



Sports on the SIDE

Just give me
a man who
watches football

EDITOR'S NOTE: Have a question or comment about the single life in Chattanooga? E-mail Cari Gervin at CGervin@TFCCommunityNews.com. She answers her mail in the "First Person" blog at www.timesfreepress.com.

After our first date, I knew it would never work. Don't get me wrong — I am a firm believer in giving people a chance on a second and even third date. But when we were walking down Broad Street after dinner last summer and he told

me that the worst thing about living in his fraternity house in college had been the way everyone else would gather around the television on game days in the fall, I knew we were not destined to be.

I mean, what would happen when September rolled around and I had to say, "I'm sorry, I can't go out tonight because I have to watch the Georgia game?"

Now I know there are many happy marriages where one spouse watches a lot of football or NASCAR or even golf and the other spouse couldn't care less, except when game-watching interferes with chores.

But after having spent so much time watching football with my past two serious boyfriends, I can't imagine ever dating someone who hates the sport.

For the past several years, from September through January, I literally have planned most of my weekends around broadcasts of the Georgia



Cari Gervin
Single in
Chattanooga

Football

● Continued from Page E1

game and the Falcons game. It was all the fault of “Robert” — he had just graduated from UGA when we started dating, and I got hooked watching David Greene and David Pollack every week with him.

After we broke up, I stayed friends with him and, more importantly for football-watching since I had no cable, his friends. Every Saturday and Sunday we rooted for the red and black.

My last boyfriend had the unfortunate habit of rooting for Tennessee. But when I was visiting him, he would gamely take me to whatever sports bar in Nashville was hosting the

UGA Alumni Association game-watching party.

We agreed to not talk after Tennessee upset UGA in that dismal game in 2004. And I had no problems rooting for the Titans on Sundays, as long as they weren't playing the Falcons.

We spent most weekends in the fall curled up on the couch watching football. On Saturdays, we might leave and go out to dinner; on Sundays we would normally order a pizza near the end of the late game.

It almost didn't matter who was playing. With football on, we had a ready-made source of conversation — one that would end in February and leave us struggling for things to talk about until March Madness began and then baseball season finally started.

Is it any wonder things start-

“ With football on we had a ready-made conversation — one that would end in February and leave us struggling for things to talk about until March ... ”

ed to fall apart last February, that cruelest of months with no professional sports to watch but tedious NBA games? Last year didn't even have any hockey (though heaven knows that's even worse).

This fall, single, no longer living in a town painted red and black every weekend, I got lonely watching football by myself. So I took a few trips to Atlanta to cheer for the Dawgs with some other alums.

After our disappointing loss to Auburn, a casual friend, “Ben,” surprisingly expressed a romantic interest in me. Flattered and intrigued, I agreed to watch the Falcons game with him the next day. The Falcons lost, but I had found true love — with his roommate's NFL Sunday Ticket.

I have spent a number of Sundays in sports bars watching games via Sunday Ticket — a few years back I briefly dated a beleaguered Redskins fan who had to watch the game every week at Taco Mac. Never before had I gotten to sit in the living room of a regular apartment and watch three games at once.

These guys take their football so seriously that they drag two extra televisions into the living room every Sunday. The impressive display immediately appealed to my inner sports fanatic.

As football season wound down, I spent another weekend, then another in Atlanta. Safely ensconced on the cozy couch, bombarded by brutal hits and bedazzling plays on all sides, it was easy to enjoy Ben's company without questioning where our relationship was headed, if you could even call it a relationship at such an early stage.

Now just three football games are left. My favorite teams' seasons ended weeks ago. I don't know if weekends in Atlanta will have the same appeal without the Sunday Ticket. And as April (thankfully!) draws ever nearer, I have begun to worry.

You see, as much as I love football, baseball is my favorite sport. Ben doesn't keep up with it. All of our sports-related conversation will have to revolve around Signing Day, the off-season problems of the Vick brothers, and if Jeff Fisher really is going to the Rams.

Are we destined to fall apart after Super Bowl XL? Do we even have anything in common besides overlapping musical tastes, our mutual friends and a shared love of the two best football teams in Georgia?

I guess only time will tell. In the meantime, I can't help but wonder if that Direct TV subscription includes the New England Sports Network (i.e., the station that broadcasts every Red Sox game).

Would it be soooo wrong to date someone so I could watch baseball at his house?