

EGYPTIAN TRASH TALK

Time to get the lead out and get America's youth into an American Tahrir Square because the United States needs a revolution as much as anywhere in the world right now. Time for some real hope and change instead of the disingenuous drivel we were conned with in 2008.

SUPERBOWL XLV TRASH TALK

It is SuperBowl Weekend and time for the biggest, and sadly last, NFL Trash Talk for the season. Let's roll!

IN EGYPT A DICTATOR CENSORS POLITICS; IN THE US A CORPORATION CENSORS ... FOOTBALL

To be fair, it was not a highly lucrative football game CBS censored. Rather, it was an ad put out by the players' union opposing the lockout the owners are threatening. I guess anything from a labor union – even a labor union representing a bunch of highly paid celebrities – may count as taboo politics to a big corporation.

Moreover, CBS and other football networks have basically agreed to pay the league billions whether or not a single game is played; the networks are basically paying the owners to

break the union.

CBS is one of four networks that pay the NFL \$4 billion a year to televise the league's games. CBS, Fox, NBC and ESPN, as well as DirecTV, all agreed to pay the NFL in 2011 even if a lockout disrupts or cancels the season – a relationship that the NFLPA finds a little too cozy. In fact, the union filed suit against the league claiming the TV deals provide the owners with guaranteed payment even when no games are played, effectively purchasing “lockout insurance.”

A ruling could come as soon as this week. Mr. Atallah said CBS's decision to pull the ad “is clearly indicative of the relationships the networks have with the league.”

Either they're just so afraid of losing the contract or they're willing to forgo a season for two extra games pitting badly injured players trying to stay in the game.

But whatever it is, it's censorship. And at a time when our government is lecturing dictators in other countries about censorship, you'd think they'd be a bit bothered by corporations using our own public airwaves.

For more on this labor fight, see Lockout Central.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN: CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY

NFL TRASH TALK

Yep, that's right folks, it's the Final Countdown. No, I am not talking about the sudden exit of the narcissistic scold Keith Olbermann from MSNBC, the news will go on just fine without him, and MSNBC will undoubtedly continue to funnel an endless supply of slime through our teevee sets. No, I'm talking about the battle for berths in the SuperBowl. And a couple of really great matchups are on tap. Packers/Bears and Steelers/Jets. There is no way to say any of the four are here by fluke, they earned it and deserve to be playing on Championship Sunday.

First up is the Black and Blue Division throwback grudge match between the Green Bay Packers and Chicago Bears. Tometown versus the Monsters of the Midway. Hey, this just reeks of football the way it was designed and meant to be played. The ghosts of the gridiron will come for this one. Halas, Lambeau, Lombardi, Butkus, Sayers, Starr, Nitschke, the list is endless. At 181 games, it is the longest and most storied rivalry in the history of pro football, with 21 NFL Championships between the two (Green Bay 12, Chicago 9) and four SuperBowl crowns (GB 3, Bears 1). Even better, the game won't be played in any pansy assed dome. Nope, real dirt, sod and grass with heap load of wind and cold. Gonna be a scorcher, with the temperature expected to spike at 20 degrees, wind chill down to 10 with wind off Lake Michigan and possible lake effect snow. Booyah. Perfect.

We saw a preview of the conference championship between these two in the last week of the regular season, with the Pack eeking out a hard fought 10-3 win that they had to have to get in the playoffs at all. But Aaron Rodgers, Clay Matthews and friends have been on a serious roll since then, with convincing wins over Philadelphia and Atlanta. Oh yeah, and it is not just Charles Woodson any more, Tramon Williams has risen from undrafted obscurity to be a big game difference maker. The Bears come in as the

number two seed, but are a little harder to gauge as they had bye and an absolute blowout of Seattle last week. But I have to admit, the Bears are better than I gave them credit for. Their defense is once again tough and aggressive, Urlacher is healthy and playing with abandon and Jay Cutler has seemingly matured into a consistent quality pro quarterback. Despite being at home on Soldier Field, I think the two defenses cancel each other out and it comes down to leadership on offense. On that front, I will take Aaron Rodgers and the Pack for the win.

