

Trojans

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were starting to, shall we say, annoy us folks who were there diligently following all of the collegiate games, busting our humps gathering info for these riveting columns. I may have mentioned to the Bruin guys something to the effect that it was great that the Bruins were beating up on a junior varsity team, but it was someone way funnier and droller than me who quipped about the nice win over the “Vassar knitting team.” Wow. Great shot, way to go, *Girl*. And sorry, all of you Vassar College fans. Didn’t know that you had a knitting team.

Allrightee, before getting on to the NFL, need to give some futbol props to the LA Galaxy, who have advanced to the MLS Championship Game, which takes place Sunday night in Seattle. Think that they are playing the team from Salt Lake City. Saw some of the Galaxy’s 2-0 semifinal win over Houston Dynamo last Friday night. Viewed it on the tube, cuz the soccer coach, who shall go nameless, had reneged on his promise of hooking up *Plank* and the kid with duckets for a Galaxy game this season. We had been invited to attend an early season game at the Home Depot Center in the garden city of Carson, but we were “uninvited” when the coach apparently found someone better to take to the game.

That’s okay, not the first time I have been left twisting in the wind. Probably found a better way to waste/spend the \$15 bucks for parking, \$12 bucks or so for a diet beer, and \$5 for a warmed-over hot dog which they probably ran out of by halftime.

Anyway, watched a bit of the game last Friday, which was interrupted a couple of times by power outages that dimmed the lights hovering above the pitch. But the Galaxy and Ball-Bender Beckham prevailed in the overtime sessions, so the lads will play on. The Ball-Bender set up the first goal, sending a free kick near the opponent’s net, which some nondescript Galaxy player collected and deposited into the twine.

That Beckham guy can sure play, but what the heck is going on with his hairdo? Some kind of Mohawk deal, I guess. Would make has-been crooner George Michael or the occasionally incarcerated Boy George proud, I guess. Not my style, but then I apparently have no style.

Promise that I will get to the football, NFL style, but I will again digress. Watching the New England Patriots dismantle the at-the-time-undefeated Indianapolis Colts right now. That guy coaching the Pats is pretty sharp. Whoops. check that. Coach B. just made an incredibly risky decision and cost his team the game...

Anyway, the ponies are running again at Hollywood Park for the next five weeks or so, in what they term their autumn meet. They have an online contest called “Show Me the Money,” in which all you have to do is pick one horse out of the 70 or so running each day that will “show.” Finish anywhere from first to third, doesn’t matter where. Pick correctly, you move on. Screw it up, you are a moron. Easy as pie, any idiot can do that, right?

Apparently not. I was blown out of the competition on Day 1, when my nag scratched, and the dumb-ass horse that the website assigned to me in lieu of my incredibly well-researched selection ran way up the track. What a pisser!

I get some of my incredible horsie knowledge by listening to a couple of the racing shows on el radio

Saturday and Sunday mornings when I run the streets. One of the shows is hosted by a trainer by the name of Roger Stein, who can be somewhat acerbic at times. Or a real pinhead. He was lauding the listeners on Saturday, mentioning how smart most of us/them are. But he couldn’t leave it at that, adding something akin to “we also have some idiots who listen.” How did he know that I was tuned in to his show?

Guess I’ll get to the NFL next week... •

Real Estate

from page 12

Association of Realtors, said the extension is a crucial victory for home buyers. He praised lawmakers “for realizing the benefits of the federal tax credit and the role it has played in the ongoing economic recovery.” According to research by the association, Liptak said, “about 40 percent of first-time buyers believe they could not have purchased a home without the federal tax credit.” “More than 1.4 million first-time home buyers nationwide were eligible for the initial credit,” he said, and “we expect that number to increase dramatically in the months ahead once this new legislation is in place.”

The cities of Hawthorne and Inglewood also offer assistance for first-time home buyers, although neither program will have any available funds until at least the start of 2010, a testament to their popularity. Money for first-time buyers is also available in El Segundo, Manhattan Beach and Lawndale

through Los Angeles County’s Home Ownership Program, which is funded with about \$3-million annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The program offers second trust deed loans at zero percent interest with all payments deferred until the sale, transfer, refinancing or full repayment of the first mortgage. Qualified borrowers in the unincorporated portions of the county will receive \$70,000, or 25 percent, of their purchase price, whichever is less. Borrowers in participating cities will receive \$60,000, or 20 percent, of their sales prices.

The total purchase price of a single family home in any area cannot exceed \$483,000, while the price of a condo/townhouse purchase can’t be more than \$394,250. Funding for the loans will be replenished early next year --- although there will only be enough money for about 37 applicants, who will be accepted on a first-come basis. •

The Sun Thanks Customers

Last Friday, Herald Publications hosted a luncheon at McCormick and Schmick’s as a special thank you to its many business supporters in our coverage areas of El Segundo, Hawthorne, Inglewood and Manhattan Beach.

Our advertising partners represent a wide array of industries from legal to retail to real estate. We were happy to see strong

attendance at this event, with some traveling from as far away as Palm Springs to enjoy good food, fine wine and great company.

The get-together allowed us to not only personally thank our advertisers, but also to acknowledge their continued support of our papers during these tough financial times. •



Bill Mason enjoys the festivities. Photos by Rob Fiore.



Brian Simon and Norma Catania smile for the camera.



Ryan Tillson and Magee Mudge of Vistamar School, Norma Catania, and Al Wise of Manhattan Beach Toyota share advertising ideas.

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Amanda Geiger never saw the drunk driver.

**Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk.**

Photo by Monica Mazzeo

U.S. Department of Transportation

**Ad Council**