

BAKU, BELICHICK AND THE NFL DRAFT

Okay, it has been a while since we had a real Trash Talk. So here we go. Not a particularly deep one, but between the NFL Draft, which has been pretty interesting, and the Azerbaijan Grand Prix in Baku, it seemed like a decent opportunity for one of our off season points to talk a little sports trash.

First up, Baku. Frankly, Azerbaijan has made significant and important strides since the breakup of the USSR. While I am not totally comfortable with the support that a continuing Grand Prix provides, it is nowhere near as troublesome as F1 bucking up truly oppressive and evil middle eastern nations like Bahrain and Abu Dhabi. At any rate, it is what it is, and the street course in Baku is truly beautiful. Extremely so. It does not, however, allow many opportunities for overtaking and passing.

Starting grid position is at a premium, and Vettel of Ferrari and Hamilton of Mercedes are on the front row. Kimi Raikkonen was on pace to be the pole sitter through early sectors in Q3, but had a blip. Was amazing driving to pull his butt out of it without shunting his car into a wall, but the time blip cost him dearly and he will start in P7. The race looks to be very promising, even if a tad processional, especially at the front. Alonso, seems slow, and could not even get his McLaren out of Q1.

Now the NFL draft. Rounds 1-3 are in the books. Many teams seem to have done quite well for themselves, including the Brownies and Jets. I figure I will totally jinx the local Cards by saying this, but I think their first round to move up and get Josh Rosen, the best pure, and pro style ready QB in the draft, was wonderful. They followed up by getting a fantastic long term answer at slot receiver, local Scottsdale prep product, later of Texas A+M, in Christian Kirk. Very much a Julian Edelman/Danny Amendola

kind of talent, but maybe slightly faster and shiftier. Oh, and the Cards' next pick will, seriously, be announced by a dude standing on a corner in Winslow Arizona.

You cannot really rate a draft class until it is over, but, so far, the Cards are having a very good year. And, for Scribe, I think it is extremely notable that the Steelers maneuvered to select Mason Rudolph. Groomed right, Rudolph is very much a Big Ben clone successor. Will need the grooming, but sure looks like a great value pick, and with incredible upside, to me. And Pittsburgh did not stretch to get him, at all, either.

As to the Belichick angle, the Pats have been all over the board moving around and trading up and down repetitively. The national sportswriters seem to be joking that it is so much that nobody will ever know the real value of the Jimmy G trade with San Francisco late last year, because it is all too confusing. That may be true! Belichick loves to obscure things. My question is whether Bill Bel will take Richmond QB Kyle Lauletta with the fifth pick in the fourth round if he is there, and he may well be. The Pats seem like they are going to take a QB somewhere, even if just for camp fodder. Lauletta seems like a real prospect though, and a perfect flyer for the Patriots. We shall see.

Alright Wheel nuts, let loose with your draft, F1 and general sports and other thoughts. Let's let our hair down and have some fun. Music by Pink Floyd from Obscured By Clouds, one of the great under appreciated albums ever, for Floyd and in general. So, bring some chatter about your NFL team, what they have accomplished in the offseason and draft, and about F1.