



PREMIUM PODCASTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

BLEAV Sports with Fred and the Fantastics

A DRAMATIC CONCLUSION TO FOOTBALL'S REGULAR SEASON



It's that time again, folks, Fred and the Fantastics on BLEAV and on PodClips across America and around the world. We'll discuss this, that, and everything in sports, and sometimes a little bit more, with the former kicker for the Rams and the Trojans, Art Sorce, attorney Laura Snone, and you. You can email us at sportsfred@aol.com sportsfred@aol.com. All right, I've got to go back to Monday night. Rams lose last second overtime. Bottom line - Sean McVay. Did he fire the ball boy, or who did he fire after this loss, Art Sorce?

He should have fired himself, Fred. We talked about this a little bit on the internet. He made some very questionable calls, but I've got to give the Rams credit. I called, and I said, but they were down 21-0. I said they're going to come back and tie the game and come up a buck short, and that's exactly what happened. They really do need Davante Adams alongside Puka Nacua. They do need that, and I was real worried when Corum got hurt because I like the double-headed running backs they have in that position. You know, I will say this: that Western division of the NFC, with the 49ers, Seattle, and the Rams; three really good teams. But what really impressed me more than anything else was how this Philadelphia defense can hold Buffalo to basically 13 points at home. Their offense went into a shell. I'm looking at it, and I'm saying to myself, Is this the most wide-open season ever that I can recall in the NFL, in terms of what team could wind its way through and win the Super Bowl? What do you guys think?

Laura? Do you have any thoughts about how wide open the playoffs might be?

Oh yeah. I mean, I've been asking people ever since last week when we talked about our picks for the Super Bowl. And everybody I've asked has a different team. And they all are possible.

I think there's 10 teams that have a legitimate chance, because the Rams could actually win three games in a row in the playoffs. You never know. I mean, they're not afraid to go on the road.

I don't know. The Rams seemed kind of like they were asleep in that first half, I thought. It's like, what, you're not playing for anything? Just wake up. And then they woke up in the second half.

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That's the same thing the Steelers did in their game against Cleveland. I mean, really, you're a 9-6 team, you win this game, you're going to the playoffs. And they came out, and I'm like, Wow, these guys are going through the motions.

Yeah.

And that just took a Steeler fan, and it really set me back. And, you know, I also thought Shedeur Sanders showed a little bit of what this kid has in terms of moxie. I mean, they didn't want to draft him for whatever reason, but I'll tell you what, from what I can see, I see a lot more talent there than I see with Dylan Gabriel, who was drafted ahead of him.

Let me just throw you this when I'm watching the Ram game, now, Art, you played the game, I didn't play it anywhere near that level. Is it possible some of the guys, like the offensive, the special teams coordinator, and were upset with McVay for firing the special teams coordinator after the loss against Seattle? Is it possible, because of that, their mind wasn't on the game and were starting to get back at McVay? Is that conceivable?

When you're with these guys all year long, and they're your coaches, and you're a special teams player, you develop a relationship and an affinity for people. I mean, this is your coach, this is the guy you go to battle with. I just don't believe that you fire somebody 15, 16, 17 games into a season. I mean, if you want to make a change, maybe you sit the guy down and say, Look, I want you to do this, this, and this, and this is how it's going to be. You are the head coach. The buck stops at your desk. So, I mean, that is something I do believe could have been a problem there. But I would think, as a professional, you're going to go out and do your job. I mean, you're one of the privileged few to play in the National Football League. They talk about the shield, the logo. I mean, I would hope to think that wouldn't be true, but you never know.

Let's talk about Seattle at the 49ers. Art, you're first. I think last time I checked, Seattle was a slight favorite on the road, which I don't understand. Art. Who do you think might win that one?

Well, I grew up, I lived in San Clemente for many years. I watched Sammy Darnold play boys' club basketball, I watched him play at San Clemente and at the University of Southern

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California. And I've never seen him win a big game. Fred, except the Rose Bowl, which was nine years ago. So my question is, the jury's out on Sammy Darnold. I love him as a quarterback, but he has a penchant to throw interceptions in big games. If he was so good, why would O'Connell have gotten rid of him when he won 14 games last year? I think Brock Purdy is the hottest quarterback in the game, right this minute. I'm not real infatuated with a 49er defense, however, because you saw how many points they gave up.

Thirty-eight.

Seattle has a great defense. Can Sammy Darnold play a game without making a mistake offensively? If he does, Seattle wins. If they don't, watch Brock Purdy and the 49ers roll to the title. And they may never have to leave the Bay Area because the Super Bowl is being played there this year.

