

TRASH TALK: WHEREIN THE CHAMPS SHOOT THEMSELVES IN THE FOOT THIGH

✘ Don't know where that slacker bmaz is with this week's Trash Talk (oh wait? Trash is supposed to be my job, you say??). But today is the day when teams' playoff hopes will live or die and it's already 5 AM in the desert yet still bmaz sleeps.

But before we talk about the on-the-field fun, let's talk about Plaxico Burress.

How does a guy whose career depends on his 4.4 speed (and whose team depends on his ability to stretch defenses) happen to head out to a nightclub one night and [shoot himself in the thigh](#)? It seems Plaxico [doesn't want to talk about it](#)—having left the cops standing outside his home for 37 minutes yesterday...

New York City police arrived at Burress' sprawling \$4-million home in Totowa, N.J., at 4:35 p.m. and spent 37 minutes outside the home. According to a police spokesman, Burress' wife, Tiffany, told them, "You can't come in. You can't talk to my husband."

Police made a second visit just after 7:30 p.m. and left when no one answered the door.

And the hospital that treated Plaxico doesn't want to talk about it—having failed to inform the cops of the gunshot wound they treated...

Police said they learned of the incident yesterday only after reports of the shooting surfaced around noon, because the hospital did not report the gunshot wound to police, as is expected.

And the Gents don't want to talk about it—at least not until after they play their big division game against the 'Skins today.

According to police, the Giants have agreed to put police in touch with those two players, saying a meeting could be arranged this week after they return home from Washington, D.C.

They also appear to be in no rush to give the cops the gun.

According to police, the Giants told them that a team representative might be able to bring them to a third location where the gun is currently being held.

All this reluctance to talk probably has something to do with the fact that [it is a felony](#) to carry an unlicensed gun in NY—and Plaxico's only gun permit is an expired one for Florida.

Records show New York Giants' star receiver does not have a permit to carry a weapon in the city, meaning that he had no legal right to do so in the LQ Club in Manhattan, where he allegedly shot himself in the leg.

Burrell did have a concealed-weapon permit issued to him in Florida, where he has a home, but records show it expired in May.

And even if it was still valid, New York does not recognize out-of-state permits.

Incidentally, the bullet appears to have gone through his leg, missing all bones and arteries, but piercing some part of that 4.4 speed thigh. Plaxico's hamstring injury—which was already slated to keep him out of today's game—is now the least of his worries.

Gents at Skins

Look, the Gents are going to win the NFC East. And they're going to continue to be a superb team even without Plaxico. But all this distraction is precisely the kind of thing that gives the Skins an opportunity to win this game and keep up with the Boys in the hunt for the top wild card spot in the NFC. And since Zorn is a much nicer coach than Coughlin, I'm gonna say the Skins stay focused and beat the champs today.

Bears at Vikes

Yes, they still do let one NFC North team come to the playoffs (figuring that, on average, the division is much stronger than the NFC West). And the winner of today's game ought to be the favorite to win the division. This will be a contest against two great running backs and two decent defenses. I think Childress will goof something up and give it to the Bears. But then you never know whether Da Bears will have a last minute penalty to give the game away. Ah! NFC North—who couldn't love it?!?! I'll go with Da Bears on this one.

Stillers at Pats

Remember when everyone but me and a few other diehards believed that Matt Cassell was gonna sink the Pats' season? You know, Matt Cassell, the guy who has thrown two-straight 400-yard passing games? Well, I'm going to take this opportunity to say "I told you so" now, before the Pats meet the best defense in the league today, just in case I don't look so smart around 7PM (besides, it's about the only thing I've been right about this year). In any case, I think this game will be decided by the Pats' D—can those old farts chase down Rotty after the sieve-like Stillers O line breaks down? I say yes, if only because a Pats loss today would make bmaz even more intolerable with his friggin' "J-E-T-S" inanity than he already is.

Those are the marquee games today, but the potential surprises include Colts at Brownies (remember, the Brownies have been the only team

to beat that other Manning this year), Ravens and Bengals (yeah, the Bengals suck, but screwing up the Ravens' shot at the AFC North is the kind of game they might pull off), and the Falcons at San Diego (I predict Michael Turner will have a much bigger game than the guy he used to back up).

Plus, how much fun will we have with everyone at their mother making fun of Plaxico today?

TRASH TALK - THANKSGIVING STUFF YER FACE EDITION

It's Turkey Day!!! Time to get fat and happy people. And then, when you cannot have one more round of food, you simply *must* have one more wafer thin mint! Or perhaps a Savoy Truffle.

Hey, is anybody out there having the John Madden specialty of [Turducken](#) instead of turkey?