The nightcap features the Jets and Steelers in the Big Ketchup Bottle. Another game in the elements and on natural ground. From PFT:

In Pittsburgh, weather forecasters are predicting single digit temperatures on Sunday evening when the Steelers and Jets face off at Heinz Field. That could mark the coldest playoff game in team history; the temperature dropped to nine degrees in 2005 when the Patriots beat the Steelers.

Awesome. That's only about 65 degrees less than where my seats for the game are located. The Jets are somewhat remarkably in the conference championship game for the second year in a row and in both years of the still nascent career of Mark Sanchez. You have to give the kid some credit, and a heavy helping to Rex Ryan too, he has really coached them up. They have an attitude and win, lose or draw, that is their character and they roll with it. The brash Jets are the buzz in the air, but the team on the other side of the ball just shows up and does what they always do. Bring their lunchbucket and get physical. Big Ben isn't exactly Joe Montana stylish, but he is a load, is tough as nails, doesn't quit and has a proven knack for the moment and big games. Rex Ryan isn't the only guy who can coach up a defense, Dick Lebeau has been wreaking defensive havoc in the NFL since well before Ryan was born, and he clearly is not

done yet. The Jets have the buzz, but the Stillers have the goods. And Troy Polamalu, Big Ben and Hines Ward. That's a winning formula.

Get the beer, heat up some hot toddy, ready the chips and dip, cause whoa nelly we got a couple of real barnburners today. Here is a little pep talk for the occasion. Let's get it on! Oh yeah, and to Mr. Olbermann, don't let the door hit you where your head is on the way out.

[Editors Note: I sincerely apologize for the link in the first paragraph to The Final Countdown, now that nasty bit of big hair 80's trash earwig music is going to be rattling around your brain, killing perfectly good gray matter, like it has been mine ever since yesterday.]

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFF TRASH TALK

The most exciting weekend of the pro football calendar, divisional playoff weekend is here!

WILDCARD WEEKEND TRASH

bmaz was going to put Trash together, but got distracted by the tragic craziness happening in his state. So until he does something more substantive, here's what I've picked in this weekend's games:

NO-SEA: I'm gonna be stupid and pick the home team, the worst playoff team ever. Just a feeling I'm already beginning to regret watching

the opening drive.

NYJ-Indy: Peyton Manning. Home game. Gotta go Peyton. (Grumble grumble.)

Baltimore-KC: KC is a surprisingly good team, but not consistent. So I gotta go with the Ravens.

GB-Philly: I have a gut feel that Vick is not 100%, maybe not even 90%. And Green Bay's D has been looking pretty damned good of late. So I pick the Packers.

MOVE OVER 2010, IT'S A NEW YEAR OF TRASH TALK!

It is hard to believe 2010 is over and gone already, but nevertheless we have blasted through another year here at Emptywheel full of substantive and important issues on the merits and fun and relaxation with Trash Talking. And another year of football is heading down the stretch. Big props to the TCU Horned Frogs who capped a perfect 13-0 season with a solid game and huge win over the powerful Wisconsin Badgers. By the way, non-AQ schools are now 4-1 vs AQ schools in BCS bowl games, those stuck up holier than thou Big-10 and SEC school officials ought to just shut the fuck up about TCU and Boise State not belonging on the big stage.

After yesterday's debacle, however, you have to wonder if the Big 10 belongs on the big stage. The three yards and a cloud of dusts managed to go 0 for five in New Years day bowl games and actually managed to lose four of them all in the same time slot. In all, Michigan, Michigan State, Northwestern, Penn State and Wisconsin all lost. Michigan and Michigan State just flat out got embarrassed. Pretty bleak, and Ohio

State still has to play another SEC school, Arkansas, so if the past decade's record by the Big-10 against SEC schools is any indication, it could still get worse for the Big-10. To be fair, my beloved Pac-10 did not, except the Ducks and the Trees, have a really great year overall either, and we still do not know how those two will perform in their respective bowl games.

