

CLEMSON UP HUGE; PEOPLE LOSING THEIR SHIT OVER A KICKER

Trash talk is late. I had some serious home maintenance issues here in the Cactus Patch, other distracting things, and a bunch of dopes that thought references to Louise Mensch and her band of crackpots might be fair content on this blog. Let's reinforce one immutable concept: If you are referring to Louise Mensch, or any related endeavor, stop. Full stop.

Okay, it is a huge weekend of football. Before we get there, let's acknowledge the weather in Suzuka for the F1 Japanese Grand Prix in 1976. The weather there is atrocious. But F1, unlike NASCAR and IndyCar, runs in the wet. It is what they do. And one of the most memorable races, and championships won, ever, happened in the Japanese Grand Prix at Mount Fuji. Bet you thought this was going to be all about football. Nope. We have multitudes here.

Eh well, back to the footballs...Oh, hey, the Nationals stunned the favored Cards behind Anibal Sanchez last night. It was indeed a stunner. Game Two of the NLCS is ongoing in St. Louis and the Nationals are, improbably, up yet again.

In the collegiate ranks, Oklahoma edged Texas in a game not really living up to the "Red River" thing. But a win is a win. Michigan finally scored a few points and won, while the Dawgs of UGA fell short. Ooof. Wisconsin and Clemson rolling despite the carping of people over field goal kickers. People, if you have dozens of points of lead, your field goal kickers are irrelevant. Florida at LSU is clearly the game of the day. It is in Baton Rouge though, and that may be a problem for the Gators as LSU has a functioning quarterback. If the Gators win down there, they are truly legit. Penn State and Iowa may be interesting on a lesser scale.

In the Pros, it is also a huge week. Pats beat

the Gents in a throwaway game on Thursday night. The Houston Texans is a matchup of two truly exciting QB's from the 2017 draft, Pat Mahomes and Deshaun Watson. I'll take Mahomes at home. Skins at Fins...which team will be the biggest loser? Dallas at Jets and Steelers at Bolts might be interesting in some other year, but not this one.

Lions at Pack in Lambeau is far more interesting. I think Matt Stafford and the Kittens are better than they are being given credit for, as is the Green Bay defense. The question is whether Aaron Rodgers and the Pack offense really shows up. That never used to be a question.

Music this weekend by Rod the Mod. Also look for a young, pre-Stones, Woody on guitar.

BOOMTOWN BLUES TRASH TALK

As the kids are wont to say, that was a hell of a week, and I'm only talking about Thursday and Friday. Also, too, there seems to be a *second* IC whistleblower on the horizon, per the NY Times. Things are happening fast, and in real time.

First up is the collegiate athletics. By the way, I honestly think all the Fair Pay to Play acts are, well, not good. They will give a very select small few rights to earn big money, and be seen as different by all the other college athletes that will never benefit. It is a caste system, and empowerment of the 1% off of Wall Street and onto the NCAA landscape. That is not a good thing.

Here is a piece by Michael McCann at the newly decimated Sports Illustrated, that I actually agree with. If Fair Pay to Play is to be enacted, it is absolutely necessary that it be

done on a national basis, not a bogus piecemeal state by state basis, as some over aggressive voices are pushing. If you are going to do it, do it right. Join the national effort, not just try to make a name for yourself in your particular state.

Fair Pay to Play Acts are really ratifying that only a select few will ever profit off of the toils of the many. And the only recipients will be, with very few exceptions, in only football and basketball. The theory is not as evil as the result it will create. Irrespective of that merits discussion though, the siren song of state fame seems to be stronger for some noisy advocates than joining in a legitimate national plan. Shocker!

Alright, back to actual college football. It is a rather weak week for interesting games. Iowa at Michigan may be one of the best, and that is pretty telling. The best game is, arguably, Auburn at Florida. Jim White's Gators have been a bit of a surprise, while Auburn was maybe larger on the preseason radar. The game is in the Swamp, which is huge for Florida. Auburn seems for real this year though, on both sides of the ball. That is the one game I will be truly watching. Mostly a whole lot of nothing after that this week.

As to the Pros: The Squawks beat the Rams in a great Thursday Night game. Off the top of my head, I think the Thursday Night football this year is already of a better quality than past years. Scribe said Vontaze Burfict should be banned from the NFL. I did not necessarily disagree, because his miscreant conduct goes back to college, and he played a couple of years here for the Sun Devils. He is a bad character, banning was arguably a fair result. Instead he will be suspended for the remainder of the year.