Okay, this is a short trash talk for the Thursday Thanksgiving Day games only. Let's get down to it:

Titans at Lions: That's right, the masaccios are invading the Wheelhouse. If not for Brett and those pesky Jets, this would likely have been the first time in history that an 11-0 team visited an 0-11 team. Still pretty freaking close. Jeebus, and who says Ford doesn't need a bailout? Cause William Clay Ford sure [needs some kind of assistance](#) here with his kitties. Just brutal. Makes me feel proud of the Bidwells (That's bad; really bad). On the other hand, a rejuvenated Kerry Collins, Chris Johnson, a tough defense and the always solid as a rock steady coaching of Jeff Fisher has the Titans going strong and tied for the best record in the league with the Elis. This is a tough call, but

I think I'll roll with teh former Oilers.
Football in Michigan will be a lot better next year. Has to be; the laws of physics say it simply cannot get worse. Jeebus.

Seahawks at Cowboys: The Seahawks fell 20-17 at home to the Skins last week, and have now lost four straight games. The do have Hassle back now. Not sure what else, if anything, they got going though. The Boys on the other hand look to be gelling and rounding into form now that Tony Romeo is back in the swing of things. T-Oh is even catching and running wild again. Cowboys roll.

Cardinals at Eagles: Donovan McNabb, heck really the whole team, has gone wobbly. Thankfully they have very understanding and patient fans in Philly, else they might get a little testy with the Iggles. Oh, wait, these cats booed and pelted freaking Santa Claus. The Cardinals with Kurt Warner and their high powered offense ought to kill the disjointed Eagles. Ought to. But these are the Cardinals. With a Bidwell owned team, the light at the end of the tunnel is *always* an oncoming bullet train. And the game is at night and outdoors; the ball will be cold and hard and hands frozen. Not a good combo for the fumble prone Kurt Warner. Eagles rebound for a much needed win.

TRASH TALK - CLASH OF THE TITANS EDITION

It's trash talk time again. And this week we have a great slate of games, so let's get down to the nitty-gritty. I know, I know, we've got to get this guy out of our hair, but once again the world seems to revolve around randiego. You've got a dynamic blog owner, and a loyal janitor, and *still* the world revolves around a surfer dude from San Diego. Go figure. Must be

teh Rio Grande Mud that Mr. and Mrs. Randiego are stuck in with their Texas Tech jones.

NCAA: The mondo game of the week is the Texas Tech Red Rayduhs of Lady Randiego versus the Oklahoma Sooners. This game is not just huge to our favorite surfers, this is, indeed, the biggest game of the week for the nation. Let's take a look at the breakdown for the game [courtesy of Fox Sports](#):

The biggest game in the nation, the Red Raiders are playing to reach the Big 12 championship game and possibly the national championship game, while an Oklahoma victory can throw the Big 12 South division into a tiebreaker scenario that would involve Texas Tech, Texas and Oklahoma. The Sooners have never been more explosive on offense than they are right now, gaining 674, 528, 508 and 653 yards, respectively, against Kansas, Kansas State, Nebraska and Texas A&M. The biggest difference has been a running game that's taken off behind a line that's once again living up to its preseason expectations. Chris Brown and DeMarco Murray have combined for 1,623 yards from the tailback position. At Texas Tech, everything seems to be fine-tuned in coach Mike Leach's "Air Raid" offense. QB Graham Harrell is quickly approaching the 5,000-yard mark, WR Mike Crabtree is playing better than his Biletnikoff Award-winning season a year ago and the running game has never been stronger under Leach. Tech is averaging 132.6 yards per game (No. 73 in the nation). First won to 50 wins? Perhaps.

FAST FACTS: Red Raiders – The offensive line has yielded 15 sacks in a whopping 622 pass attempts. ... The Raiders are one of five teams in the league with at least 20 sacks. ... The offense is 48 of 58 on trips to the red zone. Of the 48

scores, 43 are touchdowns. Sooners – Lead the nation in scoring, averaging 51.4 points per game. ... LB Travis Lewis ranks 10th nationally in tackles, registering 10.5 per game. ... OU is 9-9 under Bob Stoops when playing higher ranked teams at home.

Sam Bradford is a very fine quarterback, and Bob Stoops always has a tough defense. But I think Graham Harrell, Michael Crabtree and teh Rayduhs de Rojo will rule the day in Norman. Sorry Freep, the Sooners are later.

This is kind of scary, but most of the rest of the good matchups are in the Big 10. Not sure what kind of alternate reality that puts us in, but there you have it. And of those, let's face it, the biggest is still Michigan at the Ohio State University. Big Blue goes to the Big Horseshoe. Gonna have to vote with my heart instead of my head and root for the Wolverineenies. It has been a tough year on EW's local gridiron scene. The Lions; well, good grief, they couldn't be worse if Charlie Brown was their kicker and Lucy Van Pelt their holder. Then Big Blue has a far worse rebuilding year under Rich Rodriquez than anybody envisioned. So EW needs some pigskin cheer up there. Go Big Blue!

The other Big 10 tilt that is prime would be Michigan State at the Penn State JoePas. Should be a good game, hope it is not Paterno's last game in Happy Valley. Also keep your eye on BYU at Utah; it is actually a very important game. BYU is tough, but if Utah gets by them, and Boise State wins out too, it is going to seriously screw with the BCS fatheads. Here's hoping.