Now, on to the pros, who are completing the final Sunday of the regular season. The biggest game by far today is Da Bears at Green Bay. Hard as it may seem to believe, the Pack needs to win to even get in the playoffs. But Aaron Rodgers is back from his concussion and absolutely shredded the Giants last week, throwing for over 400 yards and four TDs. The Bears cover two pass defense is not a good matchup for the GB passing attack, so Julius Peppers and the line are going to have to get constant pressure on Rodgers if they want a chance to win. Bears have looked very solid for several weeks now, and Jay Cutler has been playing surprisingly consistent QB for them; but the edge has to go to the Pack on the Frozen Tundra today.

Their records may not be very good, but the Rams and SeaSquawks are playing for the NFC West title and attendant home playoff game. Will it be an 8-8 St. Louis or a 7-9 Seattle that emerges? The Rams have really been surprising this year, even though young Sam Bradford has had a little bit of a slump the last few weeks. Seattle QB is a concern, Hasselbeck is questionable and Charlie Whitehurst inexperienced and shaky. But the game is in Seattle, which evens things out quit a bit. This is a toss up, but I am rooting for the Rams.

The Giants not only have to beat the Skins, but have to also have the Bears beat the Packers to make the playoffs. Coughlins job is probably safe with a win irrespective of whether that results in a playoff berth or not, but a loss to Washington might make his retention shaky. Especially with Bill Cowher indicating he is

ready to return to coaching. The Giants should win this game in spite of it being at Fed-Ex Field. Jacksonville needs to beat the Texans in Houston and have the Colts lose at home to the Titans in order to win the AFC South and make the playoffs. Neither are likely to occur. Look for the Texans to play for Kubiak's job and win over the David Garrard less Jags, and Peyton to take care of business for another division title.

Philly hosting the Cowboys should be an interesting game; Cowboys are playing much better and the Iggles are suddenly in a funk; but the game is in Philly and I will take Mike Vick and the Eagles for that reason. Dallas reportedly is going to make Jason Garrett head coach for next year. The rest of the schedule is mostly just marking time; look for Niners over Cards, Tebows to lose to Rivers and the Bolts, Saints over Bucs, Falcons over Carolina, Chfs over Rayduhs, Ravens over Bengals, Steelers over Browns and Pats over Fish. That leaves the Jets and the suddenly semi-respectable Toronto Bills. Jets are already in for a wild card and have little to play for, which makes this a toss up.

That is the schedule folks. Blend up some Bloody Marys and cut that hangover edge, get your couch freak on and let's rumble!

TRASH TALK: HORNY ROSES EDITION

It's New Years, and given that there are no PAC-10 teams at the Rose Bowl this year, I'm gonna assume that bmaz is still asleep. So I better get a trash talk up for the college games today, at least, if only to keep scribe quiet.

Though I can't really tell you what to look for today. I was just practicing the first bars of

“On Wisconsin, On Wisconsin” when I realized someone let the Wolvereenies into a New Years Day game. In response to my tweet, “I’m so old I remember when you were expected to have a D to play in a bowl game,” DDay reminded me, “like the Michigan team, Tate Forcier couldn’t get a D either, so he’s ineligible today.” Go Blue!

In addition to the first bars of “On Wisconsin,” I’ve been working on some “Rah! Team! Fight!” for MSU, which faces the Crimson Tide in what actually looks like a real bowl game (I can say that, given that we’re assuming bmaz is not yet awake).

There are some other wacky games today ... Northwestern?!?! UConn?!?!? (Speaking of which, congrats to Stanford for finally beating the lady Huskies in hoops.)

And then one more real-looking game: the maybe-finally-but-then-again-maybe-not-retiring JoePa versus the definitely retiring Urban Meyers.

May the Big 10.2 continue to outperform their normal Bowl performance...

Update: Swapped out the Rose Bowl for this YouTube, thanks to the newly liberated David Shuster.

FAT TRASH

Get some food, find the couch and man the remote – it’s time for some football!

SNOWY AND WOODEN

TRASH

Yakkety Yak, Take Out The Papers and the Trash