FISCAL CLIFF FOOTBALL TRASH TALK

There is really no explanation for the cowardice in Washington DC that allows the most important items of governance to be backed into corners and to edge of cliffs before some slimy compromise screwing everybody and punting the rest down the road is made. Just happened with literally the essence of Fourth Amendment law on FISA, and not the insane “fiscal showdown”. And then, once done, the Monty Python Sir Robin like legislators turn their tail and flee under the cover of some holiday diversion that will occupy the feeble minds of the public until they can be consumed by the next idiotic disaster in the making. It is just all depressing. If the people in our national government these days are our best and brightest, we are truly fucked. Blerrrgh.

So, here, instead of worrying about the DC Wile E. Coyote’s hurtling toward the fabricated cliff, we are gonna talk some football. Much more satisfying. The big story, of course, is Week 17, the final regular season slate of games, in the NFL. Before we get to the Sunday Pros though, there are some college Saturday Joes on tap.

There are five lower tier bowls Saturday. Hard to get too excited by Rice and Air Force in the Armed Services Bowl, but the other four have some watchable matchups. West Virginia and Syracuse in the Pinstripe Bowl at Yankee Stadium could be a real sleeper as they are old foes from when both were in the Big East. Both QBs are very good, even if not that well known. The Mountaineers’ Geno Smith got some early attention this year, but the team struggled and the focus went away. He is very good. However Syracuse’s Ryan Nassib got no attention despite turning in an incredible year, breaking school records in many categories. TCU and Michigan State pair off in the Buffalo Wild wings bowl right here at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe. Both

teams underachieved for the year; hard to see much excitement there.

The premier game for the day is Texas and Oregon State in the Alamo Bowl. Mack Brown and the Whorens had a pretty weak year, but still finished at 8-4 and ranked #23. The Beavers really had a consistently outstanding year, going 9-3 with a #13 ranking. Two of the three Beavs losses came against powerhouses Stanford and Oregon, and they were very much in both games. Mack Brown has a pretty good record in bowls, but OSU looks better on paper. This could be a great game. The game that most interests me, even though not exactly a scintillating pairing, is Arizona State and Navy in the Fight Hunger Bowl in San Francisco. Really, where do these bowl names come from? ASU surprised most and put a licking on the Arizona Wildcats to close out the regular season and earn this berth. Navy did the same to Army. Navy is decent on D and relies on the old fangled triple option running game. ASU is a better team, but has no experience with Navy's offensive style. If the Devil's defense can figure out the option they will win, if not, they lose. That simple. Go Devils!

Now, to the pros. It is Week 17. The Final Countdown (sorry about that link, the linker has been sacked). The game of the week HAS to be the Clown Bowl featuring the Jets Jets Jets at the Bills, whose wagons are circling down the drain. Having been vanquished by the mighty Bolts last Sunday in the Toilet Bowl, the Jets try to rebound in the Clown Bowl. They will face the imposing Ryan Fitzpatrick led Bills offense. Revis Island is now reduced to Rex's Bikini Atoll. This grudge match is for the bottom of the AFC East, so you know it will be sixty minutes of ugly. Rory McIlroy is out with a concussion, so the Jets will tee up Dirty Sanchez, again snubbing Baby Jesus Tebow. What a Clown Show.

Am tempted to highlight the other Loser Bowl on the slate, i.e. Iggles at Gents (I think Andy

Reid is starting at QB for Philly). But we probably ought to discuss non-loser games. So, how bout them Cheesers! Yes, the season will end with a classic Norske Division tilt – Packers at the surging Vikings. The Vikes seem to have no cognizable passing attack of late, but are riding Adrian Peterson and tough defense. The Pack is on a serious late season roll. Green Bay wants to lockup a first round bye, and Minnesota wants to lockup a playoff berth. And Peterson needs 208 yards to catch Eric Dickerson. Nobody will be slacking in this one. The Vikes have come so far, but it is hard to see them stopping Aaron Rodgers enough to take the Pack. Go Cheese!

The unquestioned most significant game of the week is the final game of the regular season, the NBC Sunday Night game of Cowboys at Skins. Washington is 9-6, Dallas is 8-7 and, simply put, the winner of this game wins the NFC East and goes to the playoffs as a Division winner. The Skins have won six in a row, their longest streak in sixteen years, and will have RGIII another week stronger. The 'Boys, despite the crushing overtime loss to the Saints last week, have really been playing well on both sides of the ball. Probably enough that Garrett and Romo are safe for next year; still, Tony Romo has to start winning big games sometime or he will never shake that collar. This is, on paper, almost a dead even matchup. But rookie RB Alfred Morris for the Skins, and home field at Fed-Ex Stadium, gives the not to Washington.

That is the meat of the NFL slate. The rest of the games are fairly meh, but Ravens at Bengals has AFC seeding implications, Bears need a win at Detroit to keep their very faint playoff hopes alive, as do the Giants who host the Eagles, and Houston at Indy also has AFC seeding importance (especially for the Broncos).

That is your lineup for this weekend. Forget the cliff, smoke a spliff! In that vein, some reggae mon from Jimmy Cliff will light up the day. Two classics are posted. The joy of the Jamaican

Bobled team effort leading up to and in the 1988 Olymics depicted in the “I Can See Clearly Now” video is really fun.