NFL: The game of the week is the J E T S Jets, Jets, Jets at masaccio's Titans. Now this is an interesting clash. It is a Clash of the Titans, because, you see, the [original name of the Jets](#) in the old AFL was the Titans. So, there you go. Here's the rundown:

Not so long ago, Brett Favre and Kerry Collins weren't even expected to be starting this season. Now two of the NFL's oldest and most experienced quarterbacks will square off in the most highly anticipated game of Week 12.

...

Collins has thrown for 519 yards with five touchdowns and one interception in road wins over Chicago and Jacksonville. He hadn't thrown for 200 yards in any of his previous eight games, during which he totaled three TD passes and three interceptions.

...

Favre's been able to rely more on the rushing attack, which has averaged 163.8 yards and scored eight touchdowns over the last five games. Thomas Jones tops the AFC with 854 rushing yards and will be seeking his third straight 100-yard game after running for 104 in a 34-31 overtime win over New England last week.

...

Favre will be challenged by a Titans defense which has given up the fewest points in the league, is tied for second with 15 interceptions and ranks third in the AFC with 28 sacks – 10 in the last three weeks. Star defensive tackle Albert Haynesworth has seven sacks and keys a defense which has allowed one 100-yard rusher all season.

You know where I'm going. That is exactly right, I am picking the Titans all the way baby.

The second big game of the week, and it is almost surreal to say this, involves the Arizona Cardinals. Crikey, this must be an alternate reality. The Gents are coming to town to hook up with the Cards in teh [Big Toaster](#). The Giants at 9-1 and the Cards at 7-3 are arguably the two best teams in the NFC and this should be a whale of a game. Kurt Warner is literally have another MVP caliber season, and it is no joke that Larry

Fitzgerald and Anquan Boldin are the best receiving pair in the league. If you haven't seen much of these two, take a gander, they are something special. Then there is Bad Eli Manning that is. Don't know if y'all are aware of this or not, but EW ain't really a fan of the Manning brothers. Any of them. Must have something to do with the Pats, I dunno. It's not like they have beaten the Pats out of the championship, first one brother, then the other or anything. Oh, wait.... Cards are really tough at home and are starting to really look good. I'm taking them in an upset. Jeebus I know I'll regret betting on the damn Cards. Oh well.

Next, we have the Pats at the Fish. This is arguably as big a game as the first two. Both teams are 6-4, but the Dolphins are 2-1 in division play while the Patriots are 2-2. In their first meeting of the season, the Dolphins blew out the Patriots at Foxboro by 25 points; this game looks to be much different. If the Dolphins can manage to pull out a win, they will really have the inside track for a playoff berth and the Patriots will be hurting. The Pats won't be fooled by the Dolphins wildcat formation this time and will win easily.

Okay that brings up the last game on this week's review list. That would be the Colts visiting the Chargers. Now it's a good thing that I was able to pick the Patriots over the Dolphins, because much to Marcy's chagrin this game involves another one of those evil Manning brothers. And, boy is she going to hate this, it looks to me like the Colts are going to turn the Bolts home into Peyton's Place. There just isn't much to say here except that the old Norval Turner, that we all know and love, is back in all his glory; and that, combined with a couple of big injuries have left the San Diego SuperChargers in a world of hurt. But other teams manage to pull together past key injuries (read Cassell and the Pats still putting up a show without Brady, Harrison and Thomas), but the Bolts have tanked. That's Norval folks. colts win this and keep their surge toward the

playoffs on track (not Palin).

Epilogue: First off, the video today is from that L'il Old Band From Texas. It is a live version from 2003 of *Just Got Paid Today* from ZZ Top's ~~first~~ second (h/t Bell) album, Rio Grande Mud. The bearded boys can still crank. [This video](#), *Francine*, is what I had in mind when I set out today, but this is a family blog (Great video but very brief, maybe 6-8 seconds of semi-nudity) so I let discretion be the better part of rock and roll valor.

☒ Secondly, a bittersweet farewell to a true all time great in sport. A woman who dominated her sport arguably like no other, the female Tiger Woods, has played her last match. [Annika Sorenstam](#). Annika was maybe, for a four or five year period, the most dominant golfer on the planet; no less than Tiger Woods made that statement. Sorenstam is the only female golfer in history to have shot a sub-60 round in competition and finishes off with ten major titles and 72 LPGA victories for her career. She was the individual NCAA champion *as a freshman* at the University of Arizona. Her 90 international tournament wins as a professional make her the female golfer with the most in history. Best of all, she was one of the classiest people ever. Cheers Annika, best of luck and thanks for the memories.

TRASH TALK - POST THROWDOWN ACTION

Okay, we shot our wad a little early this week with the special [Thursday Throw Down](#). But man, what a game. J - E - T - S Jets, Jets, Jets! Okay, enough of that; the Pats will be back, and the Jets have to deal with masaccio's Titans next week, so it is a temporary euphoria. Let's get down to bizness; down the rabbit hole we go!

