

CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY NFL TRASH TALK

While Divisional Playoff Weekend is the best weekend of football, Championship Sunday is the best day. Saddle up buckaroos, it is here! Before we get to the games, a word about Notre Dame and Manti Te'o. They are both lying through their teeth, and it is a sick comment on all that is wrong with big time college football, and hallowed universities' efforts to maintain their "reputation" at all costs. Penn State has got nothing on Notre Dame. Dave Zirin says much of what else I would have to say for now, so I'll just let you read him.

First up is the Niners at the Falcons. Current line is Atlanta +4. The Falcons showed some playoff moxie not previously seen last week by withstanding the charge of Russell Wilson and the Squawks and winning with a last minute field goal. That is the good news in Ho 'Lanta. The bad news? Well, Russell Wilson and the Squawk beat the snot out of them in the second half. And that onsides kick with 8 seconds left has to one of the worst coaching calls in the history of football. So, some real questions about the Dirty Birds still linger. The 49ers, however, looked locked and loaded in shredding the Packers.

If there was a weak spot in their performance last weekend, I don't remember it. The only question is if Colin Kaepernick can summons up another performance like that. If he can come even close, it is probably bad bongos for Atlanta, because they have a history of being killed by mobile and athletic QBs – see Newton, Cam and the torching the aforementioned Russell Wilson. Still I think the QBs and offenses balance out and the game will come down to defense. I trust San Francisco's defense more than Atlanta's, and that is my pick.

In the nightcap, the Ravens visit Brady, Bill Bel and the boys at the Big Razor. The line is

currently Patriots -8. That is a lot, and many pundits are even saying they favor the Ravens, apparently due to the force of will of Ray Lewis and some misguided thought that Tom Brady is just an average playoff QB now and that Flacco is maybe actually superior. These people are smoking crack.

There is a track record for this game as the same two played in the same place for the AFC championship last year. And the Pats have never lost at Foxborough with a SuperBowl on the line. They are not going to start now.

So, my call is Niners and Pats for the big game in Nawlins. That said, I would be just fine with seeing Atlanta and the Ravens there as well. After all these years, Tony Gonzales, who may well be retiring after this season, just won his first playoff game. And you already know about Ray Lewis being on his last ride. It would be fine to see these two warhorses play it out. We shall see, should be exciting!

We are getting to the end of the line for football this year, better whoop it up while you can. Let er rip! Music is a killer couple of songs by a new group called HoneyHoney out of Massachusetts. Their first album, "First Rodeo" is really great stuff for a debut effort. Highly recommended.