The Patriots have a lot of injuries, but they are playing the Skins, who are simply, and totally, fucked. Washington will be starting Colt McCoy, who may actually be their best option. If the Cards and Kyler Murray cannot

beat the Bungles, they may not win a game this year.

The game that may be the most interesting is Tampa Bay at New Orleans. Teddy Bridgewater is no Drew Brees, but the Saints are seriously good, and playing at their home dome. Give Jameis Winston a smidgen of credit though, he is markedly better under Bruce Arians' tutelage. This could be an excellent game. Vikes at Gents could be interesting, even though irrelevant mostly.

In a nod to Scribe's coming comments, the Ravens at Steelers should be very interesting. Mason Rudolph did well last week; the Ravens not so much in a blowout loss to Baker Mayfield and the Brownies. Two different styles, and two teams that really don't like each other. Excellent!

Green Bay at Dallas you would think would be a great game. But, even though I am a lifelong Pack fan, this is a tough road to hoe. Have to favor the 'Boys. Lastly, the MNF game of Cleveland versus Niners in Santa Clara (yeah, that is still a dumbass location for the Niners to be playing in; what a joke), could be very good. Mayfield versus Garrapolo. Both teams are really looking up this year. Edge to SF though. I think....

This week's music is Boomtown Blues by Bob Seger, and it is from an under-appreciated early 80's album, The Distance. Not sure what made me think of it, I have not thrown that album on the turntable for years, but here we are. Making Thunderbirds is also a truly killer cut on The Distance.

Since blowing the whistle is all the rage currently, I am including a second Seger cut, Let It Rock, this from the much earlier Bob Seger System, and it is an old song originally credited to Edward Anderson. Thing is, Edward Anderson was an early pseudonym for the one and only Chuck Berry. Seger's version is awesome.

Rock on folks.

NON-IMPEACHMENT TRASH TALK

With no formal impeachment inquiry resolution voted yet, it is time to Trash Talk some college and pro football.

BROWN IS LEAVING TOWN TRASH TALK

On this week's Trash Talk: As pretty much everybody knows by now, the Patriots have released Antonio Brown. He has been jettisoned by two teams in two weeks. That has to pretty much be a record for a player with actual ability.

PACKERS AT BEARS - THE NFL SUN COMES OUT AGAIN TRASH TALK

Trash Talk is back baybee! The NFL season starts for real tonight with the first game of the league's centennial season. And, proving that even Roger Goodell and the NFL can occasionally get something right, the season starts with the Packers at the Bears. On Soldier field. Now *that* is a start to the season.



Honestly, the Bears are at home, and are probably, overall, the far better team. But the Cheesers have that Rodgers guy. If Green Bay's O-Line can hold, they have a chance. If not, they don't. It is pretty much that simple. Even a couple of Khalil Mackers to Aaron Rodgers will slow the Cheese train down. But, either way, it is one hell of a season opener.

There are a myriad of additional games on tap for Saturday in the college ranks, and Sunday, in the pro ranks. Not to mention the timeless speed of the Italian Grand Prix at Monza. Last weekend at Spa was a sensational race at, perhaps, the most beautiful circuit on the Circus calendar. Monza is not far behind, even if it is not the same as it once was with the feared steep banking.

So, Saturday is a big day here at Casa de bmaz as our daughter is coming home in the afternoon after six months on work assignment in India. We are extremely excited, but will try to get some more content up in the morning. If not, now you know why. The NFL sun is coming out starting tonight at Soldier Field. So the official Trash Talk season opening music is Sun King by The Cult. It is one truly kick ass song. Let's rock and roll peoples!

THE [ANDREW] LUCK OF THE DRAW

It seems as if both Marcy and Jim White (where has that guy been lately?) are harshing on me for some Trash Talk. So, off we go!

The Florida Gators seem to have won a football game. Over other Florida men, the crossfire Hurricanes. Of Miami. That was Mr. White's concern.

