OSU/LSU ... tonight in the Superdome for the national championship. Can Jim Tressel and the Buckeyes win their second national title in the last five years? Brian McPeek is the latest of our writers to opine on tonights's game, and in his Weekend Wrap, also hits on the NFL playoffs, the winning streak The Cav is on, and the fast approaching start of spring training. In addition, Brian's going to go a live game blog for tonight's title game, which we'll post as soon as the game ends. GO BUCKS!

Finally

Time to shut up and play in New Orleans.

After what seems likes about 6 months since the Michigan win the Buckeyes get a chance to face LSU Monday night in the BCS Championship game. Volumes have been written about last year's debacle as well as this year's game, but I've been successful in avoiding most of the pre-game hyperbole and references to last January.

It's literally a new year and a completely different type of OSU team taking the field. They are not a prohibitive favorite, they aren't walking the Heisman Trophy winner out on the field, they aren't fat and full of themselves and they typically aren't looking to make any game a track meet this season. They go into this

game with a better record than LSU but as an underdog in Vegas and in the minds of many talking heads.

Which is perfect.

Given that the underdogs have a better record than the favorites in this game I'm fine with the onus being on LSU. I'm fine with the Buckeyes being overlooked and under appreciated and perhaps spending their week in New Orleans needing an extra hotel room to store the chips they have on their shoulders.

The one element of the game that I (nor anyone blessed with the sense of hearing) have not been able to avoid is the repeated references to SEC speed. This isn't the 2007 NCAA Track championship (won by Wisconsin, by the way). OSU matches up well all the way around with LSU. Including in the speed department.

This game is going to be decided by the ability of the OSU line to create some room for Chris Wells and some time for QB Todd Boeckman. If Wells gets into a rhythm and Boeckman gets his time and makes use of it, Ohio State stands a solid shot of winning their second national title in 6 years.

So enough. Let's hear no more Mark May and listen instead to some pads cracking on Monday night.

What Was That?

Is it asking too much out of your quarterback to occasionally throw the football accurately? Apparently it is in Tennessee. Vince Young may be a fine runner and a great guy who never cheats on his chick or his taxes. But the hell if he's an NFL QB right now. The Titans defense pitched a shutout in the first half of Sunday's Wildcard Playoff game against Chargers but once the Chargers went up 10-6 in the second half the game was essentially over.

Pathetic.

Young threw his obligatory bad interception and was unable to put any points on the board in the second half of a 17-6 San Diego win. I don't care how good your defense may be. Asking them for a shutout week in and week out is a recipe for an early playoff exit. That may work against Jim Sorgi and the bottom of the Indianapolis Colts depth

chart, but it's not going to work against too many quality squads.

Speaking of Wild Card games, it was difficult to sit back and watch Jacksonville trump the Steelers Saturday night in Pittsburgh, wasn't it? I didn't think so either. Watching the Jags tease the Steelers, give up an 18 point lead and then come back to stick the knife in the hearts of Pittsburgh and its fans with a late field goal was like finding a stray gift while packing away the Christmas decorations and finding out it was a nice, new flat-screen TV.

It really should have never come down to the late field goal. Despite not hearing it mentioned too often, the pass interference call that benefited the Steelers on 4th down late in the 4th quarter was shameful, if not egregious. Steeler receiver Hines Ward had a solid handful of Jacksonville CB Brian Williams's facemask on the play. Yet it was Williams who was called for interfering with Ward on the play.

It was a terrible call that nearly and directly altered the outcome of the game. Fortunately for Jaguar and Browns fans Josh Scobee made it all moot with his game winner.

Beatin' Da Bums

Before we get too excited about the Cav hitting the .500 mark with wins Friday and Sunday, let's call for a bit of perspective. I mean Sacramento, who was missing Ron Artest, Mike Bibby and Kevin Martin, did take them to the wire Friday night. And on Sunday in Toronto they needed only a franchise-record 24 points from LBJ in the fourth quarter to edge the Raptors.

I'll be kind. They got done what they needed to get done. A win is a win during the regular season. But let's be realistic as well. Going to the final horn

against a depleted and rotten Sacramento team and asking James to put 24 on most teams in the 4th quarter is probably not the recipe you're looking for going forward.

Can You Smell It?

We are just about to the point where we're closer to the start of the 2008 Indians season than we are to the end of the 2007 Indians season. Pitchers and catchers report to Winter Haven in about 5 weeks and the opener is 12 Mondays away.

The hot stove action is in full

bloom. There are 15 pages worth of posts on this site's message boards dedicated to "Indians Off Season Rumors". Never mind that the Tribe has acquired only utility infielder Jamey Carroll and Japanese reliever Masahide Kobayashi.

There are also posts asking people to rank the AL Central standings as of January 4, 2008. And damned if I can find such

things on ESPN.com or in any paper.

What's all that mean?

It means the doom and gloomers have no off-season. Lamenting every move made by other clubs as slothfulness or an opportunity lost by the Indians front office and conceding the division to the Tigers and/or the White Sox

probably shouldn't surprise anyone.

I'm not trying to play Pollyanna when it comes to the Tribe, but how about waiting until the plane leaves for Cleveland at the end of March to bemoan the roster? There's a lot of time and a lot of phone calls to be made between now and then. Let the craziness of the winter meetings dissipate a bit and allow for a little to reality to strike those asking the world

for a corner outfielder. Tribe GM Mark Shapiro has never shown an inclination to over bid for talent. I'll still be surprised if there has not been an acquisition or two by the time the time games start counting at the end of March.

Etcetera

- Lydocaine and B12 injections huh? I didn't bother watching Roger Clemens

being interviewed by his 80-year old father....err... friend Mike Wallace Sunday night on '60 Minutes'.

Why bother?

Clemens is in full-blown backpedal mode right now. His excuses are cliché and his defiance is comical. That

he states he hasn't filed a lawsuit over being falsely accused because of financial considerations is laughable. He stands to lose ten times in endorsement dollars what it would cost to clear his good name.

The guy will spend thousands on lydocaine, B12 and syringes and thousands upon

thousands more to hire a dirty personal trainer who he took with him to multiple tams and towns, but he draws the line on finances at defending his name? Carry on sir. I'm enjoying this show.

- Tom Brady earns 49 of the 50 NFL MVP votes? Who is the lone idiot that voted for Brett Favre and decided Brady's 69% completion

percentage, nearly 5,000 yards, 50 TDs and 8 INTs for a 16-0 team just didn't quite measure up?

Maybe Brady can work on some of the deficiencies in his game and come back with an earnest effort next season. Don't think Patriots coach Bill Belichik won't be using it as leverage down the road.

- Final BCS/SEC note- SEC players and fans were able to read this column in far less time given their speed advantage. They probably didn't retain much of it, but they were faster in getting through it.

Check back tomorrow for a special running diary of the

Buckeyes/LSU championship game.