

# THE JOKER IS WILDCARD WEEKEND

The college football championship between Clemson and LSU is still over a week away. And, after all, those are truly the two best teams that should be playing, so it will be as is should. Never sleep on Clemson, but LSU seems currently on a different level.

Beyond that, it is the Wildcard Weekend. And how that is going to go is a far better question. And that is the trash for this fine weekend.

First up is Buffalo at Houston. Both come in 10-6. In a way, they are almost mirror images even beyond their records. How much can JJ Watt contribute? Josh Allen and Deshaun Watson were both early first round picks expected to get their teams here, and they have. Watson has the flair to date, but don't sleep on Allen, he is growing into a very good QB, something the Wagon Circlers have not had since Jim Kelly. The game is in Houston, and home field is always a plus, especially in the playoffs, except the last World Series in baseball. But this is the NFL, and home field counts. Will Fuller seems to be out for the Texans, which means the Bills can pay more attention to DeAndre Hopkins, which limits Watson and O'Brien's offense. Probably gonna regret this, but I think that gives the Bills the edge.

Next, of course, is the Titans at Foxborough and the Pats. Chance of rain and 46° by what is reported. Home field, again, and the weather favor the Pats. But the Titans have, despite their record compared to the Pats, looked like a far better team down the stretch. Ryan Tannehill has been fantastic for them, and Derrick Henry beyond that. Tennessee is really good. There is not a chance in hell I will bet real money against Bill Bel and Brady, but if I were up in Vegas, I just might. This will be a really interesting game, and likely the most interesting and consequential one of the

weekend.

On to Sunday. Early game is Minnesota at Nawlins. That miracle reception is not going to happen again. Drew is going to breeze this one. In the month of December, after coming back from injury, Brees threw for 15 touchdowns and no interceptions. That is pretty good. Kirk Cousins has always been better than people let on, but hard to see it here against a Saints' defense that is as good as it has been in a very long time.

Last up is Squawks at Eagles. Carson Went is good. And he is healthy. No reason not to think he will get the Iggles back to the Super Bowl that Nick Foles got them to, and won. Philly has solid coaching, and know how it is done. But....the Squawks are mad. They think they should have won that last game against the Niners, and they may not be wrong about that. Seattle's running attack is basically a rookie named Travis Homer, who is out of the U and actually is pretty promising, and a couple of scrubs picked up a week ago off the street. But one of those scrubs is Beast Mode, and he is back, and has unfinished business. The Squawk's running game may be a tad patchwork, but, hey, Beast Mode had a warmup week and is ready to roll. Also, too, they have Russell Wilson. Went and the Eagles will be back in the playoffs, just maybe not next week.

So there is your wildcard weekend. Music by Steve Miller, because Rosalind. But the even older Sinatra cut had to be included too. Welcome to the New Year folks, thank you for being here, and let's have a good one.