

SUPERBOWL XLV TRASH TALK

As of post time, it appears SuperBowl XLV will still be played in Reykjavík Texas despite the spate of injuries to innocent plaintiffs, er fans, from ice falling off of Cowboys Stadium. SuperBowls should be played in reasonable and warm climates, not the frozen tundra of Texas. As Dallas born and bred Stevie Ray Vaughn knows, the Texas Flood will give you the blues; just think what the ice storm they have been suffering the past few days will do.

Now the thing that has most fascinated me from all the usual build up hype this week is the discovery that, apparently, all stud Packers quarterbacks are Vikings, whether at the start of their career or the geezerly end. Who knew?

Despite my Geezer based flirtation with the Vikings, and despite living in a city with a semi-pro football team known as the Cardinals, I have been a lifelong Green Bay Packer Cheesehead. I read a biography of Bart Starr when I was maybe eight years or so old and a kid, even ones in places with no teams, had to "have a team". Mine became the Packers, and the deal was cemented for a lifetime when, at Vince Lombardi's express demand, the Pack drafted Travis Williams from Arizona State and he had a breakout year his rookie season in 1967, setting the rookie record for kickoff returns, including two in one game against the Cleveland Browns. The Cardinals may be here now, but I am a Cheesehead for life. And I am *still waiting* for Phred to send me my damn cheesehead she promised years ago. This is in contrast to that "other blogger" here at Emptywheel, who lives equidistant from the Packers, Bears and Lions and seems to want to claim all of them.

The game itself looks to be fantastic. Two original NFL teams that bring their lunchpail to the field. And, in that regard, it is notable that both teams come from the heart of the

American workforce, people that make things and do things, and are supporters of American labor. From the Alliance for American Manufacturing:

This year's Super Bowl presents a special match-up: two teams named for the local industries that support their diehard fans. The Steelers emerged from Pittsburgh's steelmaking foundries, while the Packers honor their sturdy meatpacking industry.

Both teams are understandably proud of their hometown fans and the work they do. Both Green Bay and Pittsburgh were built on manufacturing, and are the respective epicenters of paper and meatpacking, and of the steel industry, in America. Both cities have suffered heavy manufacturing job losses, but some paper production remains in Green Bay, and Pittsburgh still retains a steel presence. Both Green Bay and Pittsburgh also enjoy a loyal following built on the middle-class, blue-collar jobs supported by these industries.

The video above of Packers AJ Hawk and Mason Crosby is refreshing. It is good to see top flight NFL players standing up for the incredibly important, but too often ignored, principle that the United States needs to renew its ability to actually *make things* as opposed to the craven churning of financial products that seems the focus of "business" these days.

To get back to the game, both teams have excellent defenses with genuine stars and studs from the line to defensive backfield; they bring it all game long and make big plays when it counts. Green Bay appears to have the more explosive and superior offense, but I am not sure that is really the case. The Steelers can make big plays and chew up yardage in a hurry when the need to; it is just that their preference is to grind it out and eat up the clock. They are very good at that. Although the

Pack seems to have found a solid running game with James Starks, but you would still have to give the edge there to Pittsburgh with Rashard Mendenhall.

Both teams have a few nicked up players, but the only major issue on the injury front belongs to the Steelers who will be without Pro Bowl center Maurkice Pouncey, who went out in the AFC Championship game with a high ankle sprain. This could pose a few problems for Big Ben, but he has played on the run all year anyway from a somewhat leaky offensive line; he should be able to cope just fine.

The rest of the story you all already know from the discussions and Trash Talks throughout the playoffs. These teams are who we thought they were, and that is how they are gonna play Sunday. So, let the trash talking begin! Go Cheesers!