

GOODBYE EARL TRUMP

“Well, the weeks went by and spring
turned to summer
And summer faded into fall
And it turns out he was a missing person
who nobody missed at all”

Listen, this has been really over since mid Wednesday morning. Am not sure how long The Arizona Republic has called this race, but pretty sure it has been at least a day or more. Even if the drama happy cable networks won't acknowledge it.

But even MSNBC and CNN are chiming. So, it is really over. Goodbye Earl Trump!

Some good college football on today. ASU at USC starts it off. Houston at Cinci could be interesting. Best game could be Gators at the UGA. But the oxygen in the room goes to....Clemson at The Golden Domers. Having Taylor Lawrence out puts a large dent in this, bet Clemson can still put up a fight.

I'll be back in a bit with the pros.

The Chicks with Goodbye Earl.

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.

TUSCALOOSA GETS THE BIRMINGHAM BLUES

The Saban Spreader:

WHAT A WEEK TRASH TALK

Since the period where there was no sports to trash talk about, and this turned into a music blog, it has been hard to get back into the normal trash groove. Let's try to get back to it, because everything else is botched up.


The NBA has actually been pretty good in their bubble, but not that many are watching as normally would. Ditto for the NHL and MLB. For all the clamor to get sports "open" from all kinds of preening politicians, maybe that is okay. Sports are great, but there is a problem going on in the world.

The NFL is also back, and initially without much drama. That worm has turned. The Tennessee Titans had a full on Trump White House like outbreak. The Saints had a scare that, so far, seems to have abated. But then, as they were preparing to make the already perilous trip to

Arrowhead to meet the Chiefs, the Patriots' Cam Newton has tested positive for Covid. That's a problem, both for the Pats and the league. The first three weeks went quite well, but the inevitable has arrived. The Covid has arrived, and not just as to the Trump crew. King Roger (h/t Scribe) we have a problem. It is sad in a way, because Newton's reclamation in New England was one of the really good stories in the NFL so far.

On a more somber note, Bob Gibson has passed. He was simply one of the best athletes in history. He did not just star in baseball, but was also a Harlem Globetrotter. If he had played in the NBA instead of MLB, he might have rivaled Elgin Baylor. He was that good. But MLB it was, and what a career. Read this great story.

Here is the Gibson stat line from just 1968. Keep in mind, this is just ONE season.



.112 ERA
34 Starts
28 Complete Games
13 Shutouts

Yep, that is pretty good.

Music today by Johnny Rivers. No, he did not write all his songs. But neither did Elvis. Johnny Rivers was great. With a hat tip to the Dodge City Cowboy Band.

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 shill, 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 CHICKS ARE OWED AN APOLOGY

Once upon a time, back when the United States was under the leadership of another fairly incompetent Republican President (yes yes, Bush and Cheney look a little better now compared to Trump and Pence, but only because they were actually semi-competent in their evil, but they were still very evil), there was was sensationally good crossover country/pop group known as the Dixie Chicks.

They were country, but never of the “stars and bars” Dixie kind. It was simply an appellation. In fact, they were all pretty forward and progressive thinking and talking. And man did they get in trouble for it. I guess the new term of the day is “cancelled”, which is kind of an idiotic term, but the howlers really did try to obliterate Natalie Maines, Emily Strayer and Martie Maguire. From Wiki:

On March 10, 2003, nine days before the invasion of Iraq, the Dixie Chicks performed at the Shepherd's Bush Empire theater in London, England. It was the first concert of their Top of the World tour in support of their sixth album, Home. Introducing their song “Travelin’ Soldier”, Maines told the audience the band they did not support the upcoming Allied invasion of Iraq and were “ashamed” that President George W. Bush was from Texas. Many American country music listeners supported the war, and Maines’s remark triggered a backlash in the United States. The Dixie Chicks were blacklisted by thousands of country radio stations, and the band members received death threats. Maines issued an apology, saying her remark had been disrespectful; in 2006 she rescinded the apology, saying she felt Bush deserved no respect. The backlash damaged sales of their music and sales of their next album and tour.

In a September 2003 interview, Maguire told the German magazine Der Spiegel: “We don’t feel a part of the country scene any longer, it can’t be our home anymore.” She noted a lack of support from country stars, and being shunned at the 2003 ACM Awards. “Instead, we won three Grammys against much stronger competition. So we now consider ourselves part of the big rock ‘n’ roll family.” Some fans were dismayed, but the group made no clear response.

If you have forgotten, which is awfully easy to do in these pandemic days of Trump, this was a huge deal at the time. The United States government under the Bush/Cheney regime, and the entire country music scene hated on them and ostracized them. It was one of those kind of fulcrum moments. It was not just the Iraq war, it was torture, the unitary executive, free speech, protest....everything was wrapped up, in a cultural way, in the actions of the Dixie Chicks. It was symbolic of the divide.

But Natalie Maines, Emily Strayer and Martie Maguire were bad ass and stuck to their morals and thoughts. They got hammered at the time, but they hung in and are still here bigger and badder ass than ever. They are now just The Chicks, having dumped the Dixie part of their original name. The Chicks are owed a debt of gratitude and an apology for the idiocy and bigotry they faced from the howlers during the Bush/Cheney years, and they are here to let you know they are still on the good side of the cutting edge.

