

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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5 Questions: Fox Sports' FIFA Women's World Cup Exec Producer David Neal

The corruption crackdown of FIFA may be underway, but it's full steam ahead for Fox Sports' unprecedented volume of coverage of this year's Women's World Cup, which kicks off Sat (June 6). Frankly, it will be difficult to miss: all 52 games are being aired by Fox Sports (16 on Fox, 29 on FS1 and 7 on FS2). Then there are 200 hours of additional programming, as well as replays and docs on Fox Soccer Plus, temporarily rebranded to over the tourney. The net cleverly tapped veteran producer David Neal, who spent 30 years at NBC Sports (including 9 Olympics), as executive producer of Fox's FIFA World Cup production, which commences with the Women's tournament. Here's Neal on what to expect during the month-long event.

Any ratings expectations going into the tournament? It's interesting. As a producer I don't worry about the ratings so much. We're certainly happy about the fact that this is an event in our time zone with featured matches predominantly in primetime, many of them on the broadcast networks—all those things bode very well. But I hesitate to look at my crystal ball because you really can't project.

What are some of production highlights that will get people talking? What's really exciting is that this is the largest Women's World Cup in the history of FIFA. It's expanded to 52 games from 36 four years ago. It's expanded from 16 teams to 24... One of my fun facts is that the number of games we'll have on broadcast television for a single World Cup is more than the aggregate total that have ever been covered in the United States ever before. That's a pretty bold statement about the level of commitment to this event. And it's all reflective of the fact that it's the single most important women's sports event on the planet.

What kind of production stage did you put together down there? I'm sitting actually in a state-of-the-art broadcast facility that a month ago was an empty storefront here in Vancouver on the waterfront, on the harbor, adjacent to this magnificent convention center built just in time for the Olympics in 2010. And we have created a two-level stage, which is just breathtaking, because first of all along with the spectacular scenic location to begin with, the design and creation of this set are in keeping with the distinctive Pacific Northwest architecture and incredibly functional for us—it's bi-level, so we've got multiple stages.

Is Vancouver the only Canadian city with a stage? There are six cities in Canada where the competition will be, and we'll have a presence in all six. But you choose one, because first of all that's where the broadcast center is, so HBS, which is the host broadcaster, they have chosen Vancouver to be the location of their IBCC, or International Broadcast center. So logically you want to be

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where the host is basing their operations, and plus, you want to be where the final's going to be played, here in Vancouver. **Any challenges shooting in Canada poses to your team?** Well the vast distances, for sure. And the logistical challenge to move production and commentator teams across the country. The furthest distance, from here to Vancouver to the Maritimes, is almost 2500 miles, and just moving people and equipment that distance more than once is certainly a challenge. But at the same time our technical team is accomplished as you can find it in the business, so I'm completely confident they'll have us covered in every way we need to be. *Neal chats more about the production at Cablefax.com.*

Pole Attachment: NCTA and ACA want to make sure that the FCC's initiative to lower pole attachment rates is still good following the agency's Title II net neutrality order. The groups warned the Commission prior to its Feb reclassification vote that cable ops might be subject to higher pole attachment fees as telecom providers. Utility pole owners have been notifying cable ops that their pole attachment fees will go up by as much as 80% under the telecom formula, the cable groups said in comments filed with the FCC Thurs. They urged the Commission to act on their petitions to reduce the telecom pole fee to enable providers to better compete.

Merger Survival Guide: As merger mania continues to make its way through the industry, here's some food for thought: in 50-75% of mergers, the anticipated results aren't achieved. That startling stat from **Gagen MacDonald** was one of several rattled off by **George Washington Univ's Lawrence Parnell** at the **Association of Cable Communicators'** annual Forum conference Fri. And he said mergers can be even tougher for service industries whose customers are used to certain ways of doing things. What goes wrong? Most of the time it stems from cultural differences between the two companies, Parnell said, citing the "rock 'n roll" style of **AOL** and "conservative" approach of **Time Warner** as one example of culture clash. Other problems in that infamous merger included changing technology. When a merger review takes 12-18 months, stuff happens. "Have the courage to say we've got to adjust," he advised. When problems arise after a merger, it's the communications professionals who have to solve them. Parnell, assoc prof and program director in strategic public relations, has a checklist for M&A (or any other big restructure). **Pre-Merger:** Focus on how it will be announced, who will announce it and make sure to keep the internal stakeholders up-to-date. **During Merger:** Once the merger is announced, detail the management structure ASAP. Make sure internal resources are being leveraged to keep employees informed—that can include online forums, but also traditional town halls. **Post-Merger:** This is where most mergers fail. Make sure you've identified milestones and are delivering on them. If you're not providing the value promised, adjust. When it comes to cultures, work to identify the best of both cultures. Communication continues to be key, with Parnell saying that companies that prioritize communications being 13% more likely to succeed. "We are in the storytelling business," he told the room. "If there is market benefits, humankind benefits, global benefits, that is the story to tell."

