

Bonched

PASSION & TRADITION ROYALTY

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PASSION & TRADITION ELEVATE COLLEGE FOOTBALL OVER THE NFL

*20 reasons college football is
better than the NFL*

US \$4.99



MIAMI SCANDAL

Overshadowed by SMU Case

BOOMER SOONER

OU No. 1 in Preseason AP Poll

BIG 10 REMAINS 12

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THE HEISMAN FORMULA

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By Austin Murphy



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Photograph by Winslow Towson

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- 3 OREGON
- 4 LSU
- 5 BOISE STATE
- 6 FLORIDA STATE
- 7 STANFORD
- 8 TEXAS A&M
- 9 OKLAHOMA STATE
- 10 NEBRASKA

“IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL, EVERY GAME IS A PLAYOFF. ONCE YOU LOSE ONE GAME, YOU'RE MOSTLY OUT. IF YOU LOSE TWO YOU'RE DEFINITELY OUT. WE GET 12 PLAYOFF GAMES. TEAMS TAKE THAT APPROACH. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY THERE IS SO MUCH INTEREST. YOU STUB YOUR TOE, YOU CAN NEVER GET BACK IN.” - RICK RODRIGUEZ

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PASSION, TRADITION

ELEVATE COLLEGE FOOTBALL OVER THE NFL

“Passion, tradition and rivalries are just the most obvious reasons college football beats the NFL.”

By: Ivan Maisel

The request to provide 20 reasons college football is better than the NFL is not a fair one.

How can anyone defend the humdrum nature of 110,000 screaming fashion-forward (orange, I hear, is hot) Tennessee fans against parity (NFL motto: Excellence just gets in the way)?

How can anyone justify the depth of antipathy that Ohio State and Michigan fans have for each other when compared to the thrills of a Houston-Jacksonville game in October (or the rematch three weeks later)?

What is the worth of winning the Little Brown Jug, or the Old Oaken Bucket, or the Egg Bowl, when compared to the \$26.5 million guaranteed to a former North Carolina State defensive end benched in the middle of last season?

Oh, the sleepless nights of trying to face such a task. Oh, the agony.

Oh, and one other thing: Only 20 reasons? Sure you don't want 40?



PASSION

The appeal of college football is rooted in the simple notion that your team represents you, your state, your alma mater, your youth. The NFL represents – what, exactly? A bunch of 25-year-old millionaires who will dump your town the minute their agent secures a better offer. There is no loyalty in the NFL. College football is all about loyalty.

25-YEAR-OLD MILLIONAIRES

Speaking of which, college football has none. What the game does have, instead, is humility. You want the bling and the talk? Have at it. We'll stick with guys who are still happy to get their names in the paper.

RIVALRIES

Army-Navy. Ohio State-Michigan. Alabama-Auburn. Texas-Oklahoma. Harvard-Yale. Williams-Amherst. No matter the division, there are rivalries that go 365-24-7. You revel in victory and agonize in defeat. What does the NFL offer in comparison? Dallas-Washington? How big can a rivalry be when they play it twice a year?

THE POSTSEASON

That's right. I'm defending the BCS. Well, not exactly. I'm defending the lack of a playoff. Better yet, I'm

going to let West Virginia coach Rich Rodriguez defend it for me. "In Division I [-A] football, every game is a playoff," Rodriguez said.

"Once you lose one game, you're mostly out. If you lose two, you're definitely out. We got 12 playoff games. Teams take that approach. That's probably why there's so much interest. You stub your toe, you can never get back in it."

Those ugly December games when Peyton Manning plays one series and sits out, as if it were August? In college football, games in August are played as if they're in December.

BOWLS ON TV

Of course there are too many bowls. But from Dec. 19 to Jan. 8, when there's a game on just about every day, how great is that?

PLAYBOOK BUFFET

College offenses range from the option employed by Navy and Air Force to the I to the West Coast to the spread. Every week brings something different. They stretch the capabilities of defensive coordinators and the enjoyment of the fans. Most NFL offenses come from the same cookie cutter. Call them Two Degrees of Bill Walsh.

OVERTIME

It's simple. In college, both teams get the ball. In the NFL, you can lose the game without one side of your team stepping onto the field.

STADIUMS

NFL owners hold up their hometowns for state-of-the-art palaces that have as much personality as a downtown skyscraper. Give me old-school (there's a reason that became an adjective) classics like the stadiums at Notre Dame, Ohio State or most any SEC school any day of the week.

And think about this: Which sport has 16 stadiums that average more than 80,000 in attendance? The NFL has one. Which sport has four stadiums that average six figures in attendance? It ain't the Sunday one.

TICKET PRICES

The highest cost of a ticket at Georgia this season is \$32. The Bulldogs are the defending SEC champion. The highest cost of a ticket at the Atlanta Falcons this season is \$104. The Falcons went 8-8. Where would you rather be?

COMMERCIALS AFTER KICKOFF

The worst thing to happen to football since the XFL. Let's go over this. Extra point. Lots of commercials. Kickoff. Lots

of commercials. By the time the game starts again, you've got to remind yourself who's playing. That's not a problem in college football.

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

All those commercials and yet the games are shorter. What does that mean? Less football! NFL teams ran an average of 62.5 offensive plays per game last season. Division I-A teams ran an average of 70.6 offensive plays. And don't tell me that college games last longer. Yes, they averaged 3:06 and the NFL averaged 3:01, but that's explained by halftime. College halftimes last 20 minutes; the NFL, 12.

COLLEGE HALFTIMES

NFL halftime means a break. College halftime means tradition. Marching bands dot the I in Ohio or at least rouse the emotions by playing the fight song. Non-marching bands, such as the LSJUMB (Leland Stanford Junior University Marching Band) at Stanford, mock all that is sacred. Either way, it's an inestimable part of the college football experience. NFL halftime means, um, time to make a sandwich.

