

MID OCTOBER TRASH TALK

Welp, we had a good discussion about the reply function yesterday, but time to move on to some proper Trash Talk.

BRAVE FOR SPEAKING OUT: DR. FORD TRASH ADMIRATION TALK

Okay, the last post indicated a few thoughts as we are on the cusp, and maybe by the time I post this, other side of Kavanaugh confirmation. But Dr. Christine Blasey Ford was brave. Brave. Courageous, not just for herself, but all girls now and all to come. The Kavanaugh confirmation battle may be individually lost, but Dr. Ford set a standard of courage that should stand the test of time. A long time.

I said I would be back with our usual open thread sports Trash Talk, and so here we are.

In the colleges, there are several good games. Texas has already edged Oklahoma in the Red river shootout 48-45. LSU at Florida could be interesting. Jim White was out at a blues bar last night, will he be awake for this?? LSU up early and looking for two in a row in Gainesville. As crappy as Florida State has been so far this year, I smell an upset in Miami. My favorite game of the week, maybe year so far! is Kentucky at the Aggies of Texas A & M. The KY Wildcats are on the most improbably roll so far and are undefeated. But can they take the Aggies in College Station? Tall task! Honorable mention to Notre Dame at Virginia Tech and Utah at Stanford. Think the Domers and Trees win, but they play unpredictable opponents. The local

joes, the ASU Sun Devils, are up at another of my old haunts, Folsom Field at University of Colorado. The Buffs are certainly favored, but the Devils may have something for them. Or not, we shall see!

Okay, in the Pros: The Pats already clocked the Colts and have significant time off until the next game. With Josh Gordon and the return of Edelman, things are looking up there. Falcons at Steelers is interesting. Both good teams way underperforming this year so far. Green Bay at the Kittens in Detroit is also interesting. The Pack has underperformed, and Aaron Rodgers been a bit hurt, but if they can come out of Motown with another win, they will be sitting pretty. The Lions desperately need another win to stay in the mix at all. In a battle of terrible teams, the Cardinals visit the 49ers. If Jimmy G were on the field, this would be a no brainer. Still may be. Vikes at Eagles has some gloss to it, but, again, both teams need to step up.

Formula One is at Suzuka in Japan. It is, yet again, raining there, and the circus has grown stale from lack of competition for Mercedes. It is really pretty pathetic.

On a positive note, MLB playoffs are underway, and the Red Sox and Yankees are heating up with Boston taking a narrow win last night in game one in Fenway. Dodgers and Brew Crew seem to be rolling. October baseball is good baseball!

And, that is it. Music today is Brave by Sara Bareilles. She is really good. And Christine Blasey Ford was really brave.

THE END OF THE AIRPLANE TRASH TALK

Okay, after a week of hijacking by Rayne (just kidding if you don't get our humor here), we

return you to your normal Trash Talk programming. This week is going to be a little different of format. We'll talk sports in a bit, but the lead today is music.

I was a rather emancipated kid. I was allowed to pick out what I bought, especially as to music. But when my mother found out I had purchased Surrealistic Pillow by the Airplane, she kind of freaked. This was in late 1967 or so, maybe early 68, I can't remember. But a woman that was totally cool with my childhood fascination with the Doors, the Airplane was a bridge too far. But I already had it, and that was that (Hendrix "Are You Experienced" and Stones "Aftermath" too; think mom may have seen a problem child early on, but didn't stop it).

Anyway, back to the Airplane, they were one on the great, and most seminal bands ever. I am on at least my third copy of Surrealistic Pillow on wax by this point, but still have a very early version of Bless Its Pointed Little Head (as well as a newer one), the Airplane's ground breaking live album from The Fillmore that came out a little over a year later. The Airplane rocked it up.

And, so, we come to the basis for this post today: Marty Balin has died. Now, while most people associate Grace Slick when you mention Jefferson Airplane, it was Marty Balin that founded it. Grace was not even the original female singer, Signe Toly Anderson was. It was originally Marty Balin's band through the initial album "Jefferson Airplane Takes Off". That was before the Slick era, but only by that first album in 1966. The Wiki on JA is fairly decent if interested in further history.

In sum, while not the Beatles or Stones, the Jefferson Airplane were the progenitors of San Francisco based counterculture rock. Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young? JA led the way. The Dead, same. They deserve a better place in history. Now the actual founder, Balin, is dead, as is co-founder Paul Kantner. Grace Slick is a recluse and Jorma Kaukonen and Jack Casady hang

in as elder geniuses, but not seen much. They were all, individually, geniuses, and collectively something even better.

So, today, a remembrance for the original founder, Marty Balin. There will be two cuts to commemorate Mr. Balin. The first is "Clergy/Three Fifths of a Mile In Ten Seconds", from Bless Its Pointed Little Head. It starts slow and then blows up into incredible rock. The second is a live song originally on the first album, Jefferson Airplane Take Off; "It's No Secret", with the original lineup Balin created with Signe Toly Anderson, before the singular presence of Grace Slick became the face of the band with such hits as White Rabbit and Somebody To Love. Enjoy some early seminal San Fran rock.

