

# **SUPER BOWL 43 TRASH TALK: THE RED & THE BLACK**

This is it baby, the big finale. All the marbles come down to these two: One Red. One Black. One will leave with the Lombardi Trophy in hand, the other with the regret of the world's biggest runner-up percolating in their gut for the entire off season, maybe for the rest of their lives.

Parting is such sweet sorrow; nevertheless, with this game will come the end of another season of football trash talk here at Emptywheel. Yes, we occasionally whip out a trash talk without football (March Madness and the start of the F1 Circus are certainly possibilities), but it isn't the same without the pigskin in the air.

What a season it has been, from the tantalizingly close to perfect season by the Pats that came just a few points short to Good Eli and the Gents in Super Bowl 42, the entire complexion of the 2009 season inexorably changed with the loss of Tom Brady in the first few minutes of this year. For eleven games Brett was Favre and all was magical; then it wasn't. The San Diego team looked like the Clippers for the first twelve games, then they caught lightning and were Chargers on into the playoffs where they again went Norval. When it was all said and done, it was the Stillers and the Cardinals, yes the Arizona freaking Cardinals, left standing. And, thus, here we are.

Who are the Arizona Cardinals' fans? I'm not quite sure, but I appear to live in the town that houses almost all of what few there are of them. Oh, and even here I have not noticed the whole town being painted red and buildings redecorated in team colors and insignias like it was purple for Barkley and the Suns in 1993 and the Diamondbacks in 2001. Da birdz de rojo get no respect I tell ya. And if all that were not

bad enough, now That One is climbing on the dogpile,

Q. The Steelers or Cardinals, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I have to say, you know, I wish the Cardinals the best. Kurt Warner is a great story and he's closer to my age than anybody else on the field, but I am a long-time Steelers fan. Mr. Rooney, the owner, was just an extraordinary supporter during the course of the campaign. Franco Harris was campaigning for me in Pittsburgh. So —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Coach signed up with you, too.

THE PRESIDENT: Right, Coach Tomlin was a supporter. So I — you know, I wish the best to the Cardinals. They've been long-suffering; it's a great Cinderella story. But other than the Bears, the Steelers are probably the team that's closest to my heart.

Jeebus. Oh, and Vice-That One (D-MBNA) too. How special. Freaking frontrunners. Well, on that lustrous note, lets get down to business:

**THE RED** — The Cardinals? The Arizona Cardinals?? Good golly Miss Molly how did the NFC end up with the Cards as its representative? I mean, seriously, wasn't everyone sure the NFC East was the best conference in football? What happened to that? Romeo of Dallas still has the bimbo jinx, ever plumping, girlfriend, TO is whining again, and all of the Giants' receivers are in the gunshot wound clinic. The Packers probably could have been in the hunt if Ted Thompson hadn't have traded the entirety of the team's balls to the Jets. Bears and Vikes still don't know what a quarterback is. And, so, hailing from the lowly NFC West, here come the Red Birdz! Gotta love it.

Hey, why not? Kurt Warner has got to be the most

unappreciated two time league MVP, Super Bowl winner and MVP on the planet. Well, he is back. He really needs a certain kind of offense, with wild ass receivers and a back that can catch the release out of the backfield, but, hey, give him that and he is deadly. Turns out that the Cards have this spidey man dude, Larry Fitzgerald. And Anquan Boldin (who will be fine for the game by what I hear) and Steve Breaston are pretty darn good too. Like Nixon and Elvis, the Edge is rested and ready for these playoffs and he is playing for his future as a featured back in the NFL, watch for him to prove his worth with a big performance. The real reason the Cards are still here though is their defense, which has come on late and strong. Antrelle Rolle, Adrian Wilson and the Rookie, Dominic Rogers-Cromartie have given the already underrated line and linebackers some deep protection, and it has made all the difference in the world. If the Cards stand a chance, it will be because their defense rose to the occasion, not the supposedly vaunted offense.

**THE BLACK** – Contrary to the Cards, we know how the Steelers got here. They slugged it out in death cage battles with every team in their path, and possess one of the most impressive defenses I have ever seen. Certainly didn't hurt the Steelers that the Titans beat and pummeled the Ravens before narrowly losing, leaving the Ravens with not enough left in the tank for the Steelers. Before we move on, how about a shout out to Chad Pennington and the Fish; awesome effort this year. Tuna + Fish – who knew they went together so well?

The Steelers look pretty scary if you ask me. They were still beating top notch competition when Fast Willie Parker was slow and out; now that he is back you have the full offense. Big Ben is a better passer than people give him credit for, he just isn't asked to be Dan Marino in the traditional grind it out Pittsburgh offense. All Ben does is win, and he will put the team on his shoulders when he has to. But, of course, the heart and soul of the Steelers

is the defense. You already know about the Polynesian Wrecking Ball Troy Polamalu, but don't forget Ryan Clark, the guy who about decapitated Willis Magahee. James Farrior has been solid at linebacker for a long time, and his pal on the outside backer spot, James Harrison, well no less than Tony Dungy thought he ought to be the league MVP over Peyton Manning. That is pretty high praise, and deserved too, Harrison is very good. And all coordinated by Dick Lebeau, another former Detroit Lion who has gone on to win Super Bowls with the Steelers (there are a lot of those).

So, there is my rundown, with some input from Marcy, please add yours in comments. Well, now for the hard part. And for that, I am going to stay consistent. I have made and laid my bones throughout the playoffs on one simple contention: The Cardinals suck, no way can they win. No way I gonna quit while I am ahead and the devious plan is working. Stillers baby!

[I would like to thank NewtonUSR for the video mix above, it was a special request and he really came through. If you want a little hard hitting theme music, check out *The Red and The Black*, that is where the concept for the post came from]