

OPINIONS

Is the XFL worth watching?

BY JOSIAH OSIEMI

Vince McMahon's XFL organization looks to become the new and improved football league of today, and to rival the near century-old NFL. He wishes for it to stand out with its changes to the rules, point system, and optional strategies, but is it worth watching? Being that the original XFL league was considered a "colossal failure" by McMahon himself, and with the failure of the AAF (Alliance of American Football) just last year, there is fertile ground for skepticism to be planted. However, the new XFL is something not only to be excited about, but also interested to see what it becomes of its plethora of potential.

The most notable element to the XFL is its system and formation changes. The kickoff, for example, is different than the NFL. In the NFL, the kicking team would run the entire field to tackle the receiving kicker while the receiving team had to block their opposers, whereas the XFL's formation has the two teams lined up five yards apart from each other. I saw this as a safer way to utilize kickoffs because it combats dangerous, full speed player to player collisions, which have a higher risk of injury to the players. Another welcomed attribute is that there isn't as much downtime in the XFL compared to the NFL. The time between individual plays is much shorter. Being that the NFL has so many ads, announcements, and downtime, games last a much longer time, which could make the game boring for some. However, XFL plays are so fast that it's hard to determine when to run to the bathroom or grab some snacks, which isn't necessarily a bad problem.

Along with its consistent and speedy play-calling, the XFL's extra point system adds another layer of strategy to the game. After scoring a touchdown, the scoring team has the option to add on 1-3 extra points by scoring another touchdown. The variation of points relies on where the scoring team decides to place the ball. The 1-point mark is at the 2-yard line, the 2-point mark is at the 5-yard line, and the 3-point mark is at the 10-yard line. This is the most interesting element that differentiates the XFL from the NFL. It gives scoring teams the option to either play it safe with low points or play a high risk/high reward option by going for bigger points. It also gives defenders a chance to strategize their defense depending on which point mark the scoring team decides. This is not only a unique system that sets it apart from the NFL, but it also adds unpredictability and excitement to football that hasn't been seen before.

Lastly, the NFL season is within the confines of fall and winter, and the XFL takes place during the spring. This is perfect for football fans who have to wait half a year to see their favorite teams take to the field once more. Although the XFL season is only ten

weeks and ends in April, it still gives fans exciting football to watch amidst the "dry season." With all of the XFL's attributes together, I'd say with much confidence, that the XFL is worth watching. Not only is it great football that can quench any football fans thirst during the NFL off-season, but it also adds enough new and thrilling elements to the game that would satisfy any pigskin fan. Although the league is still small and very new, I've seen enough potential in its first week to heartily recommend it.

The Parasite Controversy

BY ANNA FRITZE

History was made this year at the 2020 Oscars. The thriller *Parasite* was the first film of a foreign language to win best picture. The movie also won the Oscar for best international feature film, along with an array of other awards. Many people watching beamed along with Bong Joon-ho, the director of the film, as he said thank you to the crowds, smiled at his trophies, and said that he was "ready to drink tonight." The crowd cheered for the director and the others involved, delighted to be in the room where history was being made.

Not everyone is happy with the movie's awards; many are upset that *Parasite* was able to win both "best" titles. Making even more of a stir was President Donald Trump, who commented on the award show at a Trump rally in Colorado Springs, saying, "And the winner is... a movie from South Korea, what the hell was that all about?" The president went on to say, "Was it good? I don't know," and even asked to have *Gone With the Wind* back, a movie that is considered timeless, but would not take good standing if made today with its negative portrayal of slavery. Many people were upset with the president's comments, and they wondered why he had more to say about an award show than the state of our country.

So, is it wrong that our best film was won by a foreign film that most Americans have to read subtitles to understand? Even I had to stop and think about it, not because of the subtitles, but because it is something that has never happened before. After some thought, the conclusion I drew was that it's sort of odd that we have a separate award for foreign films in general. Why can't a foreign film be the coveted best picture?

It is odd that we have the best picture and best foreign film, as though only an American film could be the very best. We definitely have great resources and great directors, but it was about time that someone reminded us that, despite Trump's criticisms, America isn't always the best at everything. We should stop worrying so much about the fact that a non-American film beat American films, and instead look positively at the fact that we have even more resources for great entertainment.

Why is the Democratic Party So Divided?

BY ANNA FRITZE

It's the year of the next presidential election, and candidates are campaigning left and right. While November 3rd is still months away, Democrats are beginning to feel the fear and tension. They have an array of candidates shooting for the presidency, and while there is usually power in numbers, here that's not quite the case. The Democratic Party is pretty divided in this race, and those who want Donald Trump out of the White House are getting nervous.

Right now, there is no clear answer to who will be the Democratic candidate. I watched the debates at the beginning of the race, and from what I heard, Elizabeth Warren was pulling ahead of the others. Now, Warren is ranked third, while Joe Biden stands in first, with Bernie Sanders close behind.

Why can't those voting Democrats make a clear decision? Right now, the stakes are really high. While there are plenty of celebrities that openly talk about their hatred for Trump, there is also an unfortunately huge number of Trump supporters, who still stand behind him after a neverending list of quotes like, "But you know, I never did politics before. Now I do politics." Thanks for that insight, Mr. President.

The Democrats want someone who has no question in their ability to beat Trump in the election. They want someone who can clearly win, someone who will have no issue taking on Trump and his comments on what their age or gender or looks are, someone who can talk politics like no other. Well, Sanders is a prime candidate, but he didn't even beat Hillary Clinton in the last election, and she obviously didn't beat Trump. People are upset that he's our best bet, so they're trying to find someone else to put their faith in. Right now, it seems as though different traits in the number of candidates appeal to different people.

Democrats recognize that with the perfect candidate or not, there are Republicans who don't like Trump. A lot of Democrats are for the idea of candidates finding common ground with Republicans so they are more likely to get their votes as well. Sanders and Warren both do not seem to be doing that any time soon. The divide between wanting and not wanting to find common Republican ground is split about fifty-fifty. It seems no progress is being made there. For now, voters can be happy that the Democrats are at least acknowledging that they are divided. We can hope that they will be able to work together to have a candidate strong enough to go against Trump with some new ideas to appeal to both the Democrats and Republicans so that in a way, everyone can win.