Alright, there are sports to be discussed too I guess. Sigh. Let's start in the "student athlete" ranks. West Virginia and Texas Tech could be a barnburner and is just starting. I'll take Tech in an upset. I don't think Southern Miss can take Auburn in Jordan Hare stadium unless Brett Favre is coming in off the sideline, but it could be interesting. Penn State at Ohio State and Stanford at Notre Dame are huge national games. No good reason why, but will very gingerly go with OSU and Stanford. Said this before, don't sleep on BYU, and today they are at Washington, that could be an excellent game. Oregon at Cal sounds important, but I just cannot get excited about it, think both are pretenders.

In the NFL, obviously the Fins at the Pats is extremely interesting. Miami is 3-0 and Pats 1-2. OMG! No laughing matter though, if the Fins can roll in and roll Brady and Bill Bel at home, there is REALLY a problem Boston. Same if the Wagon Circling Bills can ride into the Frozen Tundra and eclipse the Pack. I don't think so, but it is really bad if so. Tampa Bay at Bears may be fascinating, will the Buccos start Rapies Winston, or the hot Harvard Hand, Ryan Fitzpatrick? Marcy's Kittenhs at Dallas is kind of curiously interesting, but not that much.

Frankly, the Bronies at Rayduhs may be the biggest unknown and interesting game of the week!

In F1, the circus is in Sochi for the Russian Grand Prix, where Valtteri Bottas has beaten teammate Lewis Hamilton to pole, and both ahead of Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen of Ferrari. Where in the world has the power pace the Ferraris showed early gone?? With Ricciardo and Verstappen far back on the grid, this is Hamilton's race, and with it almost surely another Driver's Championship. It has gotten sad, and I am not sure the "Liberty Media era" of F1 is going to get any better soon.

That is it for today ladies and gents. Hope you enjoyed your flight on Jefferson Airways.

TRASH TALK: POSSESSION IS 9/10THS OF THE LAW

This weekend's Trash Talk has been hijacked – I've taken adverse possession.

MANAFORT PLEA AGREEMENT WEEKEND TRASH TALK

Okay, this post will have nothing to do with Manafort's plea. But this is the big weekend after the Friday of Manafort, and Trash must be talked. This will be a bit of truncated Trash because , well, I am tired after an early

morning yesterday and then spending the rest of the day, and much of the night, trying to settle a couple of things as to the day job.

As to the Joes: I dunno, most of the college games this week look uninteresting. Can Florida State regain their footing and beat Syracuse in the Cuse Dome? You would think so, but FSU has stunk it up so bad to date that you have to wonder. I guess the Irish can handle Vandy at home, but you never know. BYU at Wisconsin could be a lot tougher game than the Badgers want. Probably most think LSU at Auburn is the early game of the day, but Boise State at Oklahoma State may be it. Ohio State may run into a buzz saw visiting TCU deep in the heart of Texas. USC at Texas is getting big buildup, but not sure it is deserved. Washington at Utah may be another curious game. Rice Stadium is not always particularly hospitable (though it sure was when I was there with the Stones in 1994!). Locally, and late, we will be watching ASU at San Diego State. The Devils somehow, miraculously, beat Michigan State last weekend. Can they make it to 3-0 tonight against the Aztecs? I will not bet on that.

As to the The Pros: Cinci already beat the Ravens, and did so rather convincingly. That is surprising. Cleveland is undefeated for the first time in forever, but don't think they can win a shootout with Brees and the Saints in NOLA. The Chargers will kill Buffalo, which is just seriously bad. The Chiefs at Steelers should be interesting. Still no Laveon Bell for the Stillers, but James Connor kicked ass last week. I'll take the Stillers, but young Mahomes and the Chiefs offense look like the real deal.

Miami at the suddenly explosive Jets Jets Jets looks fascinating. I think the Sammy and the Jets keep it going at home. Vikings at the Cheeseheads will be interesting IF Rodgers and Adams are on the frozen tundra at home. If not, then Kirk Cousins gonna win that game. Cardinals going to get humiliated for a second week in a row against the Rams in LA. The Cards billed

this as the Year of New Hope, instead is the year of nope.

New England Pats at Jacksonville could be highly entertaining. Brady and the boys were not really in synch last week in a win against the Texans. He hooked up well with Gronk and Dorsett, but the whole effort, especially the run game, looked suspect. The Jags may be without Leonard Fournette, but their defense is almost as good and bit as Jalen Ramsey's mouth. Seattle at Bears is a tossup.