Speaking of Mergers....: Don't try to tell NCTA's **Michael Powell** that **Altice's** \$9.1bln purchase of **Suddenlink** is a sign that Title II won't hurt investment in the US. "The kind of investment we're talking about is capital flowing to build better networks to more people in the country and more affordable prices," Powell told reporters last week. "I don't think a foreign company coming into the US should be cited as what you're hoping to achieve with the net neutrality order." Title II makes new entry harder, he argued. "It puts them up against incumbents who've played the regulatory game for 100 years." Powell threw out **Verizon** buying **AOL** at \$4.4bln, saying it could have spent that money on expanding FiOS.

Vodafone/Liberty Global: Fresh from helping engineer the **Charter-Time Warner Cable** deal, **John Malone** has its eyes on UK's wireless carrier **Vodafone**. The telco confirmed Fri that it's in talks with **Liberty Global** around a possible asset exchange. The company stressed that talks are in early stage and that it's not aiming for a combination of the 2 companies. The potential transaction could enable Liberty Global to diversify its offerings, providing wireless services in addition to pay-TV, wireline and broadband services. The pay-TV/wireless trend isn't new. **AT&T-DirecTV's** pending merger is expected to allow the combined company to offer better broadband, video and wireless services. And the Liberty Global-backed Charter's TWC merger could potentially enable wireless MVNO services thanks to TWC's partnership with **Verizon Wireless**.

ACC Beacon Awards: **Univision's** "Univision Contigo's Samana de la Salud" took home **ACC's** Golden Beacon Thurs night. It's the association's highest honor, recognizing the campaign or initiative that has made an impact within the industry, while enhancing cable's image. Univision's winning campaign informed the Hispanic community about health and wellness topics, and included free health screenings and online health-related tools. At a ceremony during its annual Forum conference, ACC presented 49 Beacon Awards representing work by MSOs, cable systems, programmers and associations.

Cablefax Week in Review

Company	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS				
DIRECTV:	DTV	91.68	0.70%	5.74%
DISH:	DISH	75.51	6.67%	3.59%
ENTRAVISION:	EVC	7.06	4.59%	8.95%
GRAY TELEVISION:	GTN	15.78	(1.13%)	40.89%
MEDIA GENERAL:	MEG	16.97	2.48%	1.43%
NEXSTAR:	NXST	57.69	1.41%	11.39%
SINCLAIR:	SBGI	30.39	1.17%	11.07%

Company	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MSOS				
CABLEVISION:	CVC	24.06	(1.84%)	16.57%
CHARTER:	CHTR	173.97	(2.82%)	4.41%
COMCAST:	CMCSA	58.69	0.38%	1.16%
COMCAST SPCL:	CMCSK	58.36	0.62%	1.37%
GCI:	GNCMA	16.27	1.24%	18.33%
GRAHAM HOLDING:	GHC	1069.03	(0.18%)	23.77%
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	LBRDA	52.68	(2.28%)	5.17%
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	LBTYA	55.24	(3.98%)	10.02%
SHAW COMM:	SJR	21.90	(0.77%)	(18.86%)
SHENTEL:	SHEN	32.17	2.35%	2.94%
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TIME WARNER CABLE:	TWC	178.06	(1.56%)	17.10%

