

MONZA, US OPEN, NFL AND OTHER SPORTS TRASH TALK

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piece on the ten year anniversary of my 2011 50 year anniversary post on the 1961 Italian Grand Prix, first American Champion in history (there have only ever been two), on the weekend of the 60th anniversary of the same. But we often scold people for wasting electrons and column inches needlessly. So, here is a link to my September 10, 2011 post "Italian Grand Prix 1961-2011: Monza, Death of von Trips & A Yankee Champion". Everything is there. If you like F1 and have not seen it before, think you will like it. Tomorrow may be the 12th of September, but it is truly the 60th anniversary for the Italian GP at Monza. Qualifying was lackluster, but Monza truly is the Temple Of Speed on the F1 circus.

The NFL kicked off Thursday night with a fantastic game between the 'Boys and Bucs. Both teams played really well, but never give the ball back to Brady with 1:20 left on the clock. Lot of great games on tap for Sunday.

Talk about anything and everything, sports or not. The relentless 9/11 hagiography is mind numbing. Thanks goodness for college football and the absolutely amazing Women's Final at the US Open that is about to, in minutes, come off between two amazing and captivating teenagers, Leyla Fernandez, a 19 year old (only by less than a week!) takes on former Canadian and current Brit, Emma Raducanu. They are truly amazing players and young personalities.

Captivating is actually an understatement. Take a look at them, you will not be sorry.

THE SHOCKING BLUE STREETS OF MONACO

Monaco is part boring as a procession, and part the most special race on the calendar.

THE NFL DRAFT 2021 AND PORTUGUESE GP

Down to the stretch in the NBA, and a week from now the order will be pretty fascinating. Some fun stuff in MLB, what with the Cubs Rizzo striking out MVP Frederick Freeman. Both were incredible sports about the encounter, and it was great. But MLB is early still.

So, to the NFL Draft. One seems sure to the Jags with Trevor Lawrence, and two, seemingly so to the Jets Jets Jets. Three, however, seemed to be either Mac Jones or Trey Lance to the Niners. But Mr. Discount Doublecheck threw a monkey wrench into the equation by saying he wants out of the Packers. That is a real monkey wrench. The Patriots still need a future at QB; might it be Jimmy G, might they move up for a rook? Nobody knows what Bill Bel will do. Suffice it to say that tonight's first round will be pretty exciting. After that, the draft far less so.

As to the Portuguese Grand Prix, well, it should be interesting. I honestly thought Lewis Hamilton was done at the Emilia-Romagna GP at Imola when he went off into the kitty litter for what seemed like an interminable amount of time.

But Lewis is Lewis, and he covered to not only place in the points, but finish in P2. Insane, but that is quintessential Lewis. So, despite all that, Hamilton still leads the Drivers Championship by a point over Verstappen, 44 to 43, with McLaren's Norris an admirable, but yet distant, third at 27.

So, on to Portugal, what will happen? The weather looks okay at Potimao for the maiden cruise of the F1 "sprint qualifying". As you might guess, I am not crazy about "sprint qualifying" for F1. The problem with F1 has been with lack of field competitiveness as to equipment, not drivers or qualification stunts. This TV stunt bullshit is not the F1 I grew up with. And it sucks.

So, let's get it started with the NFL Draft, the Portuguese GP and any and everything else.

THE F1 CIRCUS BEGINS AGAIN, AND RIP TO A FRIEND

F1 ought not be in the homes of authoritarian despots in places like Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. They are there on the 2021 calendar nevertheless. And away we go with the 2021 season starting in Bahrain.

STARS, GUITARS AND GEAR TRASH TALK

Now two weekends post Super Bowl. F1 is quietly gearing up, though there is nothin overly

interesting until March 26-28, and it is now somehow in the authoritarian hellhole of Bahrain, where F1 should not even be, instead of Australia. So there is not much in the Trash Talk world right not. But it seems a talk thread might be useful for decompression.

There is one thing of note, the wonderful Naomi Osaka has just won her fourth slam at the Australian. Next to Serena and Venus, Osaka already has more Slams than any other woman currently playing. Doubt she will really catch up Serena (23), much less Margaret Smith Court (24), but a hell of a start on her career, and she can really play. Some real competition in that rarified air though, with Fraulein Forehand Steffi Graff at 22, Helen Wills Moody at 19, and Martina and Chrissy both at 18. Osaka is a real breath of fresh air.

A while back, somebody mentioned guitars in the middle of one of Rayne's threads and I, wrongfully, responded and helped hijack her post's comment section. My bad. So, since we do do music here too, and in lieu of nothing else, a real post for such discussion.

