over a picture frame with her overly bushy tail, breaking the glass, slicing the photo. And no day passes without her stepping on the power button on my work laptop, allowing me to enjoy the 15 minute process of logging back on to my company's VPN?

Which, of course, effectively slaughters any project I had been working on. Doing the same thing twice is super-fun. Like this article, for instance.

Chewing up paperwork, knocking over speakers, getting into food, throwing up on the carpet, pissing on the chair...

I can't takes it no more.

Socks, it's time for you to meet with an *accident*.

She likes to climb onto the kitchen counter and nose around in the sink while my back is turned, despite the fact that she knows I will attempt to murder her if I see her up there. But what if I *accidentally* put a little tuna on switch for the garbage disposal, which rests right next to the sink? She'll be licking the switch, which *might* just flip up. That bushy tail very well could be resting near the drain, *perhaps* just close enough to cause it to catch. A sucking sound, a feline screech, and - SLURP! - down the drain.

The important thing would be ensuring that my girlfriend was home, because, were Socks found half-chewed up and quite dead in the sink, just her shocked lifeless head sticking out of the drain, she might be so bold as to accuse me. As if I would think of such a terrible thing.

Other *accidents*: "Socks just jumped onto this log while I was chopping wood." I don't know why. "Stupid cat."

"Socks ran under my lawn mower. I think she was chasing a mouse."

"Socks jumped right into the furnace. She might've been cold."

"I don't know why we're keeping acid in the house, but Socks got into it and drank the whole thing."

"Socks somehow got out and got stuck in the tiger pit at the zoo. Maybe she was trying to return to her roots."

As I write these words, I am looking at Socks. And she is looking at me.

Enjoy 2008 while you can, Socks. You just might not see 2009.

***Apparently, there was a game played on Monday night. Not just any game. The BCS National Championship Game. The only postseason game in college football that means anything. Maybe you've heard of it.

This game features the Tigers of Louisiana State and the Buckeyes of Ohio State. OSU was a one loss team coming out of the Big 10. LSU

was a two loss team coming out of the SEC.

Were these the best two teams in college football? Doubtful. But we'll never know. They only have one game, and the contestants are arbitrarily determined by polls and computers.

The national championship in college football is never - NEVER - determined on the field.

As you might've read, the Buckeyes did not win this game. They jumped out to a 10 point lead, my pessimism was actually lessened momentarily, before slowly allowing the Tigers back in, and then undergoing a full-on collapse following Robiskie's dropped TD pass and subsequent blocked FG attempt.

If Robiskie had held onto the ball, who knows where that game would've gone. OSU jumped to an early lead, then gave it up - just like the previous year against Florida. But had they managed to hang in there and recapture the lead, going up 17-10... they might've quelled their fears, calmed their nerves, and settled in for a close contest. But dropping that score and having the kick blocked - well, they were just tied then, with LSU having all the momentum and the Buckeyes scared shitless of repeating the past.

They appeared so scared of blowing it again, that they went and assured that it would happen by going away from their game: run the ball, be aggressive on D.

It was a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In retrospect, it's easy to argue that Ohio State did not belong in the NCG, that they weren't ready. I say that, the way the system is currently run, they DID belong there. And they WEREN'T ready.

Who can be after a 51 day layoff? It's like playing the first 3 rounds of the Masters in April, then playing the Final Round in June. By that time, the leader through the first 3 rounds has had plenty of time to cool off, to listen to way too much media hype, to get nervous. All momentum is gone. But the NCAA thinks it's brilliant. It's a ridiculous way to run a postseason.

Not to mention that there's only one game. If the NFL just automatically threw its 2 Number One seeds into the Superbowl each year, then you'd have tons of past Superbowl Champs stuck in meaningless bowl games.

Thus, this vote-in-the-contestants shit that the NCAA insists on prolonging very rarely ends up giving us a championship between the best two teams. Most argue that USC and Georgia were the best two teams at the end of the season, but, due to the way college runs its show, neither of them played in a meaningful game. They got to prance around in the dog and pony show - the pre-combine combine - that is the BCS bowl games.

Had there been an 8 team playoff... well, who knows?

There's no guarantee that the BCS National Championship Game wouldn't have been another mismatch... but at least we'd know that the best two teams were there; that they *deserved* to be there.

And maybe OSU is one of those teams, having survived their first two playoff combatants, walking into the NCG with confidence, on a roll.

And maybe they're not, having been exposed as nothing but the champion of a weak conference, not yet ready to play with the big boys. But then, at least, their shame is less. NFL Wild Card teams lose early each year. They don't throw Tampa Bay and New England into the Superbowl and then have the whole world gawk at the embarrassment. No, Tampa loses early, people think of them as a team on the rise that isn't quite ready for the big time, and they all move on.

I was scared this might happen. Ohio State had been exposed versus Illinois. They played a weak schedule against a weak conference. They weren't ready to face an LSU in THE National Championship Game. I would've been shocked had this Todd Boeckman-led team been able to pull it out.

But that's not Ohio State's fault. That's not Jim Tressel's fault. THAT Buckeye team shouldn't have been just magically tossed into the End-All Be-All of bowl games without a previous test after a nearly 2 month layoff.

That's the SYSTEM's fault.

And that System is actually making me lose interest in College Football - the DUMBEST of all the sports leagues. A league where the regular season is all-important, and the post-season means almost nothing.

Who do I have to kill to get this changed? Will Socks do? Please - point me the way.

