

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FUTBOL? SPECIAL FIFA TRASH

Yeah, well, gather round the campfire boys and girls, because this may be the only time you get soccer trash talk out of me. And it took some extreme measures from mom to get it at all. But Mr. Wheel, being Irish and all, has the beautiful game in him and that is enough for me; so here goes.

Tomorrow's match with England may be, at least in some respects, the biggest soccer tilt the US has ever played; certainly at least in a very long time. The tilt goes off at 1:30 pm EST and 10:30 PST. From NBC Sports:

The bars are stocked across America, and the pubs are getting ready in England. A 70½-foot billboard of Clint Dempsey stands near Penn Station in Manhattan, and there's even a large poster of Landon Donovan in a store along Piccadilly Circus.

American soccer has never been more popular in the United States or its players more well-known across the world. And on Saturday comes the first competitive match between the U.S. and England since the great American upset at the 1950 World Cup. For one afternoon, millions will be watching from California to New York island. Like never before in the United States, this is the sport's moment.

Yep, sounds about right. Brits v. Yanks. Old Glory v. Union Jack. The big tilt. If the US is going to do anything in this, they need to get out of the gate early, get the point and get out of group and into the sweet sixteen. That process, if it is to happen, starts by beating England tomorrow. England is a little beat up

and a lot cocky; they are ripe. The Yanks must put a clamp on Wayne Rooney and Landon Donovan must step up and Jozy Altidore must hold up. Game on. Above and beyond this opening match, the smart money is on Spain or Brazil taking the cup. Germany is down, but always dangerous; the Netherlands is the hot longshot if you are in a betting mood and feeling loose.

Next up is some real football. You may have heard, there is a bit 'o shuffling afoot in the major NCAA football conferences. Nebraska has already officially joined the ~~Big-10~~ ~~Big-11~~ Big-12. the Colorado Buffaloes have already joined up with the PAC-10. Ralphie and the Buffs hooking up with my homeboys, the PAC-10, is fine by me. I went to graduate school in Boulder for a year and a half; it is a beautiful and wonderful town and university. Gotta love a place where the restaurant in the student union building is named after a cannibal and Vail, Copper, Mary Jane and Breckenridge are all within 90 minutes or so bed to slope. So I am all down with that.

The remainder of what appears to be the inevitable plan though, bringing in the Okies and Aggies, namely Texas, Texas Tech, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State, well I just dunno about that. Jeebus. Like I want to go to Lubbock or Muskogee for an away game. The other question is – that makes it the PAC-15 – who is 16? Please let it be BYU and not those pyromaniacs at Texas A&M. You know they will try to use the Stanford Tree for their fucking bonfire; you just know it. Also, Boise State has moved from the WAC to the Mountain West. Probably a good move; although I would have taken them in the PAC if it were up to me.

Next up is kind of an intra-FDL grudge match we are hoping to manufacture in the NCAA baseball playoffs. I have the ASU Sun Devils, who along with their PAC-10 brethren Southern Cal, Texas and LSU are the cream of the crop historically. ASU has five national championships; Florida has well, they don't have any yet. But the Sun

Devils play Arkansas this weekend in a two out of three Super Regional for a spot in the College World Series while the Gators take on Miami, starting tonight in a two out of three Super Regional for spot in the CWS. Here is hoping they both make it to Omaha for a CWS showdown in the last year of fabled Roseblatt Stadium.

Lastly, this weekend is the much anticipated return of the Canadian Grand Prix after a tragic year without the Canucks being on the schedule. The race is at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal. Montreal is a rather uncomplicated circuit, and I say that in a loving manner. It is fast and there are several excellent opportunities for overtaking. The Senna curve is always one to watch. Look for the McLarens and Mercedes teams to be fast on this circuit, and keep an eye on Schumi who should be starting to round into form about now.

As a parting shot, the video is of U2 playing All Because Of You, which was filmed with the boys on a flatbed spontaneously rolling through Manhattan. Pretty awesome. Funny thing is, just about exactly one year ago I was in New York with Marcy and Mr. Wheel for the Hillman Prize ceremony and I was right in that exact same spot in Times Square depicted in in the U2 video. I didn't get Bono and the Edge; I got this dude. Go figure. Time to rock and roll people; let's rip this joint!