

From: Graham Hackney
Sent: 13 December 2003 11:22
To: BBC Charter Review
Subject: From a sport lover

Dear Sir

An institution which welcomes public opinion is always a positive step in my view, as it keeps them in touch with the customer needs. I only have one main worry about the BBC, and that is the continual demise in live sport shown by the corporation. However important Sue Barker tries to make the latest swimming/gymnastics/darts/show jumping event that the BBC is showing, I have little interest in these when I can simply pick up my Sky digital remote and turn to a lunchtime premiership football match (today for instance it is the Manchester derby). I know I am not alone in my decision of program, and it must frustrate the BBC that their sports coverage has shown such an alarming dip in quality (of sport and presenting I'm afraid).

When I was growing up I can remember my Dad shouting at the TV as yet another 5 nations victory for Wales over England was confirmed, and he was watching this on BBC. This year however, both my Dad and I have watched England primarily on Sky, and this has been the case for a while now.

Unbelievably the BBC has started to copy Sky, an inconceivable thought only 20 years ago when the BBC was 'the' television corporation of the world. I reference the new style of football results reporting at 4:45pm on Grandstand. Jeff Stelling and the boys on Gillette Soccer Saturday led the way, and BBC have taken the idea, it is a good one however.

Jonny Wilkinson is now a household name, and nothing has please me more this year than that drop goal, but the spoiling factor is that we had to watch it on ITV. Terrible, awful ITV with its amateur coverage, pathetic commentating and a shocking choice of guests (David Sole is possibly the most biased person ever in the history of commentating, he was a disgrace).

Knowing that the World Cup would be forced onto a terrestrial channel, how I wished I could have watched John Inverdale host the shows instead of, instead of... I've no idea who the ITV host was, just shows doesn't it.

My solution is simple, but possibly implausible. PLEASE INTRODUCE ADVERTS. But don't show them as ITV do, as England and Manchester United before them are parading the trophy!?!?!?! But show them only between the programs.

All this money could buy you back sport that the majority want to watch (and are desperate to watch on BBC), you could then have BBC 1 as the news, children, soap, comedy channel with adverts between each program, while BBC2 could be the sport, film, documentary channel, which would mean less adverts due to the nature of the length of the programs.

I hate adverts but could cope with them if it meant the making the BBC good again (and so we wouldn't have another abhorrent sports personality of the year show like the 2002 show which was just one long self promotion advert with 20 minutes actual sports footage - The Boat Race is NOT that important).

Thanks

Graham Hackney