***Anyone else feeling West Virginia University's pain?

They were within one game of an appearance in the National Championship Game, and they blew it. At home. To a 28 point underdog. A lot of that blame has to be laid at the feet of the Head Coach.

So what does that Head Coach do? He bolts for Michigan.

Yep, Rich Rodriguez is the new Wolverine Head Coach. And it's obvious why he took the job. It's because... because...

Huh. Rodriguez grew up in West Virginia. He played at WVU. He graduated from WVU. He coached there for the last 7 seasons. His team was perennially the cream of the crop in the Big East, which - sorry - is every bit as strong as the Big 10 has been lately. He had a passionate fan base that would've endured losing seasons with little criticism. He had a system and a staff already in place. He could've

stayed there forever.

He left that why?

For Michigan?

Yes, Michigan is the more name-brand college. They have more money. And recruiting on a national level might be a little easier at Michigan.

But it's not like West Virginia is a nobody. And, of recent, they have been every bit as good as that Michigan squad. If they win that last game against Pitt, they're in the NCG. If they are an annual Top 10 team with Championship expectations, isn't that an "elite program"?

He already admitted that had they beaten Pitt and gotten to the NCG that he would not have gone to Michigan. So what changed your mind? Your own incompetence? Felt you went and soiled your own Big East rep? Had to get out and take the cash before everyone identified the hoax that you are?

Per [Wikipedia](#): *The announcement of his departure came just one year after Rodriguez last renegotiated his contract with West Virginia, and was made despite his stated long-term commitment to the*

*Mountaineers. After being considered for the head coaching job at Alabama in 2006, he stated to the media, **"When the details (of the new contract with WVU) come out, you'll see that I'm committed to West Virginia University for a very, very long time."***

Time flies for Rich Rodriguez.

Also loved this little tidbit: *On December 16, 2007, Rodriguez informed players at West Virginia that he was leaving to succeed Lloyd Carr as the University of Michigan head football coach. Rodriguez's original resignation letter, which **he left with a graduate assistant to deliver to WVU officials** shortly after meeting with his players, listed January 3, 2008, as his resignation date, however he subsequently made it clear that he would not be coaching WVU in its January 2 appearance in the 2008 Fiesta Bowl vs the University of Oklahoma. Some press reports suggested that*

the resignation letter was a ploy intended to put WVU officials into a position of "firing" Rodriguez before the bowl game, allowing him to escape the \$4 million buyout clause in his seven-year contract with WVU

. On December 18, 2007, Rodriguez informed the university that his resignation would instead be effective at midnight that night.

*This has been exacerbated by possible conflicts between Rodriguez and the new President of WVU, Mike Garrison, and the potential violation of NCAA rules committed by Rodriguez in **contacting a recruit he had already made for WVU about his move to Michigan while still employed by WVU***

Big Blue - Are ya proud of your new coach? He sounds like a great guy.

Rodriguez said he left because it just "*felt right*", which is complete and utter bullshit that translates into "*they paid me a lot more money*". He also said that he would have a recruiting advantage. As if a Top 5 program positioned between the football hotbeds of Western PA, Ohio, and Virginia should have extreme difficulties with that recruiting thing. Everyone in the world wanted Noel Devine, didn't they? And WVU got 'im. Sounds like you're not struggling in that regard.

So, when you leave your home state and alma mater and elite program for a mostly lateral move (and no one will convince me that Michigan is a superior program in any way other than brand name and some cash), and your only real reason is to go from an obscene amount of money to a disgusting amount of money, well then, my friend, you are a *piece of shit*.

Excellent. I already despise Michigan's new coach.

I'm not alone. You think all those WVU fans turned out at the facilities to wish him good luck? Or maybe to tear his liver out with tweezers?

I have a lot of relatives in West Virginia. They seem to use terms like "scumbag" and "rat bastard" and "sock-cucker" quite a bit. Know that you have sympathy from Cleveland, West Virginians. We here also know what it feels like to be betrayed.

I welcome you to Michigan, Rich Rodriguez. It was hard to hate Lloyd Carr. He was a likeable guy - and he was so ineffective.

But I can hate you. Oh, yes I can.

And I look forward to watching your spread offense fizzle and sputter as everyone in the world starts running it and the Big 10 starts figuring out how to squash it, just like they did with all those other gimmicky schemes (see: *Shoot, Run and*). Illinois already runs the spread. By the time you get the right personnel in Michigan to run your cute l'il offense - the entire Big 10 will know how to stop it.

And since you didn't grow up in Michigan, you didn't go to Michigan, you didn't play for Michigan - you are an Outsider. Lose to Ohio State a couple times and see where that gets ya. Have a losing season, and get your resume ready for Prairie View.

I look forward to the demise of your career.

***'Course, Rich Rodriguez is still 10 times less despicable than Mr. Bobby Petrino. And 10,000 times less despicable than the former owner of a purple NFL team.

***The New England Patriots are an incomparable 16-0 in the regular season. It's never been done before, and now they are 3 short wins from completing the greatest season ever in the NFL.

Having watched many Patriots games this year - how can you escape them? - I am so impressed by New England that I have this to say about them:

They are the biggest frauds since [Kenneth Lay](#) .

I don't want to hear about how this is the "greatest team of all time" - those bastards are probably no better than the 3rd best team in the AFC.

Call me a Hater if you want, but I truly believe that the Patriots will be 16-1 when the Jacksonville Jaguars come to town and stomp all over their ass.