Marcy wants me to talk about the Patrick Chung case. I will likely come back to that later, when there is more information available. Like departmental reports and search warrant affidavits (if there are any!). For the meantime, there are serious questions as to the propriety of the actions of the Belknap County, of New Hampshire, officials in entering Chung's house, not to mention searching it without belief there was a suspect inside and ongoing crime being committed. It is, for now at least, hard to see how they could have thought that. We shall see, but there are some serious questions needing to be asked and answered on this one.

And, then, the Luck ran out. Of Indy. From the great Gregg Doyell of the IndyStar:

Indianapolis Colts quarterback Andrew Luck announced Saturday night he was retiring, and for a moment he couldn't breathe. He was crying. He was catching his breath and apologizing.

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Luck was booed off the field Saturday night when the Colts played the Chicago Bears in the third preseason game, the news of his retirement breaking on Twitter during the second half. The fans who stuck around, they booed Luck off the field. And he heard it.

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Even so, Luck sounded like a man at peace, a man who has stared into the

abyss and turned away. Football, once his favorite hobby, the source of such childlike joy, had become his dark place. He said he had been thinking about retiring for about 10 days, calling it "a moment of clarity" when the idea finally started to take shape. He said he'd been tired.

"I feel exhausted," he said, sounding very much that, "and quite tired."

This is stunning. And it changes the AFC calculus dramatically. Good for Andrew Luck. He has always seemed like a cerebral chap, and if he thinks it is time to move on, then it is time to move on. That is truly gutsy though.

So, there are two musical selections today. The first is, in honor of Andrew Luck, The Luck Of The Draw by the incomparable Bonnie Raitt. Along with early (think Derek And The Dominoes era) Eric Clapton, and Lowell George of Little Feat, Bonnie is as kick ass of a slide guitar player as I have ever seen in my life. She is so good.

And, the second is the Stones. They are still Rolling.

And in just over 24 hours from now, Mrs. bmaz and I are going to be visiting with the Glimmer Twins, and the other Stones. Because if the Stones are in town, you go. And they are not some over the hill geriatric second level casino act, they still absolutely kill. The attached video is from 2006. A tour I saw, though here as opposed to at Copacabana Beach with half a million people in Rio. I wish I had flown down to Rio. Because, damn, that looked like some serious fun.

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY 2019 TRASH TALK

Well, here it is, Super Bowl LIII game day. The last time Atlanta hosted a Super Bowl, it was basically a disaster. It was freezing cold with frozen rain, transportation was sketchy, many integral events had to be cancelled, the game was a thriller and Ray Lewis was arrested for double murder for an altercation after the game. It was a black eye for Atlanta of epic proportion. Things have, by all reports, gone much better this time, and the newish Mercedes Benz Stadium looks beautiful and ready for today's action.

There are a LOT of people who think the wrong teams are in the game, and it should be the Saints and Chiefs. The Saints fans actually have the better argument, they were robbed and jobbed at the end of the NFC Championship game. The Chiefs may have deserved to have a chance to get the ball after the Patriots' touchdown drive in overtime, but those are the rules, and the Pats did what they had to do.

As to the the teams that are in the game, they both seem extremely healthy with little of note on the injury reports. Even the always nicked up Gronk seems at full speed and energized. And Julian Edelman will be on the field after being noticeably absent last year. Same for Dont'a Hightower, notably absent in the Pats' De last year. The Rams' biggest concern seems to be how to allocate snaps between Todd Gurley and the white hot CJ Anderson. If you have to have a concern, that is a pretty good one to have.

Both teams have potent offenses capable of taking the game over. So this game will be won on defense. The better D is going to win the game. The Rams quartet of Aaron Donald, Ndamukong Suh, Aqib Talib and Marcus Peters, while maybe not the Fearsome Fosome of old, is pretty fearsome. The Pats have less (if any) big names on defense, but have been playing very

well down the stretch and in the playoffs. As far as coaching, Sean McVay is a wonder kind and worthy of all the accolades he has received. Hard to envision that the edge still doesn't go to Bill Bell with all his caginess and experience, and with Josh McDaniels still coaching up the offense and Brady.

The blueprint for beating the Pats is to get such immense pressure on Brady that he is rattled or hit constantly. It is no secret, that has always been the plan. The plan for avoiding this is for Brady to get the ball out fast in midrange and get the running game going with Sony Michel, James White and Burkhead. Look for a lot of play action and short flat throws, with an occasional shot to Gronk or Dorsett.

The trend line has the Pats favored by a couple of points, but I don't see it. This is a complete pickem.