NCAA: randiego swears the Texas Tech Red Raiders are da bomb. But not this week, they have a bye and won't face battle until November 22 when they travel to Norman to ~~beat~~ meet Freep's Boomer Sooners. That leaves the [big game of the day](#) as the Ole Ball Coach and his South Carolina Gamecocks invading the Gators down in the Swamp.

Florida already has wrapped up the SEC East, but needs a win to keep its BCS title hopes alive. It will be the second trip back to Florida Field for South Carolina coach Steve Spurrier, the former Gator coach and Heisman Trophy winner who guided the Gators to their first football national title in 1996. The Gamecocks head to Gainesville with a lot of confidence after winning six of their last seven. Both teams are ranked for the first time since Spurrier took over in Columbia. It's a classic matchup of the SEC's top defense (South Carolina) against the SEC's highest-scoring offense (Florida). Florida has averaged 46.5 points per game during its current five-game winning streak. Quarterback Tim Tebow has been running the ball better of late since suffering a hyper-extended knee against Arkansas. Tebow has rushed for five touchdowns in his last two games. Wide receiver Percy Harvin is third in Southeastern Conference in touchdowns with 12 (five rushing, seven receiving). The Gamecocks lead the SEC in total defense (256.5 yards per game) and rank third in points allowed (15.6 per game). LB Eric Norwood is coming off a three-sack performance, and South Carolina picked off a season-high three passes a week ago. Tebow exploded on South Carolina last season. The defense needs to find a better way to corral him or South Carolina will suffer a similar result.

Other games of note include: Oklahoma State at

Colorado; Ralphie and the Buffs are tough at Folsom Field, but they don't have enough for OSU this time. Boston College at Bobby Bowden just got a lot harder for FSU since they just suspended their entire receiving corps. Southern Cal is going to piss on the Stanford Tree; Harbaugh used up his magic last year, not gonna happen again this year. Keep your eye on Boise State and Utah too; they are both still undefeated; should still be so after this weekend, they are each clearly better than their respective foes, but their games are always a lot of fun.

NFL: There are maybe more glossy games, but I think the most interesting may be a good old fashioned Black and Blue Division matchup of Da Bears at Le Cheeseheads. Just doesn't seem right to be talking about this game in the middle of November, in Green Bay, and not have Brett Favre in the mix. But Brett's a Jet now, so it's Aaron Rodgers against a gimpy Kyle Orton. Better than Rex Grossman though. Da Bears are 5-4 and the Pack are 4-5; if the Bears win, they have the upper hand and the momentum for the division and the Pack is slack. But if the Cheesers put on a good show and nail down a solid win, all bets are off and the division is up for grabs with the Vikes in the mix too. Pack sack Da Bears.

The next curious game is teh Bolts at the Stillers. San Diego is an enigma; no clue what their bag is. The Stillers looked for the first six or seven weeks like one of the three or four best teams in the league; then injuries set in and they went a little wobbly. I guess there is a chance that the Chargers pop out of their doldrums and crank out a win; but I'll leave my chips with Big Ben, wounded wing and all.

Titans go big game hunting for Jaguars in Jacksonville. Normally I would pick the Jags for the upset because they always give the Titans fits. But I am tired of predicting the Oilers, er Titans, to lose every week and having masaccio chime in with the latest win total. Titans win this one. Also, the 'Boys go after

Skins in DC. The return of Romo. If he leaves Jessica back at Southfork, his return will be enough juice to gin the 'Boys up for a much needed win. Also Ray Lewis and the Ravens visit the Gents. I think Ray Ray is going to go wild and it will be a lot closer than most think; not enough though, and there will be enough Good Eli to pull out a close win.

Well, that's the roundup for this weekend. Hoop it up, and trash the joint; and, find somebody to love, will ya?

TRASH TALK - THURSDAY THROW DOWN SPECIAL EDITION

It's here baybee!!

Marcy's Pats are hooking horns with bmaz's New York Bretts. Tonight!!

Unfortunately, it is on the craptastic NFL Network (cable or sat); but get thee to a TeeVee!

There is always something special about a NY versus Beantown sporting match, and it is not just when the Yanks take on the Sawx. In week two of the season, a still reined in Matt Cassell led the Pats to a 19-10 win, although the game felt a little closer than that most of the way. Since that time, Cassell has come into his own a bit. Tom Brady he ain't; but he does look to be getting to be at least comfortable and competent. The Pat's defense is a little depleted since then though. Roidney Harrison is out, maybe career over; and last week, Audalius Thomas was lost. Considering the age of Bruschi and some of the others, the loss of Thomas, a big time defender, hurts.

The Jets have come into their own too. While not at the comfort level he was in GB, Favre looks to have settled in to the Jets offense. Somehow, I think his shoulder is hurt just a tad though, the old zip isn't quite there, although he is still better than most. More importantly, Thomas Jones is untracked and the jets offense is balanced and not relying as much on Brett. On the downside, both key receivers, Cotchery and Coles are slightly dinged, but will play. The Jets defense is really coming together now and Kris Jenkins is a wrecking crew all by himself. The Jets also just signed Ty Law to help the secondary, and with his knowledge of the Pats passing game, he should be a plus.