The Chicks have a new song and video out. "March March", and it is truly awesome. A song for this time. I saw it last night at Atrios' joint, and it is really superb. Take a look. Expand it and watch it full screen, it is worth it. This is the music of protest, and in the best way. Music was key in the 60's and it is key now. It spreads far and wide what people feel, whether they are in the streets or at home. The "at home" part seems even more pertinent now in the time of unabated pandemic at the hands of yet another evil Administration. And that is our trash talk for this weekend, get on it!

TRASH TALK: THE NBA'S

INSANE MONEY GRAB SCHEME

I really don't have a lot for this week, but there is this: The National Basketball Association is desperate to join the Grand Reopening. And boy is it a doozy. Via ESPN:

"the NBA's board of governors overwhelmingly approved a proposal for 22 teams to return to play, starting July 31 at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida.

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Before the NBA can come back, teams must reassemble in their home markets. That means bringing back players who left for their hometowns – or, in some cases, home countries – while the league sorted out its plans. Players who return from overseas are likely to be subject to a two-week quarantine upon arrival, under current federal rules.

Teams will continue to hold individual workouts in their facilities. A training camp will start June 30 and last a week. All teams will fly to Orlando on July 7, three weeks before the restart of the season. They will likely have to quarantine for some period; Florida law requires people flying in from some states, including New York, to quarantine for 14 days."

Orlando you say? Yep, they are all going to DisneyWorld to live and play in a "bubble"! The 22 teams include six, including the Phoenix Suns, that were not in playoff contention when the season was stopped. Why, you ask? Well it is literally as simple as more teams equals more games to broadcast, and therefore more money to make for the plantation owners of the NBA. A group that is all white with the exception of Charlotte's Michael Jordan, Sacramento Kings

owner Vivek Ranadivé, who is Indian and Joseph Tsai of the Brooklyn Nets. The players they are summoning to live and play in the bubble are, of course, about 75% black.

But there are some problems, of course. One is the players:

“In a string of tweets on Wednesday, ESPN’s Adrian Wojnarowski outlined conversations that were taking place over the last couple of days including a large group of “several dozen” players who believe resuming play in Orlando is a bad idea.

According to Wojnarowski, because of the dissenting views, the NBA and NBPA are likely to agree on a provision in which players would not be required to join their respective teams for the restart of the season. The two sides are working toward an agreement that would not include disciplinary action for players who choose to stay home, though they would lose a portion of their salary for games missed.”

Yeah, while players want to play theoretically, who wants to live in a bubble far away from home, with limited, if any fun, friends and nightlife so the league can rake in some bucks off of TV revenue? And probably little to no family contact. There will, of course, be no fans and players and coaches will be Carona tested every day. Older coaches may not be allowed, which would be horrid, and, frankly, probably a violation of age discrimination protections.

There are a LOT more issues too, starting with how Covid secure will “the bubble” actually be? It might work. It might not. There are a lot of moving parts on that. As to those parts and all the other problems, this article by Zach Lowe at ESPN is really good, and I urge you to take a read of it.

It will be really interesting to see how this plays out. Were I an NBA player, I think I'd take a pass on this harebrained scheme and say see you next year guys.

Well, that's it. The Zach Lowe piece really is a worth a read to get the full picture. Today's music is, of course, Roundball Rock, one of the best sports theme songs ever. Yeah, I know, it is John Tesh, but with a full big band, and it is pretty good. Hoop it up folks!

THE FABULOUS EMPTYWHEEL MUSIC BLOG: COUNTRY AND WESTERN EDITION!

Welp, it has been another glorious ~~month~~ week living the glorious life in Trump's America. So let's have a little fun and games.

I am pretty much normally a rock and roll person. Ed Walker's opera and Zappa post was wonderful. So, let's change it up a bit. Country and Western! Believe it or not, when I was younger, and before I had a drivers license, I went to a few C&W shows with some family friends. He was, seriously the principal of my grade school, and his wife the school nurse. Both simply fantastic people. And they loved C&W.

Pretty sure the first one was Johnny Cash and the Carter Family. I was not expecting much, I was just going because, well why not? And boy was I wrong. Fantastic. Oh, and I do believe the great Carl Perkins was on guitar for Cash at the time and did a truly rocking version of Blue Suede Shoes.

My recollection is that the second was Charlie

Pride. Again truly fantastic.

What a presence. What a band. What a voice.
Smooth and beautiful.

...

The third was Buck Owens and the Buckaroos. They had a huge following in Phoenix from very early on. In their early years they were serious regulars, if not kind of the erstwhile house band, at the original Phoenix Honky Tonk, Mr. Lucky's.

Mr. Lucky's was a place that regularly hosted some of the biggest names in country music – Glen Campbell, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, Ray Price, Tom T. Hall, George Jones, Loretta Lynn, Waylon Jennings and pretty much everybody else. But Buck and the Buckaroos kind of owned the joint (literally for a while as I recall).

There is truly a lot of great country and Western out there, lets discuss it!

Normal Trash Talk rules apply, anything and everything flies.