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confines of Casa de Bmaz. The main axe is a black Fender Strat. It plugs into a Crate Twin Twelve mostly tube amp. No, the Crate was not my choice, it literally got thrown in for \$100 or something by the guy I bought the pristine (seriously, the thing had the original price tag on it and came in a hard Gator case) Stratocaster. That was impossible to turn down,

but since I don't play much, has been sufficient to keep me from procuring the Marshall half stack I have always wanted. So, yay and ugh at the same time.

Also have an acoustic, it is an Olympia, which is made by Fender. It could use some new strings about now, but it is really pretty nice. It is a hand me down from when Mrs. Bmaz decided she wanted to learn to play guitar and bought it. I told her bar chords were necessary, and hard, especially on an acoustic. That foray didn't last too long, and while not what I would have bought on my own, it is now mine, and, again, it is not bad at all. Don't play it much either.

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harp. No, not the huge variety, but the thing is really sweet. Another Mrs. Bmaz acquisition. Thing is, Lady Bmaz is, by a light year, the only real musician here. She has played piano since was a small child, and was at one point a real bonafide prodigy. She can not play for a year and still whip off concert level stuff.

Which brings up what got me going on this music equipment thing. A piano. A friend is aging and cleaning up some stuff and has just given us a Steinway baby grand. Have not even gotten it yet, and it will cost a small fortune to get professionally moved. We already had a Kawai baby, but this is too good to pass up.

Am sure Rosalind will drop in, and so must

mention the ukulele here. Think it may have come across on the Lusitania or something, and at some point got a fraternity tattoo on by an in-law. It was rescued from said in-law's basement when they were moving on out. Think Rosalind looked at it, if not tried to play it. That is more than I have ever done.

Music today is Bite The Bullet by Neil Young and Crazy Horse, from American Stars and Bars, and it is spectacular. So, what gear you have, and why? Chat it up.

LAST TRASH TALK BEFORE THE ELECTION

The long national nightmare is hitting the home stretch, Sean Connery has passed, and there is some great football and F1 on tap this weekend.

TEN DAYS TO GO TRASH TALK

There are ten days left to insure the Trump Train leaves the station forever. Let Mr. Springsteen tell you to drive that train on out of town.

NFL SUNDAY TRASH

TALK

I mostly boycotted NCAA football yesterday, and got busy with an absolutely insane F1 race from Italy. It is the Tuscan Grand Prix, celebrating Ferrari's 1000th F1 race. But it is a shit cookie cutter circuit, and the course is WAY too narrow. It is nuts, eight cars have already crashed out, and there has been safety cars out and two, TWO full red flag suspensions of the race.

Anyway, after the Chefs cooked and BBQ'd the Texans on Thursday, today brings a full slate of games. Brady and the Bucs have a very tough opener with the Saints. Probably can't win it, but we will start to see how they are going to look. Cards are choking on the Santa Clara air to play the 49ers.

Eh, it is a new year for everybody. Discuss!

DEAD FLOWERS ON KENTUCKY DERBY DAY

Hi there Trash Talk fans and fannettes, we are back. Personally, I think opening up BIG and SEC football is a declaration of pandemic war on society, especially in some seriously at high risk areas without the ICU resources to cover in a mass problem. Led by Trump, however, this seems to be the clarion call dopes cannot refuse.

Is it the move of voices like Trump, the flailing NCAA athletic departments, or the craven interests of Insta Sports betting interests like Fan Duel and Draft Kings who are desperate to make money now because their precarious and sick corporate lives depend on it? Don't sleep on the latter, and pay attention as to the ever increasing Insta Sports Betting

commercials soak up ad time on ESPN (and their chief skill, Mike Greenberg) and other sports channels. It is a full on push, and they cannot wait for the pandemic to end if they are to take over the gaming world. ESPN is all in on this garbage. Why? Because it is big advertising bucks, and money is their business. It is that simple.

Okay, on to the actual sports. First, today is, improbably, Kentucky Derby Day. As my family originally came from Kentucky before the cactus patch, the Derby is something special. Always has been and always will be. The Derby in September, without the people and hats in the stands, seems wrong. But the horses deserve to run in their time, so okay. F1, and even Indy, have proved that closed circuit courses with fast action are still compelling on TV. Frankly, so too has the NBA and NHL "bubbles". So, it will still be interesting to see the Kentucky Derby.

One of our early partners and contributors here at Emptywheel, and even before the formal formation of the Emptywheel blog, was Mary. Mary lives on in our recollections and history, and her family, but will be forever known as the one that put horses in our bailiwick. Something Emptywheel Roving Reporter took to ground. So, when horses are up, the memory of Mary is as well. Today is an improbable, and weird day, for the Derby. But let it be run, for the horses. From CBS:

Though the NFL and Kentucky Derby are never mentioned in the same sentence, 2020 has been anything but usual. Even though the 2020 Kentucky Derby will go off Saturday, Sept. 5 on the brink of Week 1 in the NFL, all eyes will be on Churchill Downs, where 16 of the top three-year-old horses will load up for the 146th Run for the Roses. Tiz the Law won the Belmont Stakes earlier this summer and is aiming to become just the 14th horse in history to win the Triple

Crown and the first since Justify two years ago.

