

# HOLIDAY TRASH TALK: FOOTBALL, FUN AND FRIVOLITY

Ah, here comes the holiday weekend. With Monday being Christmas Eve, many of us are already on a giant holiday roll. Whether you are or not, it is time to engage in some holiday trashing.

Last night was some gawdawfully named thing called the "Beef O'Brady's Bowl". Seriously, what the hell is a Beef O'Brady's? Well, no matter, fun is coming today in the form of the Boise State Broncos, who will be taking on Washington in the Las Vegas Bowl at 3:30 pm EST. Boise is always fun and well coached by Chris Peterson, and Washington Huskies should make for a good game. Christmas Eve night brings another smaller bowl, but a potentially interesting matchup between SMU and Fresno State in the Hawaii Bowl. All on ESPN.

In hockey news.....No news is hockey news. Just foolin.

Okay, on to the NFL, where the meat on the plate is these days. First up is a rare Saturday night version of MNF on ESPN (8:30 pm EST). The matchup is Atlanta at Detroit. At the start of the year, you would have thought this game was a no brainer for critical playoff positioning. Not so thanks to the disappointing Criminal docket Kitties. The Lions are toast, seem to have lost heart and really need a coaching change. Hot 'Lanta rolls on.

But the one must see game of the bunch is Niners at Squawks. San Francisco is playing for the NFC west title and to maintain its slim half game lead on the Packers for the second seed and first round bye. Seattle, on the other hand, is on a roll having won five of their last six outings and getting explosive offense from Russell Wilson, Marshawn Lynch and some quietly talented receivers. The game is in the notoriously loud and difficult Seattle bird's

nest. Should be cold and awesome. Head says Niners are too good; heart says lookout for the Squawks.

The other must see head to head division grudge match is Bengals at Stillers. Cinci comes in at 8-6 and Pittsburgh at 7-7. The way the Ravens have been going down the tubes, this game may well decide the AFC North and has so many playoff entry and seeding implications they are too many to go through. The Steelers have to win out against the Bengals and the Browns next week to get in. Bengals, who play the Ravens next week are in better position. The Ravens, meanwhile, play the also reeling Giants Sunday. Huge game; both the G-Men and Ravens are desperate to end their skids. Something will have to give. I think the Steelers pull out the win at home over the Bengals, and Giants pull together enough to pin another loss on Baltimore. Setting up a wild last week for all of them.

That leaves the Cowboys. They host the fork in em Saints. Never count out New Orleans and Drew Brees, but Dallas seems to have curiously jelled in the last 2-3 weeks. And the game is in Big D at Jerry world. A little queasy about it, but I take the 'Boys. The Skins should get past the crumbling Eagles. Assuming the Giants do indeed get past the Ravens, that will leave Washington, Dallas and the Giants all tied at 9-6 heading into the last week. Right now, the Skins have the tiebreaker among the three, but Dallas and Washington play each other next week. Good stuff.

That leaves one last game of interest: Vikings at Houston. Texans have to be favored at home, they are just a better team and actually have a passing attack. But the real question is can Adrian Peterson put up big enough numbers to stay in the chase for Eric Dickerson's record? 300 yards to go, but tough sledding against the Texans' front line. Honorable mention goes to the Jets at Chargers in what can only be described as the Toilet Bowl. I am rooting for

the Bolts, cause it could save Norval Turner's  
job and kill Rex Ryan's. Both would be fun!

Christmas Time in New Orleans and Winter  
Wonderland by the one and only Louis Armstrong.  
Get yer Santa on and let's take a sleigh ride  
baybee!