Company	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
PROGRAMMING				
21ST CENTURY FOX:	FOXA	33.30	(0.89%)	(13.3%)
AMC NETWORKS:	AMCX	79.93	1.71%	25.34%
CBS:	CBS	61.33	(0.63%)	10.82%
CROWN:	CRWN	4.32	10.49%	22.03%
DISCOVERY:	DISCA	34.45	1.50%	0.00%
DISNEY:	DIS	110.30	(0.06%)	17.10%
GRUPO TELEVISIVA:	TV	37.06	(2.09%)	8.81%
HSN:	HSNI	69.32	3.29%	(8.79%)
LIONSGATE:	LGF	35.40	6.98%	10.56%
MSG:	MSG	86.40	1.14%	14.80%
SCRIPPS INT:	SNL	68.73	2.57%	(8.69%)
STARZ:	STRZA	41.67	(0.69%)	40.30%
TIME WARNER:	TWX	84.90	0.50%	(0.61%)
VIACOM:	VIA	68.39	1.24%	(9.42%)
WWE:	WWE	14.88	4.06%	20.58%

Company	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TECHNOLOGY				
ADDVANTAGE:	AEY	2.30	(4.56%)	(5.74%)
AMDOCS:	DOX	56.27	2.59%	20.60%
AMPHENOL:	APH	57.14	0.16%	6.19%
AOL:	AOL	50.09	0.16%	8.49%
APPLE:	AAPL	128.65	(2.93%)	16.55%
ARRIS GROUP:	ARRS	33.90	2.70%	12.29%
AVID TECH:	AVID	17.85	0.22%	25.62%
BLNDER TONGUE:	BDR	0.81	20.90%	(69.89%)
BROADCOM:	BRCM	54.35	(4.4%)	25.43%
CISCO:	CSCO	28.58	(2.49%)	2.73%
COMMSCOPE:	CTV	26.22	(0.11%)	2.26%
CONCURRENT:	CCUR	6.47	5.22%	(8.73%)
CONVERGYS:	CVG	25.12	1.17%	23.32%
CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	32.57	4.42%	29.92%
ECHOSTAR:	SATS	51.47	2.73%	(1.96%)
GOOGLE:	GOOG	533.33	0.23%	1.32%
HARMONIC:	HLIT	7.05	1.44%	0.57%

Company	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
INTEL:	INTC	31.84	(7.6%)	(12.26%)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	IACI	76.59	2.02%	25.99%
JDSU:	JDSU	13.11	2.22%	(4.48%)
LEVEL 3:	LVT	54.78	(0.99%)	10.94%
MICROSOFT:	MSFT	46.14	(1.54%)	(0.67%)
NETFLIX:	NFLX	633.22	1.47%	85.36%
NIELSEN:	NLSN	44.76	(0.51%)	0.07%
RENTRAK:	RENT	68.97	1.56%	(5.29%)
SEACHANGE:	SEAC	7.58	9.86%	18.81%
SONY:	SNE	30.05	(5.26%)	46.80%
SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	4.42	(4.95%)	6.51%
TIVO:	TIVO	10.64	1.04%	(10.14%)
UNIVERSAL ELEC:	UEIC	53.11	2.49%	(18.33%)
VONAGE:	VG	4.93	6.25%	29.40%
YAHOO:	YHOO	42.81	(0.3%)	(15.24%)

Company	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TELCOS				
AT&T:	T	34.57	0.09%	2.92%
CENTURYLINK:	CTL	32.18	(3.19%)	(18.7%)
TDS:	TDS	29.90	0.71%	18.42%
VERIZON:	VZ	47.23	(4.47%)	0.96%

Index	Ticker	6/05 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MARKET INDICES				
DOW:	DJI	17849.46	(0.9%)	0.15%
NASDAQ:	IXIC	5068.46	(0.03%)	7.02%
S&P 500:	GSPC	2092.83	(0.69%)	1.65%

WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. BLNDER TONGUE:	0.81	20.90%
2. CROWN:	4.32	10.49%
3. SEACHANGE:	7.58	9.86%
4. LIONSGATE:	35.40	6.98%
5. DISH:	75.51	6.67%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. INTEL:	31.84	(7.6%)
2. SONY:	30.05	(5.26%)
3. SPRINT NEXTEL:	4.42	(4.95%)
4. ADDVANTAGE:	2.30	(4.56%)
5. VERIZON:	47.23	(4.47%)

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