



Mariëlle Pack is currently studying in Austin, Texas. In every Angler, she will write a piece about something which is typical of that area or America in general.

## Hook 'em Horns!

Football is a very popular sport in the USA. That is obvious from the huge celebration that burst forth when the Longhorns of the University of Texas at Austin (UT) won the national championship after beating the Trojans of the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles on 4 January 2006. I have never seen so many people in Austin wearing burnt orange, which is UT's color: they were in an orange whirl of excitement. I felt very much at home in that rolling sea of orange people in the Darrel K. Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium on the UT campus where we celebrated the victory. The audience at a home game exists of about 90,000 people which are mainly students. Everyone was exuberant of joy, and so was I, since I went to all the home games of UT and became a die-hard Horns-fan.



It is no "biggy" when one player tackles another player, or when someone gets a punch in the back. The referee only throws a yellow cloth on the field when he thinks things are getting out of hand. But that hardly ever happens and it is usually just a warning. There is hardly ever a grudge between the teams.

However, there can be some competition, like when the German soccer team plays the Dutch one. Here that would be between UT and Oklahoma University. OU beat UT 4 years in a row, but UT finally beat OU in 2005. For a couple of weeks, the battle scream became "Texas fight! Texas fight! OU sucks!" instead of "Texas fight! Texas fight! Go, Horns, go!"

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The rules of the game are simple: the offensive team has to try to get the oval-shaped ball to the other side of the field in order to score a touchdown or a field goal, while the defensive team has to try to stop the other team from doing so. A college game usually takes about four hours. That is very nice when the temperature is 40 degrees Celsius, but if you get bored, there is always the option of stretching your legs and getting a Texas Style Corndog or a huge cotton candy.

What struck me was that all the violence happens on the field, and not between fans. In other words, I have not seen hooligans here yet.

