



SOME DIFFERENT LOOKS AT THE SUPER BOWL

BY Kerry Schmidt 02-03-2008

As best as I could count, just from the USA TODAY there were 87 different written stories about the SB this week, and that is just through Friday.

ESPN has already broadcast nearly 60 hours on the upcoming “game of the century.”

Pre-game TV starts at 9 a.m. EST, thus, over 9 hours before the game starts.

Virtually every player – including punters - and coaches, all possible matchups, a million comments from players and enough garbage to fill the stadium they will play in.

Thus, I am not going to discuss much at all about who will win, what matchups to watch, Brady/Manning or really anything else. All that has been over done as a burnt steak.

I’ll take a look at a couple of “off the wall” (good name for a website) aspects of the game.

The only factor I will mention about the teams is this one: In the first 10 games, the Patriots average margin of victory was 25.4 points. The last 8, the margin has been 12.75. What does that mean? Damn if I know, but make what you will of it.

Quickly, a couple of stupid, overblown “incidents.” Giants WR Plaxico was asked if his team would win, and he said, “Yea, 23-17. (that was because it was the numbers of his current and college jerseys.)

Of course, Pats’ players, especially big mouth Moss, made a huge deal of the “guarantee.” Burris replied, “I did not guarantee it, I simply said I thought we would win and picked my jersey numbers.” Then he added the most common sense comment you will hear. “I mean, what, you expected me to say our team would lose?”

Moss mouth again. The Giants arrived all dressed in black suits, many also wearing black shirts and ties. The color was randomly picked by one player to show unity.

But Moss and some teammates said it was to show that this would be a funeral for the Pats, i.e., wearing black, etc. “Yea, that’s what it is,” said Moss. “We’ll see whose funeral it is after the game.”

Eli Manning laughed and asked, “where did they come up with that?! It was just a spur of the moment thing. Geeze.”

Moss, get a fricken life. Are he and some of his teammates really that stupid? Probably, yes.

Moss also, of course, mouthed off on how he would “wear out” DB R.W. McQuarters, who is set to cover him. The same Moss that has caught 3 passes and no TD’s in the playoffs so far.

Who the F cares.

Now, let’s get on to the REALLY interesting parts of this game.

I have covered a total of 6 SB’s and the craziest part is always the Tuesday before the game; Media day.

Over 527 credentials were issued for media day, many to foreigners and others who don’t have a freakin clue. There were even some kids there, ages 7, 9, and 11. One asked a player if football was his favorite sport. NOTE: Most of those types do not have game credentials.

While I was covering them, there were many a crazy question, and apparently today is not much different.

Ines Gomez Mont, from TV Azteca in Mexico, showed up in a wedding dress and asked Brady if he would marry her.

Joel Bengoa of Telemundo TV came dressed in cape and turban and told the players he needed to know what sign they were and he would predict the outcome. About the only guy who would talk to him was Giants CB, Darren Garnett, who is only on the practice squad. When he told Bengoa he was a Gemini, Benny boy squealed, “Oh my God, the full moon is on your side. I



OFF THE WALL SPORTS

See a ring in your future.” OK!?

It gets much better. Telemundo’s Mireya Grisales asked Giants CB Kevin Dockery if women’s favorite part of players’ builds were their butts. Laughing, he said, “yea, OK.”

Kevin Frazier of Entertainment Tonight asked Giants backup QB, “what are you wearing?” Dressed in his uniform, he said “Reebok.”

A Japanese reporter asked Pat’s lineman, Matt Light, “Would you like to see the AFC win?” Here are some of my favorites.

A different Japanese asked Light, who has long, bushy hair, what type of shampoo and conditioner he used. Definitely need-to-know-stuff. Another asked a player if he spoke Japanese. LB Tedy Bruschi was asked what got him psyched up for the game. He said, “I read all the stupid stuff you guys write and that does it.”

Another woman from a Mexican TV station asked RB Kevin Faulk whether he wore boxers or briefs. Faulk just said, “neither,” but she then excitedly asked if he wore thongs. Faulk walked away.

A European male reporter asked Pats CB, Randall Gay what it felt like to be gay in the NFL. The reporter said he was gay and asked Randall if he had a “partner.” Gay just shook his head, mumbled something and left.

Another foreigner asked a Giants player, “What are you going to wear (Sunday). He said a skirt and laughed.

Brady was asked if he would watch Tom Petty and the Hearbreakers’ half-time show.

Giants’ DT Jay Alford was asked what brand of soap he used in the shower. Reportedly, he said “Tide.”

And God was talked about. A Giant was asked, “What role do you believe God plays in determining the outcome” Another chimed in, asking if God wanted his team to win.

But my favorite religious one was a Spanish reporter asking Giants CB Kevin Dockery, “Who do you think Jesus would bet on?

Most of these types of questions went unanswered, with varying acts of behavior.

Another great one was a woman reporter asking some huge offensive lineman, “What color is your athletic supporter?”

Another was asked, “what size panties would you wear if you wore them?,” and then asked if she could have his “panties.”