DYNASTIES

The NFL, thanks to the salary cap, is the last bastion of socialism in the world outside of Cuba. In college football, coaches build something to

last. History demands that Michigan must win (or Nebraska or USC). What does history demand of the Carolina Panthers? An introduction.

JOE PA

Joe Paterno has been at Penn State as assistant (beginning in 1950) and head coach (since 1966) for 56 seasons – or seven years before the dean of NFL coaches, Bill Cowher, was born.

TRADITIONS

Checkerboard end zones. Aggies kissing their girls after a touchdown. Nittany Lion roars. Boats on Lake Washington anchoring at a Husky

7 MAJOR GAME DIFFERENCES

Two-Minute Warning:

There is No Two-Minute Warning in college football. At the two-minute mark in the NFL, there is a mandatory time-out—or pause in the game—that is not attributed to either team. Gives the team time to regroup and plan. But at the college level, there is no stop of game.

Two Point Conversion:

The Two-Point Conversion Starts on the 3rd yard line. In the NFL, it starts from the second yard line.

Knee-Down:

The most important difference between college football and the NFL is that in college, if you are carrying/catching the ball and one of your

The Game Clock:

In college football, the game clock stops whenever a first down is achieved, but in the NFL the clock continues to run after a first down.

The Almost-Out-of-Bounds Catch/Pass Reception:

In college football, the receiver must have control of the ball and get one foot down in-bounds for it to be considered a catch. In the NFL, the receiver must have control of the ball and get both fe

Overtime:

In college, when a game goes to overtime, each team is given equal opportunity to try and score. They each get a possession from the opponent's 25 yard line. There is a coin toss and the winner chooses to kick first or to receive first. The team winning after both teams get a chance to score is declared the winner.

The Football:

NCAA football has white half stripes and some have team logs. The NFL football does not have stripes and has the commissioner's signature. They are both the same size and weight.

OHIO STATE *Script Ohio*

To the untrained eye high above the field, it might appear at first that the members of the Ohio State University Marching Band are imitating a snake. In fact, they are executing a highly choreographed, 75-year-old tradition that brings chills to the fans — and the fans to a roar — at every Buckeyes home game.

WISCONSIN *Jump Around*

When the third quarter ends at Camp Randall Stadium, the party's just beginning. While the P.A. system blares House of Pain's early 1990s hip-hop hit, the student section follows its instructions: Jump up, jump up and get down.

CLEMSON *Howard's Rock*

Nearly every team has its own unique way of running onto the field, but only Tigers players rub a 2½-pound rock for good luck as they charge down the hill behind the east end zone. It's known as the Most Exciting 25 Seconds in College Football.

FLORIDA STATE *Chief Osceola*

Talk about a dramatic entrance. Before the opening kickoff at Doak Campbell Stadium a man playing the role of the legendary Seminoles chief rides his horse, Renegade, to midfield, where he plants a flaming spear.

TEXAS A&M *Midnight Yell*

A&M students take their role as the 12th Man very seriously — so much so that the night before home games, roughly 20,000 students gather at Kyle Field for a pep rally.

MULTIPLE *Live Mascots*

From Georgia's beloved bulldog Uga to Texas's mammoth steer Bevo to Colorado's stampeding buffalo Ralphie, college football's sidelines welcome all breeds.

AUBURN *War Eagle*

Jordan-Hare Stadium gets loud for big hits and TDs but rarely louder than when Nova the golden eagle soars overhead and lands near the 50-yard line as almost 90,000 fans scream, "W-a-a-r Eagle!"

ARMY-NAVY *March On*

For pageantry and patriotism nothing compares with watching the uniformed students who make up the Corps of Cadets and Brigade of Midshipmen march into the stadium in processional before the season-ending showdown.

NOTRE DAME *Alma Mater*

When the game ends, win or lose, Fighting Irish players head to the corner of the north end zone, link arms and join the student section (which always stays till the bitter end) in singing the words to Notre Dame, Our Mother.

GEORGIA TECH *Ramblin' Wreck*

The Yellow Jackets have a unique ride in the game: a restored 1930 Model A Ford Sport Coupe — a real classic.

10 BEST COLLEGE TRADITIONS

game. The flaming spear at midfield. The Sooner Schooner. Touchdown Jesus. Traditions are the imprimatur of every college team and its fans. As long as the NFL is operated out of one office in New York, tradition will be disallowed.

SONGS

Hail to the Victors, you Helluva Engineer. What be the odds, great or small, drown 'em Tide. Whether you Fight On, or you just On Wisconsin, just remember, We are the Boys from Old Florida, and champions of the West.

THE HEISMAN

The single most recognized individual award in American sports may not deserve its perch on the merits — it is,

in fact, awarded to the best offensive player on a national championship contender — but the Heisman has held on to its stature even as it outlived its founder (the Downtown Athletic Club of New York).

Only blood relatives can name any NFL MVP who won before, say, 2001. A Heisman winner will be introduced as such for the rest of his life.

LEITH JACKSON

Suffered one year on ABC's "Monday Night Football." Called college football games for more than four decades.

CHAMPIONSHIP SITES

Last four championship sites:

Pasadena, New Orleans, Miami, Tempe. Last four Super Bowl sites: Detroit (in February), Jacksonville (not ready for Prime Time), Houston, San Diego.

ETERNAL YOUTH

Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz, whose name has gotten tossed into every NFL coaching search since he left the Ravens staff in 1998, said he likes the college game because he likes to develop young players. The rhythm and arc of a collegiate career embody the fulfillment of potential. It's the same reason we continue to go back to our alma maters season after season. College football reconnects you with the kid you were. That, and the chance to beat your archrival.

