

BIG GAMES AND THE END OF THE HOKEY POKEY ERA TRASH TALK

My my, there is a lot going on in the sporting world this weekend, so let's take a look at some of the more interesting bits and pieces. First off there was some big news in Ann Arbor yesterday that pretty much answers the burning question from last weeks trash talk, namely who will scuttle their flailing football coach sooner, Michigan or Florida? The answer is in, and it is the Michigan Men! Michigan Athletic Director Dave Brandon has resigned effective immediately, and that will almost certainly spell the end of the Brady Hokey era for the Wolverweenies.

There are a couple of updates to items on the Docket Report. First, there was a hearing in EDVA on the appeal lawsuit of the Washington Redskins from the negative trademark decision in the administrative patent court system. The hearing was on a motion to dismiss and the early reports are the court was dubious about the dismissal effort and seemed inclined to retain jurisdiction. If so, that probably favors Dan Snyder and the Skins, because it will allow additional evidence to supplement the narrow and limited administrative record. It will be interesting to see what the decision is here. Secondly, the Ray Rice appeal hearing is set for next Wednesday, and the hearing officer, Judge Barbara Jones, has ordered Roger Goodell to testify. Some people are discussing a settlement, but I would be surprised. This could be fascinating seeing good attorneys cross-examine Goodell.

Then there are the games. The World Series is over, and congratulations to the San Francisco Giants who won a compelling series over the Kansas City Royals. The Cicago Cubs have hired Joe Maddon as their new manager after he quite suddenly up and left the Tampa Bay Rays. That is

a great move for the Cubs, but the Cubbies are career killers for managers. RIP Joe Maddon. And the NBA season has started, so there is that. But we are really about football here, so let's get to it, and there are a lot of big match ups on tap.

You would think that there is no way possible that the biggest game is not Peyton versus Brady and the Broncos at Patriots in the quarterback battle of the ages. Nope, that ain't it. No, the biggest game this weekend is the Cardinals at Jerryworld to take on the Cowboys. The Cards, along with the aforementioned Broncos, have the best record in the NFL to date with only one loss on the season. The Cowboys were up there too before last week's close loss to an inspired Redskins squad. This really shapes up as a great game. The Cowboys Demarco Murray has passed Jim Brown with eight straight games over 100 yards to open a season. But the Cards have perhaps the leagues best run defense. The Cowboys can be thrown on, and Carson Palmer has finally got Larry Fitzgerald untracked. Tony Romo is hurting and has not practiced all week. Oh, and by the way, the Honey Badger is back. All the factors point to the Cardinals having the edge. So I am picking the 'Boys on the basis that they are home, and pissed about their performance against the Skins.

The other big game is of course Broncos at Patriots. Both Brady and Manning are playing lights out currently, and the Pats are on a bit of a roll. Any matchup between these two quarterbacks is an instant classic candidate, and this one is no different. I am going to assume 'Ole Noodle Arm Manning and Brady cancel each other out. once you get past that, and even understanding Gronk is really rounding into the old Gronk, the Broncos simply have more and better weapons on offense. The Broncos also have a better defense, and they get the pick here. The only other really interesting game on the NFL schedule is Ravens at Steelers. Oddsmakers have it a draw right now, but I think Big Ben and the Stillers have found a groove and pull

out the home win at the Big Catsup Bottle.

In college, the unquestioned game of the week is number 3 Auburn at number 4 'Ole Miss. After today, one of the teams will be done for the playoff discussion. The Rebels are favored by two at home, and that sounds about right to me. The other really good match ups are in the Pac-12, which has provided every bit as much excitement and compelling football this year as the SEC. Stanford is at Oregon, and the Trees have a history of manhandling the Ducks and giving them fits. Stanford is having an off year, but seemed to find an offensive groove last week. Still, I think the Quackers have the edge. Number 12 Arizona is at number 22 UCLA and I smell an upset here. Lastly, in a night game, number 17 Utah is at number 14 ASU. Utah is always superbly coached by Kyle Willingham and is consistently a better team than people give them credit for. But ASU has some momentum and, as long as they don't get caught looking forward to next week's tilt with Notre Dame, should take care of business in Sun Devil Stadium, though I expect a tight game.

Welp, that is it for this week. Rock on. This week's music by Gerry Mulligan, Dave Brubeck, Doc Severinsen and the Cincinnati Pops with Duke Ellington's classic "Take the A'Train".