

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS AND NFL WEEK 14 TRASH TALK

Pretty big weekend of football. After some thrills from Rivalry Weekend, and one very big disappointment from the Wolverweenies' failure to slay the Sweatervests of Ohio State, this weekend serves up some great conference championship games and excellent late season matchups in the NFL. Let's see what's on tap:

In the college ranks, Louisville topped Cincinnati Thursday night, in overtime, in their farewell to the American Athletic Conference. And Bowling Green State absolutely put a licking on previously undefeated BCS Buster darling Northern Illinois. The busters are done for this year, we are on to the big boys. Oklahoma and Oklahoma State tee off in an early game, starting at 12 noon EST on ABC. That is strictly for masochists, and the Cowboys should roll the Sooners.

The real fun starts at 3:30pm EST on Fox when the Longwhorens kick off against the Baylor Bears in the Bears' den in Waco. Pretty easy to take Baylor here, and I will, but this might be close. Hard to believe, but Mack Brown got the Whorens gelled and playing fairly decent and probably saved his job. Which is just fine by me, I think the Whorens and Mack Brown deserve each other forever!

Then, only a half hour later, is the SEC title game at 4pm EST on CBS from the dome in Atlanta. Auburn is the favorite by a point over Missouri in the Battle of the Tigers. Auburn sure appears to be a team of destiny this year after their last second crazy wins over Georgia and Alabama to close out the regular season. Auburn has a great rushing attack and seems to score just enough on offense to win (also of

course, special teams are solid). But Missouri, with James Franklin back in full charge of the offense after a mid season injury, has a far superior passing game and a plenty competent rushing game. Missouri has a clear edge on defense. I'll take Missouri in a mild upset.

Sadly, it will take intervention from aliens to give Duke a chance against the crime concealers of Florida State in the ACC title matchup. game starts at 8pm EST and is on ABC. Unlikeliness aside, I will be rooting for the Dookies I just cannot shake that slimy press conference where a laughing and joking asshole of a public servant, DA Willie Meggs, gleefully announced he would not charge homeboy hero Jameis Winston with rape. Let me make one thing perfectly clear, and I can tell you this from experience: rapes cases are sent to juries every day, in every general felony jurisdiction court in the country, with exactly the "problems" Meggs claimed exist in the Winston case. Meggs and the Tallahassee Police had a victim who called rape from the very start and there was DNA evidence. That kind of case usually gets filed, irrespective of what the eventual outcome is. So DA Meggs, and the Tallahassee PD, which affirmatively tried to scare the victim out of cooperating and seeking prosecution, are gaint embarrassments to the law and their communities. What scum. As an aside, contrast the coddling of Jameis Winston with what happened to an ordinary male student at Auburn, who had his whole life sucked out from him by the university with no proper due process an confrontation ability. College athletics are run by a craven NCAA and controlled by boosterism and double standards for coddled athletes. Normal college life for regular students is increasingly a "zero tolerance" nightmare. Neither standard is appropriate, there must be a responsible middle ground.

And speaking of cowardly game over propriety scum, Ohio State is right back at it. Urban Meyer, Jim Sweatervest, whatever, same difference, just a different year. Marcus Hall sucker punched a Michigan player, and brutalized

equipment and items in a fit of rage on the sideline before giving the double bird to the fans in the Big House last weekend. But, don't fret, Mr. Morality, Urban Meyer (the moral compass behind Aaron Hernandez and the Pouncey brother's college upbringing) has decided that simply "not starting" Hall, but letting him play the rest of the game, is really tough and more than enough punishment. Nothing has changed at Ohio State, and how Meyer ever got, much less maintains, his reputation as a "clean" coach is beyond baffling. As to the game, it is a pretty good match. OSU has the number two rushing attack in the country and Sparty has the number one rushing defense in the country. Power on power. Both have mediocre, at best, passing offenses, but Sparty has a far superior passing defense. The game is in the dome in Indianapolis, so weather not a factor. This game is too close to call, and is therefore a pick em, but GO SPARTY!

Last game is what, of course, really has me nervous. The Pac-12 Championship Game right here in Tempe, to be played on Frank Kush Field. The Sun Devils and The Tree. A grudge match between me and Fearless Roving Reporter Rosalind. The Sun Devils have had the feel of being the better team the second half of the season, after getting drubbed early in the year in Palo Alto. ASU has a better passing offense with Taylor Kelly, which is odd, because I think Kevin Hogan is actually a better QB. Both teams have solid run defenses, with a slight edge to Stanford, but the Devils have a lot better pass defense. Stanford has giant smart lugs on both lines, and they flat wear you out over the course of a game. It will be a real test to see if ASU can hang for an entire game (and not let the Tree take a huge lead early, like the first game). This and the BIG game are the two best games today, and they are both on at the same time. Shame.

Went long with the colleges, so only a quick look at the pros. Obviously, the biggest game is the SeaSquawks at Candlestick to visit the

Niners. Seattle killed SF the first time around, but that game was in Seattle and the Niners have gotten their act together in last couple of weeks it appears. I think Seattle is the better team, and Russell Wilson the better QB and the game will be closer but the Squawks win. Other big time game is Panthers at the Saints. Carolina is the sexy pick lately, but I'll take Drew Brees at home in the dome.

The Rams at Cardinals could actually be a great game. Pretty evenly matched teams, but the Cards are tough at home. Lastly, the Pack host the Dirty birds of Atlanta on the Frozen Tundra. No, this doesn't look to be a great game, but if the Cheese can't find a way to win, the season is done. If they can pull out a win by some means or another and get Aaron Rodgers back for the last three games, they might, possibly, have a chance. Looking grim though.

Music today is by the Glenn Miller Orchestra with a great big band jazzy version of Sleigh Ride. Very tasty.