Laura, Seattle at San Francisco. You know, I think the 49ers will win the whole thing, but tell me who you think might win that game.

Oh, I think the 49ers are just too good. I mean, they seem to just be able to win games no matter what happens, no matter how many players get hurt. I mean, they just seem so focused. And you know, it was funny. When Brock Purdy came back, there were some people that were saying, You know, Matt Jones was playing so well. You know, Purdy's going to come in. He just came out, you know, blazing since he's been back. I mean, he's playing great football. So yeah, I like the 49ers and art's right.

The Super Bowl's being played in Santa Clara. If they win Sunday, they never have to leave. As long as they're in the playoffs, as long as they're playing, they can play at home, so that's a huge advantage.

Folks, we're taping this on Wednesday afternoon, so if you have some thoughts, you can email us at sportsfred@aol.com, sportsfred@aol.com.

Hey Fred, do you see any upsets in college football over the next 24 hours?

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I think that again, of the four games, Dan Lanning, to me, is a very good coach, that's on one side. On the other side, he's had probably more talent than most squads in recent history. And they haven't won the big games. Texas Tech, I think, can beat them. I think last time I checked, the number was down to about two, two-and-a-half. The Ducks were favored. So, of the games, the hunch is again. I was a Pac-10 fan, Pac-12 fan, AAW fan, and All Pacific Coast Conference fan. So I hope Oregon wins. But something tells me they might not. Art, your thoughts?

You know, I mean, Texas Tech has proven what you can do with the right alumni and the right amount of money, and the new professional college football, you know, vista. The other game that I think is going to be really intriguing, going to be played probably in a rainstorm in L.A., the Rose Bowl tomorrow afternoon. You've got an Indiana team laying seven points against an Alabama team. And again, we talked about it on the Sports Overnight America Show. Which one of these quarterbacks, Mendoza and/or Simpson, Ty Simpson, throws the ball best in the rain? That's a real, huge thing. And I'm going to tell you, I've played in some games in the Rose Bowl where we had rain. That field does not drain well, like a lot of California stadiums. I, remember, I go back to the Rams game against Minnesota in '77. And I went to it. Because it was right there on campus, in the Coliseum, and the water is cascading down the Coliseum. It looked like a swimming pool, literally. And I mean, the Rams finally got home-field advantage. And they turn around. And, you know, in Minnesota, basically,

And that's grass, I mean, it's grass, I mean, some of these artificial surfaces, when it's raining, it looks like they're playing, it's got four feet of water underneath the turf. Yeah, I mean, you just see all this built, you know, basically, you know, tsunamis on the field.

I think the game tonight, Fred, the game tonight is intriguing to me because you've got a great athletic team in Miami, coming off one of the biggest victories they've had in two decades, beating Texas A&M last week. Their defense, their corners, just the outside rushers. You know. Ohio State is a nine-and-a-half point favorite against the team that matches up with them talent-wise. Now, can they muster up the performance of a lifetime in Jerry's house tonight? I mean, that's going to be one heck of a game.

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I'm going to watch it, there's no question about that. Today, we're going to come back with more on Fred and the Fantastics with Art and Laura right after this.

Hey, welcome back, everybody. Fred and the Fantastics on BLEAV and on PodClips. You can join us at sportsfred@aol.com, sportsfred@aol.com. Art, at 128 years of age, needs help sometimes answering these questions. Art. What are you taking this afternoon on Fred and the Fantastics to stay awake and answer these questions in the middle of the day?

Well, you know, the great thing is it's the middle of the day, so that helps me. But I still like to have my brain working very well, especially after the accident I got into two weeks ago, a little noggin shaker, but Prevagen, the professional formula, is pretty awesome. I also like Focus Factor because it has a more, how about a holistic view to it, all the vitamins I need. But those are the two products I mostly take, and they seem to be doing very well most of the time.

All right, let's talk about this. The Jets and the Raiders need quarterbacks. I don't think there's any question about that. Laura, you're a Raiders fan, you've got Mendoza, you've got Salem, you've got Sayin, you've got Dante Moore of Oregon. Which quarterback would you like to see quarterbacking for your Las Vegas Raiders?

I'd like to see if they get the number one pick. I'd like to see him pick Mendoza, see how he plays this weekend. But I think he's a great guy, I think he's a great talent. And I think there's the interesting controversy about the Raiders benching Max Crosby, which Max Crosby was really upset about. My husband,

He's had knee surgery; he's got a bad knee. Why would you waste him?

Of course, it's the right decision, irrespective of the playoff, of the draft picture. He shouldn't be playing. What's the point? So, but of course, as a professional athlete, he wants to play. I mean, my husband's like, Well, what a great gig, you get paid, and you don't play. I said, you don't have a clue about how professional athletes think they want to play.