Okay, none of you mopes on the sidelines! Pick a side and let's get it on!

emptywheel here. First off, where does bmaz get off, with a mid-week Trash Talk? No sooner do the Democrats get in office, I guess, and they're mandating mid-week recess and whatnot. Mostly I think bmaz did it so he could boast that Eric Mangini bought himself some expertise on the Pats with Ty Law; one might ask, of course, why Mangini's own experience with the Pats does him no more good than allow him to tattle once or twice to the teacher.

Which is really what bmaz is about here. He'd like to pitch this as a battle between BillBel and Favre. When of course, it's really a battle between BillBel's Video Cheats and the Mangy Manginis. Besides, as goofy and infectious as Favre's smiles are, bmaz neglected to mention that [someone else](#) has been smiling on the Pats in the last week or so—and that's got to be good luck. Doesn't it?

Whatever. This game is going to be decided by the defenses—and the Jets are improving wildly there. But I'm not sure that means Mangini is ready yet to beat his hated mentor.

TRASH TALK - ELECTION WEEKEND SPECIAL EDITION

Down to the nitty gritty. The big game is Tuesday. No, [CTMET](#), I am not talking about University of Buffalo v. Miami of Ohio. I am talking The Obama State U v. McCain Community College. This OSU isn't in the Big 10, and we are expecting victory baby!

But the good old boys at ESPN have been scheming to game the pre-election scene. Here is the [play ESPN is running](#):

On the eve of the presidential election, with "Monday Night Football" from Washington as the backdrop, candidates Barack Obama and John McCain are planning to participate in one-on-one interviews on ESPN via satellite.

...

"We worked with our partners at the NFL to schedule a Monday Night Football game in Washington on this special night, and this presents a unique opportunity for John McCain and Barack Obama to reflect upon the last few months and address a large primetime audience on the final day of the campaigns," Norby Williamson, ESPN executive vice president, production, said in a statement.

It will be the first NFL game played in the D.C. area on the Monday night before a presidential election in 24 years. The Redskins defeated the Atlanta Falcons 27-14 on Nov. 5, 1984; Ronald Reagan was re-elected the following day.

The Redskins, in fact, are an accurate barometer for presidential elections. According to Steve Hirdt of the Elias

Sports Bureau, who coined the term "Redskins Rule" in 2000, the following bromide has held true for the past 17 presidential elections: If the Redskins win their last home game prior to Election Day, the party that won the popular vote in the previous election wins the White House; if the Redskins lose, the party that lost the popular vote in the previous election wins.

In this Monday's case, a Steelers win would forecast an Obama victory; a Redskins win would indicate a McCain win.

Lovely. The last time we did this, Reagan won. And we are relying on the Steelers to win this time if we want Obama in the White House. Hope Willie Parker [is back](#). On the plus side, maybe the Stillers will remember the pandering lie McCain pulled using them as a [stage prop](#):

And then McCain told a rather moving story about his time as a P.O.W. "When I was first interrogated and really had to give some information because of the pressures, physical pressures on me, I named the starting lineup, defensive line of the Pittsburgh Steelers as my squadron mates."

"Did you really?" asked the reporter.

"Yes," McCain said.

"In your POW camp?" asked the reporter.

"Yes," McCain said.

"Could you do it today?" asked the reporter.

"No, unfortunately," McCain said.

Here's one reason he likely couldn't do it today – the Steelers aren't the team whose defensive line McCain named for his Vietnamese tormentors. The Green Bay

Packers are. At least according to every previous time McCain has told this story. And the McCain campaign just told ABC News that the senator made a mistake – it was, indeed, the Packers.

Now *that's* some locker room bulletin board material. Let us hope the Stillers remember the Maine McCain. Funny thing is, knowing McCain, I would place a fair wager that the first story about the Packers was a lie too; there is about zero chance that he would have known even the Packer's line.

Okay, let's get to the games.

National Favre League – Well, we know the Steelers have to beat the Redskins. In DC. Oy. Man, all the games this week are good matchups. Probably the two most interesting are the Cowboys at Giants and Packers at Titans. The 'Boys are due for a resurgence. But not until Romo is back, and that isn't this week. Gents win at home. Packers have three losses; the Titans have none. Titans are 4.5 point favorites; but my gut tells me this is the week the Titans have a blip and the Cheesers eke out a win.

Bretts at the Bills also interesting. I dunno what the deal is there; Bills are at home though, that is a good bet. Favre messed up by not beating the Raiders; if the Jets win that game, they finish the first half 5-3, instead it looks like 4-4. Cards at Rams and Fish at Broncs also pretty interesting games. I am going to take the upset on both; Rams nip the Cards in St. Louis and the Fish run their Red Grange play set through the paper thin Bronco defense.

One other biggie. Peyton v. Cassell. Don't laugh, Cassell is getting more comfortable every game; he is now a competent, if not yet good, NFL quarterback. Colts have been in a major funk; pats way more solid than people would have thought. Marcy isn't going to like this, and I don't have a good feeling about it, but I'm

taking the upset special yet again. Colts and Manning bust out with a win. Oh, and by the way, looks like Tom is getting [down on one knee](#) for Giselle. Good thing it only requires one knee, that is [all he has got](#) these days.