In broken English, another Japanese asked Brady why they called him “Boomer.”

Supposedly Brady said something like “you’re about 15 years behind and he played for the other team.”

And of course, several players were asked, mostly by female “reporters,” if they believed in having sex before the game.

Allegedly, one player told her to come up to his room and find out, then walked away.

A German asked Pats’ Jeff Feagles, if “Patriots” was a verb or a noun. He was heard to answer, “What do I know, I’m just the punter.”

Michael Strahan was asked by a woman with a heavy accent, “Are you black?” He said, “No, I’m American.”

Several reporters, while asking Eli Manning questions, referred to him as Peyton.

One Giant was asked what type of dog he had, then if he preferred dogs or cats.

One reporter, who was believed to be Australian, risked life and limb by asking Giants DE Osi Umenyiora if he fought pit bulls.

Giants Adrian Awason, who is on the injured reserve list, was asked what injured reserve meant.

Giants TE Kevin Boss was asked “What state is Western Oregon in?” (He went to college there.

A Japanese again, asked Brady what MVP meant.



OFF THE WALL SPORTS

A black woman who said she was from Jamaica asked Pats LB Junior Seau if he believed in voodoo and then asked him for a lock of his hair.

Many more, but a few choice ones from SB's past.

IN SB XXII, black QB Doug Williams was asked, "How long have you been a black quarterback?" In SB XXXV, a daring, or stupid, reporter asked Raven LB Ray Lewis (Who had been charged with assault and murder), "How long have you associated with thugs?" Needless to say, he got no answer, and it is believed he lived.

In SB XV, Raiders QB Jim Plunkett was asked, "Is it your mother who is blind and your father is deaf or vice versa." (His mother was legally blind).

As you can see, the SB's really bring out the knowledgeable and football savvy individuals. One player allegedly asked one of these intelligent creatures, "What planet are you from?"

And I just hit the high and low lights.

There is one other aspect of "The Game" that draws more action than any other. Gambling!

As I mentioned last week, over \$100 million is expected to be wagered in Vegas on this game.

And these are just the legal bets, which account for just 1 ½% of bets in the US. Using extrapolated math (Whoa!, what a couple of words for a stupid sportswriter), that means that just over \$5 Billion could be wagered – bookies, office pools, et al, and if you take off shore and international, who knows. The SB brings in the bettors!

And if you want to make a Vegas, bet, you have many a choice.

A couple of years ago, I wrote about this and Jay Kornegay, who then was the head of the Race and Sports Book at the Imperial Palace in Vegas (I tried to contact him on Thursday, and he is no longer there).

Anyway, two years ago he had emailed me 22 pages of all the bets you could take. Most of the over 170 different bets were called "Prop" bets, ones that combined one or more aspect and a variety of weird possibilities.

For example, there were seven different bets you could make – on every single play!

You have all the normal bets, like who wins, over under total points, etc.

Then you can bet on things like which of, say, 20 different players will score first. Who will win the coin toss and will it be heads or tails. Will the first score be a TD (pass or run), FG or safety. Bet on number of fumbles, INT's and total turnovers.

It gets better. You can bet on whether either team will score first twice or punt first twice. Total 3rd and 4th down conversions by either/both teams.

Total number of sack, tackles, INT's by any player and total by either team.

Here's a creative one (of many). Will the Pats' Wes Welker have more/less receiving yards than Phil Mickelson's 4th round total in the PGA tournament Sunday.

Or will the Pats and or Giants score more/less points than Kobe Bryant on Sunday against Washington.

Will Tom Brady have more passing yards than the combined total points on the Lakers/Wizards game Sunday.

In soccer, will Arsenal and Manchester City score more combined goals than Patriots' TD's.

Will Giants' TE Kevin Boss have more/less catches than the total number of goals scored by the NY Islanders and Montreal in Sunday's hockey game. (How did hockey get into this. No one cares).

Total points of both teams or Lakers' first half points.

Here's a favorite. Longest field goal or total number of points, assists and rebounds by Dallas Mavericks' Dirk Novitsky?

Will the Lakers score more points than the rushing total of the Pats.

Will Randy Moss have more receptions than Kobe Bryant's made free throws.



OFF THE WALL SPORTS

You can even bet on the total number of penalties and number by each team. I have just scratched the surface, but you get the idea. Virtually, Jay and his Imperials came up with just about any possible combination(s) you can think of. And some you can't. Needless to say, the "action" is certainly not only on the playing field. Kornegay had told me that they have over 3,000 bets on every single play! As they say, it is not whether you win or lose, it is whether you beat the point spread. And, whether or not your zillion prop bets come out the way you want them to. I've got a couple of bets down, "illegally." I have \$10 that the coin toss will come up heads, and I'm taking the Giants plus the 12 points! Then, you have the commercials. For \$2.7 million for 30 seconds, Budweiser and others come up with some pretty creative ads. For that amount of money, they sure as hell better! Eat too much, drink heavily and enjoy the game. And take Monday off so you can get rid of your hangover. Or whatever.