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They'd play in the parking lot at the Vons if there was a game, the old-fashioned guys that love the game, and that's the reason. That's one of the questions I wish they'd asked more of the young draft picks. Is it a love affair with the game of football or are you in this for other reasons? Because I got to tell you, when I look at Mendoza, as they say in sports now, he fills in all the boxes. But I will tell you, I just got done watching a bowl game here with Diego Pavia from Vanderbilt.

Great arm.

And this kid, he's 5'10, doesn't have the greatest gun of all time. But I will tell you, he is fiery; he never gives up. I mean, he would find a way on my squad somewhere because he'd be the kind of guy that I would look at when everybody's like, down in the dumps, get your butt in there and take us down for a touchdown. I don't care how you do it.

He went crazy after the Heisman balloting; he went nuts.

Yeah, well, but he believes in himself, Fred. I mean, maybe it doesn't come across real well, you know, in the media. But you know, I look at the quarterbacks out there, and you know, in the beginning of the year, they were talking about Nussmeier from LSU. And they had all these other quarterbacks. The kid from Clemson, Cade Klubnik, you know what happened to them? Where'd they go?

You know, the problem, though, is you are seeing that with Bryce Young, you know, the quarterbacks that aren't tall enough, they can't see over the offensive linemen. And everybody is, like, so much bigger than they used to be.

And that's a valid point, Laura. But most of the time, and I've talked to Pat Hayden about this, talked to Fran Tarkenton about this, talked to Eddie LeBaron about this. Most of the time, the way the linemen spread guys out in the pocket, you're throwing in alleys, most of the time. OK, now, with guys like that who are not as big. I also like the way you roll them out; you do rollouts, semi-rollouts. Give them a chance to use their athletic ability to buy a little time in the pocket.

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You know, the stand-up, Peyton Manning-type quarterback right now, with the amount of speed in the NFL,

Kirk Cousins.

It might be changing a little.

Yeah, like, Kirk Cousins.

Oh my God, Kirk Cousins. It's like going after a statue. I think he's got to be able to move a little bit.

You know, the interesting thing again, I think we've talked about this. He never wins on Monday night, but he wins on Sunday and Thursday night. No explanation. But I have to,

How do you figure that out?

Kirk Cousins is a perfect example of somebody who loves to play football, right?

Oh, he does. There's no doubt about it.

I think the guy has had so many injuries, and he just keeps popping back up. You know?

I mean, that Achilles tendon injury would have probably ended most people's careers at 34-35. And then you look at Aaron Rodgers, similar situation.

Yeah,

I mean, these guys, you know, talking about the game coming up this Sunday night. Did you notice how the NFL didn't do any of their scheduling until week 17, until all the games were over with? And they came up with this Saturday schedule, which has two playoff games for ESPN. And then, of course, the Sunday night game is the winner, winner-take-all. You've got, you

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know, Baltimore and Pittsburgh. That's always been a great game over the last few decades, I mean, it's pretty crazy how they come up with these great games. And you know, you've got Green Bay and Minnesota this week, you've got two teams, the Saints and the Vikings, who have won four in a row. Who would have thought that? I mean, Shough is playing great for New Orleans. You know, you think Brosmer would win four games in a row as the quarterback? I was listening to Mike Florio the other day, and he said no quarterback has thrown for less than 100 yards in four games and won four games in a row in the history of the NFL.

So much to talk about as far as the playoffs are concerned. I will tell you, though, about the National Football League, and we talk about this all the time. Last week, you had games on; the second game on Saturday was on Peacock. They had to get that in, so half the world couldn't get it. They had the two games on Netflix, the one game on Amazon. Again, the average person cannot watch all these games because the average person cannot afford all these services. I will not spend the \$22 for Netflix, even though it has a.

I thought I had a Peacock, I thought I had a Peacock, you know, deal, and we didn't. And I look, and it's a big game, you know? And I just looked, I looked at Jaclyn, and I said, Hey, you know what, I'm not, I'm not going to do it. Even if they give you a seven-day free trial, it's the point of being, Hey, look, it's a big game. You already did the Netflix, you did the Prime. I mean, you know, what about the people out there who have kids and families, and they, you know, just put one of those games on regular TV, would ya?

All right, Art. 2026 In a few hours, your thoughts about the 2025 year and heading forward?