NCAA Gridiron Glory – I want really bad for Texas Tech to whack Texas. Man would that be fun. I am generally for anything that screws with the heads of the twits that populate the BCS Committee, and boy would a Tech victory do that. The other huge game this weekend is Florida at Georgia. Both teams have proved to be more flawed than they were thought to be at the start of the season. Both have overcome the skittish play and seem to be on track now; this is going to be a war. And don't forget the stunt Georgia [pulled last year](#); that left a mark. Tim Tebow runs over the Bulldogs.

F1 Circus – Well, we are down to the last race of the season, the [Brazilian Grand Prix](#). Young Lewis Hamilton of McLaren leads Felipe Massa of Ferrari by seven points and it [boils down to this](#):

Another Formula One season comes down to the last race of the year, with McLaren's Lewis Hamilton and Ferrari's Felipe Massa vying for their first career title at the Brazilian Grand Prix.

In a thrilling season in which seven different drivers won races and as many as four led the series in points, Hamilton arrives in Brazil for Sunday's GP with a seven-point lead over home-crowd favorite Massa.

Hamilton needs only a fifth-place or better finish to ensure he becomes F1's youngest champion at age 23, and the first British champion since Damon Hill in 1996.

"I have to look at things realistically and appreciate that I have another weekend of maximum effort ahead of me," Hamilton said.

Massa retains a chance to become the first non-European driver to win the title since Canadian Jacques Villeneuve in 1997, and the first Brazilian champion since the late Ayrton Senna in 1991. But he has to win or finish second and rely on Hamilton finishing down the field.

Ferrari leads McLaren in the constructor's standings by eleven points; not an insurmountable lead, but a solid one. Last year, Hamilton had the lead over Massa's teammate at Ferrari, Kimi Raikkonen, going into Brazil and all hell broke loose and Raikkonen ended up winning the crown. Although my blood runs red for Ferrari, I think this is Lewis Hamilton's year. Should be a great race to cap off an excellent season. Don't count out Fernando Alonso, he may be out of the championship race, but he has been hot lately and would dearly love to upstage Hamilton and Massa to close out the year.

Well, that is the rundown my wheel friends. Whoop it up, suck some cool ones down, and enjoy the games. Why do we play the games? To [win the games](#) baby! Let's get it on and trash it up!

UPDATE From the comments, per some commenter named Emptywheel:

For those who didn't see this football-related news [last night](#), Brigham Young's direct descendant is telling his church to fuck off:

Former San Francisco 49ers' Hall of Fame quarterback Steve Young has two official "No on 8" signs in the windows of his house in Palo Alto. On Friday, there were also three Halloween-themed signs in Young's yard that also urged people to reject the gay marriage ban.

Young's wife, Barbara, has also donated approximately \$50,000 to the "No on 8" campaign aimed at defeating Proposition 8. Steve Young, answering a doorbell

ring at his home late Friday afternoon, declined to comment about the signs in his yard.

But in an e-mailed statement to the gay rights group Equality California, Barbara Young wrote: "We believe all families matter, and we do not believe in discrimination, therefore, our family will vote against Prop. 8."

Good on the Youngs.

(this week's video is Astronomy by BOC)

EW'S TRASH TALK - JOEPA IS WASHED UP; LONG LIVE JOEPA!

A good deal of bloviating, hand wrenching and general tut tutting was done in the previous off season for NCAA football over Joe Paterno. He is old. He has lost it. His team is out of control. The Nittany Lions are mediocre and must move on to a new era. Blah, blah, blah.

The cognoscenti were saying that in 2004 too. So what did JoePa do? Ripped off an 11-1 season capped by an Orange Bowl victory over Florida State and rival Bobby Bowden, that's what. Followed by two consecutive 9-4 seasons. Don't fuck with JoePa. It just makes him mad. So what did the the self proclaimed football gurus and gods do? They fucked with JoePa. Predictable result; JoePa and the Lions are now 9-0 and just walked out of the Horseshoe in Columbus having killed the local horse, The Ohio State University. And to think, you usually have to wait for a major bowl game for Ohio State to tank. Christmas comes early this year!

Took a day off yesterday to enjoy a truly

spectacular day of the kind of weather and beauty that makes one realize why they live in Arizona and why the summer heat is worth the pain. Trash it up people. Take the hammer out and hit something will ya? I find that teh Big 10 11 is always a fun place to start. Here is a sample; kind of like a sourdough starter kit for football fans, to get you going.

Wow, the Trojans sure beat down the Wolverweenies yesterday in the Big House. Oh, wait, those were just the Spartans, not the Trojans. When Michigan is making Michigan State look like USC, on the home turf in Ann Arbor, you know times are tough.


See, it's easy!

