

TRASH TALKIN TEXAS STYLE

This week's Lowell Thomas travelogue takes our rolling wheels on down south to Texas. Because the Lone Star State is where, by far, the most important and compelling game is to be found. That would be Jerry Jones' 'Boys visiting the upstart Houston Texans. In honor of our trip down south, we have two, count em two musical selections this week. The first is from that little old band from Tejas, ZZ Top with their classic tale of a trip to an, ahem, girls club – *La Grange*. A little bit o trivia, *La Grange* is the actual "Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" made famous on stage and in film. The second selection is *Gimme a T For Texas* by Lynyrd Skynyrd in honor of the death of the actual namesake himself, Mr. Leonard Skinner.

But before we get down to the gridiron festivities, there is one big matter CHOMPing at the bits. Sharktopus! That's right, tonight is the Emptywheel Sharktopus World Premier Sharktacular Extravaganza! The initial festivities kick off shortly before 9 pm Eastern time (8 pm Central) and will be hosted by Marcy, Eli from FDL and special guest Mystery Dub. Now, unfortunately, out here on the best coast, er left coast, we do not get the movie until 9 pm our time (that would be 9 pm Pacific, FDL and Arizona time), so I will be hosting a second set of festivities for all the west coast shark biters and bitees. This is the grand reemergence of the master of campy summer slasher movies, Roger Corman, and promises to be a load of really tacky and crazy fun. So, if you love seeing hot babes in bikinis frolicking and then being eaten by sharks – and who doesn't?? – then join us tonight! (Much more after jump)

Pros: As stated above, the big game this week is Dallas at Houston, and we are going to find out if the Cowboys are even the best team in Texas anymore, much less a viable SuperBowl contender. And with the Texans at 2-0 and looking

impressive getting there with a win over Peyton and the Colts at home and a tough road win over the Redskins. The Cowboys, on the other hand, have just looked bad in consecutive losses to the Skins and the Bears. Tony Romo has looked okay, although not great, so far but what has killed Dallas is the absence of their once vaunted running game. The Texans are clicking on all cylinders with great passing by Matt Schaub and tough running by the newly discovered Arian Foster. The Texans also look very solid on defense, which cannot be said for the Boys. Dallas can't really open the season 0-3 can they? Yes, they can.

The other pretty big game is back to the black and blue battles of yore, Packers at Bears Monday night. Both teams are 2-0 and playing solid on both sides of the ball. I would have written Jay Cutler off as another dope with a big arm and lunk head. And that is about what he has shown so far in his career, both at Denver and Chicago; but now he is operating in the wide open, yet micro controlled, Mike Martz offense. It could work, and if it does, Cutler and the Bears could be pretty scary, especially not that Urlacher and the defense seems rejuvenated. The Packers just keep getting better and rolling along. But they had a huge bit of misfortune in the loss of hard nosed running back Ryan Grant for the season. This game is almost a pick em with Grant out, but I will take the Pack in a very close contest.

The rest of the slate are all actually pretty interesting – no real dogs – but not nearly as compelling as the first two above. Bungles at Panthers is a pickem, both teams are weak but Cinci needs a win and Jimmy Clausen debuts for Carolina. Geezer and Vikes rest up on the Lions and get a much needed win. Atlanta plays tough, but can't win at the Saints. Tampa Bay is a surprising 2-0, as are the visiting Stillers; but the Stillers and Polamalu's hair find some way to leave 3-0. Ravens kill the Brownies, as the Pats do the Bills. Am going out on a limb and saying the Chiefs knock off the Niners at

Arrowhead; SF should be a better team, but I think KC does it. Skins, Eagles, Bolts and Colts all win, which means Rams, Jags, Squawks and Donks all lose. Raiders at Cards is a pickem; who know? Cards should win, but I dunno, I think the Raiders will with Gradkowski at QB. That leaves Jets at the Fish; I'll take the Jets.

NCAA: Okay, I want to say the game of the week is 24th ranked Oregon State at number 3 Boise State. And since I can say whatever I want, that is exactly what I am gonna say! The Beavers have really prepped for this game, even going so far as to paint their practice field that puke blue they have up in Boise. And make no mistake, Oregon State is a decent team from the Pac-10, not some flunky also ran. But Boise State wins this and keeps the BCS busting dream alive; the only question is by how much they win by for "style points" purposes. The other must see teevee football is Alabama at Arkansas in a tough battle of unbeaten SEC teams. You know about the Tide, but do not discount the Hogs who are powered by the first rate QB Ryan Mallet, who once played at Michigan but left to join a real conference and play in big games. Hard to pick against the Tide, especially now that they have last year's Heisman winner (and he still has the trophy) Mark Ingraham back and at full speed. Should be a good game, but Alabama wins solidly.

Stanford visits South Bend to remind the Irish they are still mediocre. But the South Carolina Gamecocks at Auburn should be a full on battle. I rate it a pickem, but if SC and the 'Ole Ball Coach can come out of Auburn with a win, look out. The Quackers from Oregon visit the Devils here at Sun Devil Stadium for a pretty big early season Pac-10 battle. The Devils are far better than you think, but I don't think they have enough to beat the Ducks, who are very good under coach Chip Kelly.

Formula One: This weekend the circus stops in Singapore at probably the most butt ass ugly circuit in history. Just atrocious. But they do

run the race at night, which is a pretty bizarre and unique scene. Vettel, Alonso and Hamilton are fast so far in practice (yeah, I know, big surprise there), while the garage area is abuzz over talk of Schumacher's future in F1. Michael apparently said he is staying in F1, but there seems to be some thought it may not be as a driver. I think he will give the comeback at least one more season. Qualifying goes live at 10 am EST (7 am PST) this morning. The race itself goes off at 7:30 am EST (4:30 am PST) Sunday morning on Speed. Again, not my favorite track, but usually a decent race in a surreal kind of way.

That's it for this week folks. Get yer Trash on. And don't forget the Sharktopus fest tonight!