

REPURPOSED AULD LANG SYNE - NOW NFL - TRASH TALK

NFL Sunday Update: Okay, I have been having fun thinking and talking about the idiocy going on up in Oregon. And, so far, that is all it has been, but there are real fears about what will transpire when the Feds finally interact a little more strenuously. So far, it seems both the Feds and locals have been pretty smart and letting it play out and seeing what happens without going all Ruby Ridge or Waco gonzo. The protest and action in Burns really does seem to have been peaceful, and the locals seem to want little to do with the nut bags that then split off and went out to the Malheur Wildlife Refuge. It is an extremely remote location, and there have yet to be any homicides, shootings, kidnapping or other serious criminal offenses that would elevate the issue into terrorism or other major federal felonies. Let's hope it stays that way.

But this is Trash Talk, and we have a full slate of games. The big one locally is of course the Sea Squawks here in the Big Toaster to take on the Cardinals. Hard to tell how long either team will play their key personnel, but they will all (mostly) start and play. It will not affect either team that much for playoff seeding, and won't affect the Cards at all. It's a pick em, but these two always put on a good show. Skins were all over the 'Boys early, but Dallas is catching up and getting momentum. Pats/Fish, Bills/Jets, Steelers/Browns and Lions/Bears all within a touchdown nearing the start of the fourth quarter.

Going to take the Broncos over Chargers, Chefs over Raiders and Panthers over Bucs in the late afternoon bloc. Though it would be real nice, and much appreciated, if the Bucs would knock off the Panthers! The bigger got flexed to Sunday Night, i.e. Vikes at Packers in the

finally Frozen Tundra. I am not going to pick against the green and gold at Lambeau, but this could be a great game. Get yer Cheeseheads on!

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As we close another year out, thanks to one and all for joining us here. And I hope that one person, long a fixture on this blog, that is right about now surely missed...Freepatriot...can see this. For Freep, Go Oklahoma!

As I write, Boomer Sooner is down 17 to 23 to Clemson. I have no idea how to pick this game. There are a hundred reasons why I ought to like the Sooners here. But Bob Stoops is the anti-Belichick, he really does not usually win big games with championships on the line. A little Dabo will do ya.

Later tonight, the other final four game goes off with Michigan State taking on Alabama in the Cotton Bowl. Most of the media attention has been on the Nick Saban mentor and Mark Dantonio plebe meme. I find that hard to buy after all these years. They are both great coaches, and both great teams. Alabama will probably win, but my heart is with Michigan State. Can't stand the Big Ten/B1G, but they are better than the SEC. And East Lansing rocks.

Every ounce of rooting goes out to the Northwestern Fighting Journalists, but the Tennessee Vols are better than you think, and I am not going to bet against them. My city is full of Irish and Buckeyes. A decidedly unpleasant situation. Two diseases at one time, in the same place. One of them has to not die I suppose, and I will, regrettably, take the Domers. Because I just can't think about taking either Urban Meyer or Ohio State, much less them together. Never.

Gators versus Wolverweenies is a great game. Maybe as good, interesting and perplexing a matchup as there is in the bowl schedule this year. It is also Marcy versus Jim White, which has heretofore only occurred in women's softball. But, here we are on the gridiron. I've

no clue who to take here, but it is hard to root for any team coached by Mr. Khaki Pants, dude is insane.

The only other bowl – until the championship game – that is really worth mentioning is the Rose Bowl. That would be the Stanford Tree versus Herky Hawkeye. I have been to football in a lot of states, in a lot of places, and at a lot of schools. But I have never been in a more magical place than the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. It is not just the fabled parade. It is not just the pageantry. It is the place. Simply magical. There is just a feeling and a vibe that comes from the location and the structure itself. Kirk Ferentz is one of the more underrated coaches in the business. He and the Hawks are class. But never bet against a Pac team in the Rose Bowl against a Big-10 team. Never. Any given year, you might not win, but overall, it is one of the soundest bets in the history of man. I'll take that bet.

So, as we reach the end of yet another year at Emptywheel, again thank you. Tomorrow is a new year, and it will be even brighter and better than the last. Rock on friends, and have a safe and great New Years Eve.