(Today's music video is a reminder that there just ain't nothin like Magic Dick on the lickin stick)

TRASH TALK - ALL YOU KNEED TO KNOW ABOUT TOM

In all the hubbub over the election, debates, McCain inciting racial strife and, of course, our economy continuing to fall off the face of the earth, the usually astute American public consciousness has lost track of a critically important story they usually would be all over. Tom Brady has undergone [yet another knee operation](#). That is not good. Not to mention that Giselle must be getting cranky from the loss of consortium in their love shack. Peyton Manning demonstrated that knee surgeries now come in pairs though, so maybe it is nothing to worry about. You folks up there in Beantown better not let Randy Moss here about this though, because he was just starting to come out of his funk with Cassell.

National Favre League – Jeebus, it really is not a great week for captivating matchups. Check out [the schedule](#), fairly bleak. Brett and the Jets visit Freep country up in Oakland. Maybe Al Davis will suit up, he may still be the toughest goat on the Raiders. Bolts at Bills, Saints at Panthers and Vikes at Da Bears are the only even halfway interesting regular schedule games. The real class, such that it is this week, are the Sunday night and Monday night games, Colts at Cheeseheads and Doncos at Pats, respectively.

 Bowl Division, Smole Division (NCAA) – Okay, I want to come clean; I think the BCS is a bunch of shit. There; now I feel better. Big game of interest to Wheelheads seems to be the Wolverineenies at Joe Pa. Already [the carping](#). Already the [rationalizing](#) from the [Schembechler Whinery](#) Region.

Kansas at Oklahoma appears to be a good game to watch. By far, the most interesting game would look to be Missouri at Texas. Chase Daniel is a pretty special kid, but so apparently is Colt McCoy. The battle between those two will probably be continuing on Sundays for many years into the future. For this year though, Texas looks to have too much for Missouri, and that and home field should carry the day. The other interesting game is LSU at South Carolina. Spurrier has a knack for these situations; Gamecocks in an upset.

MLB – The Sawx are dead. Long live the Sawx! I said when the season started that the Red Sawx may not be all that without their big prick, Curt Shilling. I am sticking with that prediction. Much to the chagrin of Ishmael, Bay State Librul, Neil, Phred and many other fine folks up Beantown way, I just don't think they can pull it out this year. Say what you will about the Shill, but he has "it" when it comes to that last ounce of playoff toughness. It is not just with the Sawx either, the Diamondbacks couldn't do it without the jerk either. MLB is going to commit hari kari, but the series is going to be Tampa Bay and Philly. Hari kari may

be justified.

F1 Circus – This weekend is the penultimate race of the season, the Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai. [From FoxSports:](#)

Championship leader Lewis Hamilton put himself in prime position to claim the Formula One title this weekend by taking the pole position Saturday for the Chinese Grand Prix.

Hamilton set a top time of 1 minute, 36.303 seconds, and will start Sunday's race ahead of Ferrari pair Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa, who were second- and third-fastest.

Hamilton leads Massa by five points in the drivers' championship with two races left in the season. To clinch the title here, he would need to finish on the podium and gain six more points than the Brazilian.

The front row for China is the same as the previous race in Japan, where Hamilton braked too late, forced Raikkonen off at the first corner and consequently received a pit drive-through penalty and finished outside the points.

Renault's Fernando Alonso, who has won the past two grands prix and had vowed to try his best to help Massa win the title, will start from fourth on the grid.

BMW's Robert Kubica, who still has slim hopes of snatching the title, put in his worst qualifying performance of the season and finished in the 12th spot, complaining of understeer.

Hamilton enters the Chinese GP five points ahead of Ferrari's Felipe Massa and twelve up on Kubica. But with both Ferraris right next to and behind him on the grid, Hamilton is going to

have to earn his first title; and it was not until the last race of the season last year that Hamilton lost grip, so it is not over till it is over. It ain't over. Again, the race is tonight, not Sunday morning, on Speed TV.

Trash it up!

TRASH TALK - SOONERS & (FREE)PATRIOTS EDITION

It must be extremely chilly in hell, because I am going to write about the Oklahoma Sooners. Seems they have a game today. Against some chaps with horns. Long ones. It is the Red River Shootout and John Wayne is nowhere in sight, but Mack Brown and Bob Stoops are. I have never thought that much of either one of these guys as game coaches, but they sure keep winning, so I must have it wrong. Boomer Sooner is a six and a half point favorite. Gonna be more than that; Oklahoma wins big. Freepatriot has a big day; but he likes it rough, give him some trash.

Then there are the Patriots. Rodney and gang are strapping the longboards to the Woody and going to visit Randiego. Hope they haven't turned the Trestles [into a parking lot](#) yet. After catching some rollers (you just know that boys from Beantown can't hit real waves), they are going to tilt with the Fighting Bolts. Bolts are favored by 5. I rate it a tossup; Bolts are starting to play better and Cassell is getting more comfortable. Also seems to have discovered that there is a dude named Moss on his team. No idea who will win, but I'll take the Pats and the points.