F1: Not a lot of comment from me on the circus this week. They are in Singapore at the Marina Bay Circuit for the famous night race. Personally, I find the night race on the heavily cemented in pit at Marina Bay kind of flakey, but they run it nevertheless. The starting grid is Hamilton, Verstappen, Vettel, Bottas and Raikkonen in P1 through P5 respectively. Not easy to pass at Marina Bay, so take your cues from the starting grid.

And, with that, we are off! Also, last week a new commenter by the name of "Bill" suggested a Canadian band called The Big Wreck. I said I would check them out, I did, and they are indeed quite good. Do check them out. So they are this weekend's music. We are a full service blog here at Emptywheel!

TRASH TALK RETURNS FROM THE DEAD

Hi there Wheelheads! Trash Talk has been on hiatus since April, nearly five months, and that was kind of a one off NFL Draft discussion. But real football is back, fall is...almost...in the air (hey, it's going to be 107° here today).

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.

THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED IN F1

This is not to detract from a few other similar dates, Von Trips and Senna come to mind (see here for background on Von Trips at the Italian at Monza and Senna at the closely related venue of Imola).

They are dark days, but bookend maybe the greatest loss in F1, that of Jim Clark, on April 7, 1968. Fifty years ago today. At Hockenheim. I was reminded of this this morning by the great Paul Henri Cahier.

Half a century has gone since that dreaded cold, wet day in Hockenheim when the greatest of them all lost his life. He was humble, the archetypal natural talent driver, and his speed on four wheels was blistering and unrivalled. He was a gentleman too.

Jim Clark. pic.twitter.com/IQStGaTcGz

– Paul-Henri Cahier (@F1Photo) April 7, 2018

It is fascinating how, now, when discussions of “the greatest driver ever” militate towards people like Hamilton and Schumacher, excellent drivers both, but with ridiculous relative equipment advantages, both, in their era of dominance. Too short of shrift is given to the lions of a different, more competitive, age like Jim Clark.

So, on the eve of the Bahrain Grand Prix, a beautiful location, but a shit show that F1 and Ecclestone should have never agreed to or tolerated for human rights reasons, raise a toast to Jim Clark. The man won two World Championships AND the 1965 Indianapolis 500. That is something you will never see again, and he was special.

DOWN UNDER F1 TRASH TALK

Welp, we have not had a Trash Talk thread here in a while. Since the Super Bowl by my



guess. So, maybe it is time, and consider this an open thread because I know not all share the historical love of Formula One that this blog does.

The Circus season is about to open. As usual lately, it will be in Albert Park in Melbourne. And it is a fair and fast circuit to open the season with. Last year provided a shocker with Vettel and Ferrari taking the opening win. The rest of the season devolved into another Hamilton coronation though. Sadly. All things racing are better with better competition.

So this year, coverage of the Circus moves from NBCSN, which was abominable, back to ESPN from whence it came long ago. Personally, I loved Leigh Diffey, Steve Matchett and David Hobbs. But other than that, the always changing, and unpredictably located coverage by NBC was shit. As was their babbling and unctuous on scene pit row "reporter" Will Buxton, who is distressingly still present on the Sky feed ESPN uses. Can we swap Buxton for Leigh Diffey somehow?

ESPN may be doing it on the cheap, but they are doing so by utilizing a far superior European feed. Frankly, I am good with that, so far, so much the better. And we are not even into qualifying yet.

Okay, off we go for qualifying. We shall see that out before I post this, but the race, like The Dude, will have to abide.

And Qualy is off! The start of the season is always pretty exciting. Albert Park is a good spot, but not necessarily one of the classic circuits in F1. Probably a little warmer there than ideal, but still a decent track.

Wow. Just wow. The difference in the feed from the NBCSN years, as well as Fox/Speed, is like night and day. Incredibly superior. Hamilton takes pole, but Raikkonen and Vettel are in P2 and P3, with the Red Bulls of Verstappen and Ricciardo right behind.

Sadly Fernando Alonso in the McLaren starts out the season once again out of the top ten in qualifying. Couldn't even make it into Q3. At some point he will no longer have it, and that day is quickly approaching, but Alonso is not done yet and the fact he is not in competitive equipment is a tragedy in the Circus. Put Fernando in Botas' seat and Hamilton might pucker. But that is not happening, which is a sad thing for F1 fans.

So, we are off with a new season of Trash. It will be inconsistent until football really starts again, but will pop up every now and then. This weekend's music is by Jimmy Barnes, a great Aussie import (for the Australian GP) that never got enough cred here in the states. In this clip, with Joe Bonamassa, but it is totally a Jimmy Barnes song (and it is awesome). Give it a listen, it is pretty great. Other than that, keep rolling, we have a long way to go yet.

WHAT JACKIE WALLACE

SAID, AND LESS IMPORTANT SUPER BOWL 52 TRASH TALK

On Super Bowl Eve, two stories seem prime: The first is about former 3X Super Bowl player and NFL star Jackie Wallace, a story of the difficulty of recovery and redemption, and Will Bunch's story of the heartwarming good of the Eagles.