

REAL HOUSEWIVES TRASH TALK

Here I was thinking I had better put this belated Trash thread up for the Las Vegas bowl pitting Utah against BYU – but by the time I started I saw Utah was 35-0 still in the first quarter. Oops.

Before launching into pro gridiron, two women deserve special notice today: Edith Piaf, who would have been 100 today. Scribe requested this video personally, though he said something about “Cheatin’ Bill” that made no sense to me.

Also, this week, the great Abby Wambach retired from old-school football. The American team worked so hard, unsuccessfully, to get her a score in her final game that we lost a friendly to China. A new generation of great American players have clearly taken over from her, but she’s been a key leader along the way. Wambach wants you to forget her, but I’m hoping she sticks around and gets Jürgen Klinsmann fired, as she tried to do this week.

Now to the housewives of my title, the affectionate name I’ve coined for the NFC East on a part of its dysfunction and the entertaining cattiness of its fans.

Someone has to win this division, and the Gents, Lobbyists, and Iggles are all tied up at 6-7. This week should give the Lobbyists a boost, as they face the Bills, who have much improved personnel this year, but are saddled by Rex Ryan’s bad coaching. The Gents and Iggles, by contrast, host the two most formidable teams in the NFC, Cam’s Panthers and Spidey Fitz and the Cardinals. I think the Gents have a good shot at ruining Cam’s perfect season, but the Cardinals should win comfortably in Philly (unless they decide to melt down in the special teams game, as some teams have been known to do when playing Philly).

Scribe's Stillers should beat the Donkos at home. While the Broncos' O is far better playing with Osweiler, their D has lost the edge it had earlier this season, and Big Ben has been lighting it up. Plus, the Stillers have a shot at catching the Dalton-less Bungles.

I have a feeling the Raiders, fresh off beating the Broncos in Denver for the first time in forever, will beat the Packers. Even with Brady and Hasselback's success this season, Charles Woodson has been the most amazing old man to watch this year. He has brought the perfect balance of still-sharp play and great leadership for the younger players.

The Pats have to weather the Titans at home one more week as the injured players continue to get healthy, though Brady himself was sick yesterday. That's good, because the Jets' O is jelling well enough to beat Dallas, setting up a big showdown in New Jersey next week.

Which will you be watching tonight: the Jets or the newly rancorous Democratic debate?

Oops: Look like scribe and I were reaching for the same gift at the same time. This is scribe's trash

It's that time of the week again and the press of the holidays is getting in the way of taking out the trash. Ms. Wheel says she's packing for a road trip. BMAz is off trying to hang Christmas lights on a cactus and wondering why things keep hanging up on those damned thorns. I snuck in and took over; I expect they'll be happy b/c I'm taking out the trash.

The games: well, I was listening to the radio while in the car today and the sports-talk guys were going on and on about how the Bowl Season is finally here. First up, the New Mexico Bowl with some cow college from Arizona and New Mexico going at it for a big mess of huevos served, as they say in Albuquerque, "Christmas". For those not in the know, that's with both

green and red peppers/salsa/chiles. Frankly, the college season between now and New Year's is a parade of made-up Bowl games designed, IMHO, more to generate tourism dollars for some town and make a profit for the boosters all of the unpaid backs of the players. You can watch, but seeing teams with a losing record going to a bowl on the strength of their history and the drawing power of the school's name – Nebraska, I'm looking at you – just doesn't do it for me. There'll be games all over the TV for the next 10 days but for Christmas Day. And when you watch, try not to look at all the empty seats.

Christmas day, you get an NBA super-duper tripleheader or something, which likewise does nothing for me. You mileage may vary.

Now for the real football. King Roger the Clown is probably in hog heaven right now, what with games on Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays from here to the end of the season.

There have been 13 games played and but for two teams, everything is still fluid. Cheatin' Bill and his Cheating Cheaters of Cheatertown, otherwise known as the Patriots, are playing the Titans at home this week. Despite already having clinched the AFC East, the Patsies still have something to play for: they want a bye and they want home field. The Titans – likely victims. I'm told the big news this week in New England remains the Trump hat in Tom Brady's locker and his steadfast refusal to say anything about it or, especially, against his friend Trump's odious policy positions. But, as a friend within the range of WEEI passed along, the opinion of New England is something like this: "If Tom Brady clubbed a baby seal, Patriot Nation would blame the seal."

As I see it, one of the biggest games of the weekend, at least for people who care about the AFC, is tonight. The J-E-T-S JETS JETS JETS go to JerryWorld to meet the Owboys. Early in the season, this looked to be a critical matchup between two good teams and got King Roger's nod to be on the NFL Network all by their lonesome.

Now that we're here, the Owboys are playing for jobs, pride and draft position and the J-E-T-S JETS JETS JETS are in a three-way dogfight for the 2 AFC wild card slots. This one could go either way. I'm going contrary to my usual rooting position of "Who's playing Dallas" because my Steelers are the third team in that 3-way fight for the Wild Card, on the outside looking in, and the Jets and Chiefs hold the tiebreakers against them.

That brings me to the next-biggest game of the weekend: The Broncos at my Steelers tomorrow in the late-afternoon game. This will be the second week in a row the Steelers, widely considered the most dangerous team in the AFC (The Squawks are in the NFC), will meet a 10-win team. Tough call – the Broncos' D is damn good and the Stillers' O cranks out points like nobody's business. (I almost went with "like a rolling mill turning out beams", but that was both trite and brought up the ugly memory of Steely McBeam, that walking invitation to a punch in the jaw about whom the less said, the better.) Tossup on this one.

Of course, that's what a lot of people said last week before the Steelers-Bungles game, too.

The NFC East continues to be a mess of mediocrity where no one can seem to get out of their own way, the standout in the bunch being Dallas. And not in a good way.

The AFC South, pretty much the same.

I will be interested to see how the Chiefs do, seeing as they are team #2 in that 3-way. Most of the rest of the games, I'm kinda paying attention to but not that much. I suspect you fans of other teams will show up and sling on their behalf or against their opponents. I will be watching to see whether Carolina can continue its run and whether Seattle will show they've finally got their act together.

In the meantime, people are packing, wrapping presents to ship, baking and so on. Please feel

free to share plans, recipes and whatever. I just got done (OK, halfway) baking kipferl, an Austrian sort of puff pastry wrapped around prune butter. They smell good, taste better and melt in your mouth. I'll be going back for the second half later. This is labor-intensive but worth it.

I suggested to Ms. Wheel that, in honor of her 100th birthday today, something from Edith Piaf would be a great selection. I further suggested "I regret nothing" with an image of Cheatin' Bill as the video accompaniment.