The good news is that Brett is back. The Bengals have apparently received permission from their parole officers to travel out of state and they

will be breaking and entering the Meadowlands. Jets are solid favorites and Carson Palmer is very iffy with a bum right elbow. Ryan Fitzpatrick is the backup; don't know who he is, probably used to coach the Raiders or something. Jets should win.

The 'Boys at Cardinals might actually be a good game. Big might on that though. I have some inside scoop on the Cardinals for ya. They are freaking losers. Always have been. Just when things start to look up, they tank. Always have. Things are looking up after their blowout of the previously undefeated Bills; probably means they will stink up the joint. But the game is here, and they do play well at home. Except that the Cowboys pretty much consider this home too. There literally used to be as many Dallas fans as Cards fans at games here, but is getting better. I think Dallas beats em down.

Other good games are Bears at Falcons and Jags at Broncs.

The F1 Circus is at Mt. Fuji for the Japanese Grand Prix. Often is wet for this race; once so wet that Nikki Lauda refused to even run. That is considered a mark of shame in F1. These aren't some hillbillies in a Pontiac, they run no matter what the weather is. They don't stop for rain. Weather looks good this weekend though, currently 60 degrees and sunny. Race goes off at 11:30 pm EST tonight; if you go looking for it tomorrow morning, you will have missed it. By the way, my condolences to my friends up north; the Canadian GP has been dumped from the schedule next year, replaced by the Abu Dhabi GP. Brutal. Let's hope Ecclestone comes to his senses and reinstates Circuit Gilles Villeneuve for 2010.

Oh, wait, there are a few boys of summer still playing in the fall. Manny is one of them, and he is kicking ass and taking names. Unfortunately, the rest of the boys from LA are blue. Those big flies that the Phillies hit at home are outfield put outs at Chavez Ravine though. We shall see, but not looking good for

the Dodgers. Sawx continue to rock.

There you go. Trash it up!

TRASH TALK - MRS. O'LEARY'S BOVINE EDITION

Well, I tell ya, the natives are restless out there. Randiego has been mercilessly hammering on the Patriots lately. He has been pounding on me daily to say bad things, very bad things, about the Pats. Even – gasp – that they are washed up and wouldn't be any better even *with* Tom Brady. Lost their mojo when Ashanti Samuel walked out the door. Bad things. I have tried to shield Marcy from it cause, you know, she is so delicate and frail on this gridiron stuff. Now, the good Professor Foland has [joined in the fray](#). Something about Juice Williams, 431 yards and 45 points by the Fighting Illini. In the Big House. Oh my. Oh, and just so the record is clear, yes I know my Sun Devils suck too. What is a poor boy to do?

But, before we get to the NFL, let's take a quick look at

MLB Playoff Baseball – Ruh roh. Just wait until next year. Yep, it is that time in the Windy City. At least on the North Side anyway. Coming soon to the South Side Sox. Talking about some mojo, that [damn cow of Mrs. O'Leary's](#) was one powerful critter eh? Brutal. Can't blame Bartman this time. Halfway through the season the Dodgers had nuthin; but along came Manny being Manny, and now they are all manned up. Derek Lowe knows how to pitch big games; looks like the boys in Blue are in the NL catbird seat.

In the junior circuit, with that confounded designated hitter thing, it is looking very much

like a Sawx-Rays (sans Devil) finale. What the hell happened to the Halos? And Beckett is pitching game three? Say good night Gracie. Oh, one more thing. Where is the Team That Dumped Torre? Oh, that's right, they are at home. Or Madonna's crib. But Joe Torre, he has already won another playoff series. Hank the Skank Steinbrenner ain't real bright.

National Favre League – Not much to talk about with the Bretts on their bye week. Pats looking for an upset over the Niners; looking for friendlier ground than Miami. Those fish are tough you know. Maybe randiego will let us know how the Frightning Bolts stack up, because the Bolts are headed to Miami Sunday. The Redskins at Iggles and Buccos at Broncs appear to be the class games of the day. If Jason Campbell keeps on improving on his solid play, the Skins are going to be surprisingly good; their defense has been first rate for quite awhile now, with offense, you really got something there. Eagles are schizo; you just don't know from week to week what is coming. I rate as a toss up, slight edge to the Skins. Cutler and Broncos should dispatch the Bucs at Invesco. The other game that is really interesting is the Titans at Ravens. Both have not good, but great, defenses. Both fairly conservative offenses. I like young Chris Johnson better than Magahee at this point though, and that should be the difference. Titans go to 5-0. Masaccio had them at 5-0 already last weekend, but he gets it for real this weekend.

Back to the NCAA for a minute. A special congratulations to the two Commodores fans, Blue Texan and Masaccio. No, not the Lionel Ritchie Commodores. The Randy Vandys! That's right, Vanderbilt is Five and Oh baby. Who'd a thunk it?

The F1 Circus is off until they hit the Mt. Fuji Circuit next weekend, and, yawn, those good old boys are still driving their lumbering sacks of American iron around in circles somewhere.

Crank up the BBQ and pop open a cold one. The

games are on! Unless, of course, you are a Cubs fan; in that case you will have to wait until next year. Or fight in the streets.