There is also the NBA, and the “embubblement” is working far better than thought possible. The games are great down the stretch.

NFL football, surprisingly, seems not far off. There is no more fascinating and competitive division than the NFC South. Couple of years ago that would have been shocking, now it is a fact. Bruce Arians, Brady and the Bucs are the most interesting story in the NFL this year. Can they really live up to that interest? I dunno about that. What a division to have to deal with, it is imposing. We shall see.

F1 is back again this weekend. Monza. There are a lot of famous historical races. Monza is very much at the top. This is not a normal year, and the front of the field has been more boring than ever in history by my eye. There is actually pretty decent racing behind the front markers and midfield. I will watch, but do not have much hopes for Monza being the nail biting theater it once was.

As summer starts to wane, today’s music will be by the Loving Spoonful. It was almost Donovan with images of the great Sue Lyon, but I think I already did that years ago. So, let’s have a good weekend folks. Rock on and chat about anything. Also, of course, Dead Flowers for Kentucky Derby Day, because there will be few Derby Days here without that.

**THE EMPTYWHEEL
FABULOUS CAR BLOG!**

FORMULA ONE AND CAR FLICKS

So, we shall take a brief respite from the fabulous music blog this weekend to bring you a fabulous car blog. Off to the races!

There has been a shake up in the F1 force. And man is it palpable. By the end of the last circus, it was quite clear that management at Ferrari had come to consider young Charles Leclerc as their number one driver, over four time World Champ and presumptive number one, Sebastian Vettel. It was no secret on the paddock from the people I still talk to. Vettel knew it, Leclerc knew it, everyone knew it. It has so come to pass. The 2020 season driver stables were already set, and they will continue as such. But for the 2021 season, which is now well less than a year away, big changes are afoot.

Vettel is out at Ferrari, and Carlos Sainz is in. Sainz is very, very good, and his family has a rich history in motorsports. He is commonly viewed as a very good pilot, but one hampered by less than first order equipment, and I think that is right. Sainz will have that kind of car now. He and Leclerc will make for a great, and energized young team. That is something Ferrari is not usually known for, but this is a great move, and one for the times at hand. Sainz is leaving McLaren, who is poised to replace him for 2021 with Daniel Ricciardo. This is also a great move for McLaren, who sign up a true number one driver, with numerous F1 wins and podiums, to pair with the still quite young, but promising, Lando Norris. Take note: for 2021, McLaren starts getting Mercedes engines to pair with their already ridiculously good chassis. Don't sleep on McLaren.

Where do the rest of the chips fall? Now there is the great unknown. Vettel is a four time champ, can he find a home at all? Sebastian can still drive, you would think so, but that is up

in the air. Do Hamilton and Bottas stay as a team for 2021? My guess is yes, but that is also a question. The F1 season was supposed to kick off in March with the Australian, but the Covid thing put the kibosh on that. It is tentatively scheduled to start with Austria in seven weeks, maybe for two races, and then Silverstone with two races. They are desperate to get at least a fifteen race schedule in, if possible. And will there be fans in the stands? Initially, it looks like no, but stay tuned.

Okay, since not everybody knows F1 as well, we are tossing in car movies for this weekend. There are a litany of great ones. You know what you have seen and appreciated over the years. I am going to throw out a few of my favorites just to get the ball rolling. They are by no means exhaustive, and not necessarily in a perfectly ranked order.

Grand Prix _ John Frankenheimer's 1966 opus is the gold standard. It is a tad long, but the characters gritty and the performances beyond fantastic across the board. The driving scenes are some of the best ever, as well as John's innovative use of split screen, a legendary move.

Vanishing Point – From 1971, and calling it a cult classic is not giving it enough credit. Spectacular and haunting in a myriad of ways.

They Drive By Night – Directed by Raoul Walsh and starring George Raft, Humphrey Bogart, Ann Sheridan and Ida Lupino. It is both a driving movie and film noir, both at their best. Fantastic.

Two Lane Blacktop – This movie is great. The genius is obvious. Really, you have to see it, and while James Taylor is surprisingly good, keep your eye on Warren Oates, in a legendary performance. Duel from the same year, generally considered to be Steven

Spielberg's first full movie. is very good, but Two Lane Blacktop is better.

It Happened One Night – There has to be room for at least one comedy here, and this is it. Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert are simply perfect, as is the story. Capra and Cohn at their best. Walter Connolly darn near stole the show.

Some honorable mentions in no particular order: Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry, Thelma and Louise, Used Cars (Kurt Russell and Jack Warden were fantastic. A real sleeper, even if a low budget one), Baby Driver (seriously great and a must watch).

Okay folks, rip this joint with your thoughts!