It's the talk of the week. The Michigan/Florida soap opera. Our very own Gary Benz and Mike Furlan have different points of view on this debate, and both have strong arguments backing their cases. In his latest, Gary responds to Furls column from this morning - agreeing with him in some areas, but ultimately stating that the BCS made the right call.

I'll take the bait on this one and play Dan Aykroyd to fellow contributor Mike Furlan's Jane Curtin and his column about the hypocrisy of the BCS voters.

If you haven't yet read Mike’s column, please do so. As Swerb notes, it's a good read . But Mike, you ignorant slut, your underlying argument has more holes than the Cleveland Browns offensive line. In line with Michigan coach LLLLLoyd Carr, you argue that had USC won, Michigan would have been third and Florida fourth. Consequently, moving Florida above Michigan resulted because USC lost and because the voters didn't want to see an Ohio State-Michigan rematch.

That may be accurate, but it's not the same thing as being true. I know most people feel that way, but in the end it's still speculation, an argument with no definitive resolution. To my knowledge, the voters weren't required to offer any sort of explanation when they made their votes and I've yet to see a definitive poll that confirms this premise.

But let's assume it is true, so what? The ranking of Michigan and Florida at that point is completely irrelevant. Whether third or fourth, Michigan still ends up in the Rose Bowl. Whether third or fourth, Florida would have been in the Sugar Bowl as SEC champ. In other words, there is no urgency to distinguish anything below the top two teams at that point in large

part because of the various affiliations between conferences and bowl games is what will determine the rest of the bowl lineups, not the rankings.

In that context, then, arguing that because Florida supposedly wouldn't have jumped over Michigan had USC won is akin to arguing that had the Indians not traded Coco Crisp they would have ended up in third place last year rather than fourth.

And I still don't get the argument that because Florida was below Michigan following the OSU-Michigan game, whatever Florida does afterward shouldn't matter because Michigan was done with its season. But the fact is Florida was not done. They still had quality games left on their schedule and thus should have been and were afforded the opportunity to present a clearer picture once everyone's season ended. If you follow the logic of the thread that no team can jump over a team whose season is finished, then why was it OK for USC to jump over Michigan? That seems acceptable to most yet Florida doing the same is not. Hard to figure.

I don't have much of a problem with Florida coach Urban Meyer campaigning for his team. That's what he should do. It's what Carr should have done. The fact that he didn't is why he's LLLLLoyd Carr. Where I do agree with Mike is in his observation regarding the CBS broadcasting crew (Vern Lundquist and Gary Danielson). Their politicking on behalf of Florida and the SEC was so obvious that the only fair conclusion is that they were required to do that by virtue of the CBS contract with the SEC. And for what it's worth, the ABC studio crew wasn't much better. Both John Saunders and Doug Flutie sang the praises of Michigan over Florida just as blatantly and last I looked, ABC had a contract with the Big Ten. (Craig James, the third wheel in that team argued for Florida)

Where I agree most with Mike is in his advocacy for a playoff system. I, too, feel it is blatant hypocrisy to essentially blame the lack of a playoff system on the student-athletes, as if they had a choice in the matter. And the suggestion that playoffs would cheapen the regular season is ludicrous. Winning the Big Ten, for example, will always be important as will playing well in order to get into what will surely be a limited field playoff in the first place.

That all being said, the existence of the bowl games must be acknowledged. Like it or not, it's a major factor to contend with in trying to sort out a playoff system. I personally think we're on the verge of a playoff system and that the BCS will ultimately be seen as an important step in that direction for any number of reasons.

But until that playoff system comes, this is what we're left with. And being lost in all of the faux controversy is the fact that this is what we've all grown up with and what we've lived with since the first pig sacrificed his hide for the amusement of others. We've had many years of disputed champions and yet the college game has continued to thrive. In fact, it's stronger than ever in every way imaginable. Besides, does anyone, including Mike, really think that the arguments will ever end? I'd like to see a show of hands as to who thinks that the St. Louis Cardinals really were the best team in baseball this year.