

## FOX-Cablevision Spat Escalating Into a Media Cage Match

Written by Maury Brown  
Friday, 22 October 2010 14:21

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After 8 days, Cablevision subscribers in several markets have been without FOX channels, trapped in a brutal battle on carriage terms. At 3 million subscribers, they have missed the NLCS, and National Football League games with the NY Giants and Philadelphia Eagles.

The affected channels and markets are FOX 5 (WNYW) in New York and FOX 29 (WTXF) in Philadelphia. Also impacted is My9 (WWOR) in New York (a MyNetworkTV affiliate licensed to Secaucus, NJ) who is also blacked out, but it does not affect MLB or NFL coverage.

The war, which pits carriage fees for FOX on Cablevision, has turned into a media cage match, of sorts. Of course, the customers are the ones that are losing out as two behemoths throw verbal barbs that have been at, or near, juvenile levels.

Today, FOX amped up the rhetoric further, using next week's World Series as a weapon. Currently, FOX is airing the NLCS while TBS has carried the ALCS. FOX will carry the World Series, and thusly, impacts the continued battle between FOX and Cablevision. FOX is now at the stage of telling Cablevision subs to jump ship.

"Unfortunately, it's becoming clear that Cablevision believes FOX has very limited value to their customers," FOX said in a statement this morning. "We urge those Cablevision subscribers who want to see the World Series (beginning October 27) to switch providers or purchase an over the air antenna now."

Cablevision has continued to stick to the point that a third party is needed to resolve the issue.

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“We welcome the FCC’s intervention,” said Charles Schueler, Cablevision’s executive vice president of communications.: “Whether through FCC action, binding arbitration or any other means, the time has come for News Corp to end the Fox blackout of 3 million Cablevision households.”

The Games 6 (and Game 7, if necessary) of NLCS between the Giants and Phillies continues tomorrow in Philadelphia. As of now, it appears Cablevision subs in the blacked markets are nearly assured of missing out on Game 6 of the NLCS at this stage. The Giants are one win away from clinching a trip the World Series.

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