The national anthem will be performed by Atlanta's own Gladys Knight, and that is a fine choice, but she should kneel in support of Kaepernick while doing so. That will never, of course, happen, but it should. The halftime show looks to be absolute rancid bullshit. So, today's music will go back to a better time for Super Bowl halftime shows with a little bit of the Boss from ten years ago. Rock it up!

CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY 2019 LAISSEZ LE BON TEMPS ROULER

There are notable football weekends in the year, both for the Pros and the Joes. But nothing matches the conference championship games weekend nor the Super Bowl.

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

2019

Getting close to the home stretch in the NFL. There are four games this weekend, and the first one up is Colts at Chiefs. The weather looks to be very nasty, with below freezing temps and snow already accumulating. It will be interesting to see how young Pat Mahomes fares in this environment for his first playoff game. He has such a strong arm, that my guess he will be fine, and same for Andrew Luck. But the Colts have a far better running game than the Chiefs, and KC run defense is not the best. Oh, and KC has not won a playoff game at home since the mid 90's when Joe Montana was their QB. This has a real potential for a Colts upset.

The second game Saturday is Cowboys at Rams. Dallas really is starting to play better lately, and the Rams seemed to stall a little toward the end of the regular season. That said, hard to see the Boys having enough offense to keep track with Goff and Gurley, and the Rams defense is superior.

The early game Sunday is maybe the most interesting game of the weekend with the Chargers at Foxborough to visit Bill Bel and the Pats. The Bolts have the offense to make this very interesting, and have solid defense too. The Pats will need a big game from Sony Michel, and Brady and Gronk have to get out of their funk. And the Pats are basically at full health finally. It is tempting to take the Bolts in an upset, but not going to bet against the Pats. Nope just not gonna do it.

The late game Sunday has the Eagles at the high flying Saints. Drew Brees is simply a machine, and he has a hot running back duo in Alvin Kamara and Mark Ingram. Fun fact, Brees and the Eagles' Nick Foles both went to the same high

school, though obviously separated by quite a few years. Foles has been absolute magic for the Iggles, but I think that luck runs out in NOLA.

As a fun little parting shot, today is the 50th anniversary of Super Bowl III in Miami, where Joe Namath and the Jets shocked the world by beating the heavily favored Colts. Here is a fun story looking back at that game and the really earth shattering consequences it had for pro football.

This weekend's music courtesy of Van the Man.

DANCING WITH MS. AOC (AND OTHER WEEKEND TALK)

Apparently the ignorant bigot Trumpalos set things a little bit of Footloose is now some kind of slam on AOC. But it it is not. It is just stupid. Seriously, what kind of bigots go there? AOC is bigger and better than that, why are her detractors not?

As Ray Davies and the Kinks would say:

Don't be afraid to come dancing,
It's only natural.

And off we go.

Yep, dancing is real. it is awesome, and completely great and @AOC is the epitome of that.

I hope I am not too late for critical Mr. Gun Scribe, but I have been at the vet with my one of my dogs, Kiki. I know he will write 1000 words of bullshit about "his" dysfunctional Steelers. So be it.

At this point, let us talk about teams that are

actually in the playoffs. And, no, that is neither the Stillers or the Cheese. Nor the local dope Cardinals.

As to games and teams that can and will happen, let us lead with the AFC.

On ESPN, the Colts are already leading the Texans by 7-0. I do not feel good with it, and will not bet one red cent on it, because Deshaun Watson is really special, but Captain Andrew Luck seems on a real roll.

Second game today is Squawks at Boys. Hard to take a second road team on a home turf, but I will do that. Yes, I know, I will die with my hat in my hand, okay. So be it, and just wait for the next predictions for Sunday!

As to that...And, no I do not feel good about this, but I will take Phil Rivers and the Bolts over the Ravens. Rivers is a WAY better QB than people give him credit for being. This is his opportunity to show it or blow it. I think show it, but need to see it.

The Philly Special will be in Chi Town, The Windy City. Khalid Mack is the anchor the Bears defense always relied on. The importance of his arrival to the Midway because Chucky Gruden was, and is, a total dope, cannot be underestimated. The Bears have been transformed. They were a team on the obvious upswing, and are now legitimate contenders.

Hell of a last game for an insanely good wildcard weekend.