Well, you know, one of the things that really bums me out is we lost a lot of great sports people, like we talked about on Sports Overnight America earlier today. And I just, it's funny, as you get older, you know, you start thinking about it. But I will say this, I'm really excited for Michigan. I think they got the right man to turn that program around in Kyle Whittingham. I played for his dad when he was the line coach of the Rams back in the '70s. And his dad was just one of the great men of all time. Coached under Ray Malavasi and Marv Goux, and those guys. And I think he's the right guy to turn that program around in Michigan, get them back on the straight and narrow. I'm looking forward to the playoffs, the college football games over the next 24 hours,

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and the NFL. You know, I just don't have the love affair I once had with the National Football League, because I'm starting to see things that bother me a little bit. Regarding the way the game is played, it's not a game I remember from the past. And it's just the consistency of the athletes, Fred, from performance week to week, is not what I once thought that there was at the National Football League. And I'll leave it at that. But I want to wish everybody the best of the holidays and Happy New Year, and go make 2026 something special.

Laura, your comments?

I think 2025 was a great year in sports, from my point of view, not a great year in politics, but, or in the state of our country. But it was a great sports year. I'm really looking forward to the NFL playoffs. I think the NFL this year has been, it's been great, as far as from a spectator standpoint. And I just wish everybody a safe and healthy, and meaningful 2026, especially tonight. Be careful, all you guys out there on the streets.

One quick question after what you just said. How do you think the Summer Olympics, how do you think the World Cup soccer will go, with MAGA being MAGA? Laura, you're first.

I hope we had a, there was a guest on last week, I think, who was talking about,

Jeff Fellenzer? Jeff Fellenzer.

Yes, yeah. And he said that he thought Stacey Wasserman could talk some sense into the President as far as these onerous restrictions that have been proposed to letting people in the country. I mean, things like people are supposed to give five years of their social media accounts and family members' social media accounts, and all sorts of really invasions of privacy. I mean, we have a preeminent law enforcement, or at least we used to have a preeminent law enforcement agency in this country. We can vet people. We don't need to take people that are coming here to watch games and require that they give five years of their social media accounts. I mean, nobody who's brown, which are the biggest fans of the World Cup, are going to want to come here and have to go through that. So I'm hopeful that that's going to not be a problem.

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And, I hope it's going to be just a great experience. With all three countries, Mexico, Canada, and the U.S.

Art, you get the final thought.

Well, I think Jeff hit it best. I think the bottom line is, this is a chance for the United States to showcase ourselves. I would like to believe that we're all bigger and better than all that. And I don't care if you're from Mars, right, Fred? If you want to come and watch the World Cup and you want to watch the Olympics, come on. We're the United States of America, we believe in everything, you know, we want to embrace the world. Come on over, it's sports, it's awesome, you know, I just don't think there's going to be a problem. I think Casey Wasserman will do a good job as the lead, like Peter Ueberroth did in 1984, and I can only hope that's what happens.

Ronald Reagan agrees or agreed with what you just said, Art. All right for Art, for Laura, for Mario. Stay tuned for much more Down the Road of Fred and the Fantastics, on BLEAV and on PodClips. Bye everybody.

Happy New Year's, you guys. God bless you.

I want to ask, what did you mean about that you think the quality of the game is different or not as up to par?

Well, what I meant about in football in the National Football League is that the referees are controlling every outcome of every game. This is my personal opinion.

The officiating,

In other words, every big play I have to look up and say, What's gold? Is there going to be a penalty on it? And then there's plays at the end of the game, like in the Steelers game against the Browns. The guy was face-guarding him. Which, in the NFL, you have to turn and make an effort to locate the ball. And they made no call. And I mean, Aaron Rodgers was livid. Because you have to have more consistency,

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That's the officiating, yeah, right.

And I say, in playoff games, in big moments, I want to see less of the referees, I want to see the players decide the game. Now. If it's an obvious hold, or an obvious where a guy really comes in and rams into a guy and it does something, that's a different story. But I just feel like, and I've noticed this over the last four or five years. For those five years, Kansas City Chiefs got almost every call there was, and now this year, they didn't. And this year, you know, I know a lot about the NFL and the makeup of the NFL from people I've dealt with over the years, and it makes me wonder if this is all preordained, like pro wrestling.

All right, in nine days, Art, I'm going to ask you about the new wide receivers for USC because this kid, Hines, is un-blank-believable. He made some catches last night I don't think even I could have made.

You're talking about number 16, right?

What?

Number 16?

9.3 in the 100 or something like this.

Yeah, yeah, he actually started stepping up all year long. Why do you think Ja'Kobi and Makai Lemon are leaving?

He's unbelievable. All right, nine days on Friday. Laura and Art, have a great holiday.

Be safe, everybody. I love you.

I'm staying home, it's raining, raining, raining. Thank you, Mario, very much. Bye everybody.

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