

Pining For Pigskin

by Scott Holstad

IT'S FOOTBALL TIME again (thank God)! My colleagues may scoff at my autumn obsession, but my enthusiasm remains undampened. It's time to invest in mega-beverages, chips and other assorted eats, and crank the tube up to catch as much pigskin as possible (while the wife scurries out the door). And if you're like me, the games on TV aren't enough. I subscribe to tons o' football mags, read books, etc. Fortunately, the Internet is yet another football medium. Not only does it help me through those dark days of spring, but it keeps me up-to-date during the fall as well. I just can't get enough football info! In fact, why don't you overdose with me....

Arguments abound about whether college football is better/worse than the NFL -- let me end that discussion right now. The fact is, college football ROCKS! One college ball Web site to bookmark is ESPN SportsZone's College Football. It's updated daily with great info: stories, scores, schedules, injury reports, and more. The College Football World Wide Web Site is another comprehensive site with predictions, archives, and even I-AA info.

Of course, one of the major aspects of college football is recruiting. Check out the National Recruiting Center to see how your favorite school has fared in the recruiting wars. But wait, let's not forget all the Heisman hype. Beano Cook is only too glad to let you know how he feels. ("It doesn't matter what you think. Beano knows!!!!") And for those of you interested in coaching one day, Big Jim is happy to instruct you in the twin arts of formations and plays.

One of the most time-honored college football traditions is, of course, arguing about which team should be on top. Sometimes it helps to check out the rankings. Fortunately, you can view both the AP and USA Today/CNN Coaches Poll. After you've looked over the polls, go chatting and argue all you want!

Chances are that, while arguing for your team, you're also pushing the superiority of your favorite conference. While I've attended universities and/or received degrees from schools in the Pac-10 and the BigWest, I know that the SEC -- the Southeastern Conference -- is **the** superior conference! And, of course, the preeminent school of the SEC -- if not the nation -- is the #2 ranked University of Tennessee Volunteers! In fact, whenever I want in-depth info on The Big Orange, I can just shout "Go Vols!" and I've got everything I need.

Now, we all know the only reason we play a regular football season is to get to the bowl games. With the Web, you can get info on the Sugar Bowl, the Fiesta Bowl, and the Orange Bowl, among others. You diehard fans might even want to check out the Senior Bowl site. While you're surfing the college football scene, don't forget to drop by the College Football Hall of Fame.

While college football soothes the soul (or stokes the embers -- whatever your predilection), Fall also brings us the NFL. And memories. The Steel Curtain. Purple People Eaters. The Immaculate Reception. Boy, when Fall arrives, I can **smell** football, taste it, feel it coursing through my veins (Am I getting carried away?). Well, the Web can ease your NFL cravings too. NFL.COM is **the** source for your football coverage -- you can get highlights, news, and stats for each NFL team. The Sports Network is another comprehensive site, where you can catch up on "This Day in Sports," as well as coverage on most major sports.

Not too shockingly, you'll also be able to find loads o' shrines to your favorite teams and players. Having spent 10 years in the Pittsburgh area (1970-80), I'm a devout Steelers fan. One of my favorite sites is [The Absolutely Unofficial Pittsburgh Steelers Ultimate Fan Handbook\(TM\)](#). I usually make a point to check out [Bioman's Steeler Page](#) as well; it's not that big, but I can get up-to-date news. One piece of news currently torturing me is the fact that [Greg Lloyd](#) is going to sit out the rest of the season with a nasty injury. Yeesh! I do like players who aren't Steelers though. [Jerry Rice](#) is HUGE, [Dan Marino](#) still has a great arm after all these years, and even NFL-loser-but-former-college-great [Heath Shuler](#) has his own fan page.

When you think NFL, though, you think post-season. That means the [Super Bowl!](#) Hey, I can handle Pittsburgh losing to [Dallas](#) 27-17 last year; the Steelers beat the Cowboys twice en route to four Super Bowl victories during the '70s. Even with the Steelers' injuries, I'm ready to [chat](#) up another round. Meanwhile, don't forget about the completely insignificant, yet still-fun-to-watch [Pro Bowl](#). You can read roster info and look up cheerleaders at this site.

While players certainly like making the Pro Bowl, most would surely do anything to enter the [Pro Football Hall of Fame](#). Well, you can enter whenever you like -- take a tour, find out facts, buy stuff at their store. The Hall of Fame enshrines the best players ever (although I still don't know why the best center who ever lived -- Mike Webster -- has not yet been inducted!!!). Luckily for you, you can [vote for the greatest running back](#). Okay, your vote may not count for much, but at least you can make your voice heard. Finally, if you're enamored with your own NFL ideas, you might want to try a hand at some [football trivia](#).

Look, football season has already started, so I know you don't have any more time to read my stuff. But in between those games this weekend, fire up your Web browser and get the scoop on the pigskin happenings. After all, you can never get [enough football](#).



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