

# Frankly Plank

By Duane Plank

Okay, Laker fans. Congrats to you on the franchises' 15th championship. Did you burn anything down on Sunday night? Overturn a couple of cars? Gee, the game ended around 45 minutes ago, and some of the Laker "fans" have already lit something on fire. Classy group, some of you are. How much money did it cost our cash-strapped county to corral some of you over-exuberant lawbreakers? Lighting trees on fire? Morons, that's what some of you are.

Sorry, but when my Angels won the World Series a few years ago, I didn't feel the need to riot. Maybe that's just me. Did paint my buzz cut red, though. Couldn't wash it out for a couple of days.

Watched the final game just down the road, at my favorite research spot, and by the fourth quarter, seemed like no one other than *RJ the Golfer* was paying attention. Saw some Laker shirts that were obviously purchased in the last week, but most of the dudes wearing those shirts weren't paying much attention to the game, ordering up Cosmopolitans or whatever else Johnny-come-lately fans order.

Some of you guys are pretty obvious frontrunners, but you probably can't or don't read, so what the heck. Email me at [franklyplank@gmail.com](mailto:franklyplank@gmail.com). Defend your behavior, fellas. Or you, the hottie in the short, white skirt, contact me. Please!

Nice week on the old diet. I believe that I consumed five or more hot dogs, more than one jalapeno double cheeseburger, a Tavern Burger, a Grunions Ortega Burger, multiple orders of salty French Fries, chili cheese fries, plus a Miller Lite or three. That's what hanging out at the ballpark and doing diligent research during the Laker playoff run will do to a guy's supposedly low-cholesterol diet. Not a lotta cholesterol in cheeseburgers and fries, is there? If there is, it must be the good cholesterol.

Somehow I didn't indulge in a plate of pulled pork nachos. See, I do have a modicum of self control.

Like to welcome brother-in-law Patrick Greene to Gundo. Pat will be hanging out at the mansion for a few days, checking out the local talent, presumably helping me with my all-encompassing research as the Angels and Dodgers battle it out this weekend in the resumption of the Freeway Series.

The 2009 edition of golf's U.S. Open

teed off early this morning, before most of you got up. Or some of you got home. The tourney is taking place in Farmingdale, N.Y. at the Bethpage State Park Black Course. Some Florida resident by the name of Tiger is apparently the favorite. Maybe because he won the tournament the only other time it took place at Bethpage back in 2002? Or maybe because he is the defending champion. Or maybe because he is the best golfer on the planet?

So who else has a chance to be in the final pairing with Mr. Woods on Sunday? According to a sampling of odd people, rather oddsmakers, most pick tubby Phil Mickelson, who is listed at 8/1, to be standing next to Woods (7/4) in the final round as the combatants approach the first tee at the incredibly long (7,500 yards) Bethpage layout.

Geoff Ogilvy, at 14/1, and Padraig Harrington (15/1) are considered threats. I am selecting outsider Retief Goosen (25/1) to be a factor come Sunday. The 40-year-old South African is a two-time winner of the Open and seems to have his game rounding into shape. And you know that Goosen won't get too worked up by the supposed pressure; not only has he withstood the heat while winning the tourney back in 2001 and 2004, Goosen survived getting hit by lightning 25 years ago.

Seems Goosen and his partner were playing in a slight drizzle when a jolt of lightning lit up the sky and knocked the 15-year-old Goosen to the ground. Goosen's partner, one Henri Potgieter, told *Golf World*: "I saw him lying on his back. His tongue was down his throat, and his eyes were backward, and he was breathing weird. He had no clothes on; they had been burned from his body. I didn't know what to do. It looked like he was dead. I was screaming for help."

Momma always said that it's all fun and games until someone gets hit by a lightning bolt.

Fortunately, Goosen survived the ordeal, so I gotta believe a guy who lived through a lightning strike won't flinch when faced with a four-foot downhill putt to save par on the 72nd hole.

Guess that alleged funny guy Will Ferrell has a new movie out. Believe it is called *Land of the Lost*. Never got the Ferrell thing,

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# Angels Finally Turning It Around?

By Duane Plank

One of the cliches that I throw out there during the seven-month-long Major League baseball season is this one: "It's still early!" I usually use the hackneyed phrase when my Angels bullpen implodes again and tanks another late-inning lead. Which is happening way too often this season.

Reminds me of an Angel bullpen back in the day, prior to the Angels being perennial divisional winners. That group of pitiful pitchers was dubbed "The Arson Squad." Get it? See, relief pitchers are sometimes called firemen cuz they typically enter the fray when the opposing team is red-hot, with a couple or three runners on base.

So the relief pitcher is supposed to stop the rally and "douse the fire." With me so far? Confused, SW?

Well, the 1975 Angel bullpen was so incapable of putting out the fire, of extinguishing any rally, that they were dubbed "The Arson Squad" by some really bitter person. Back in the day, we bemoaned the entrance of a Halo reliever and used to joke that the new guy would not only *not* put out the fire, but he would actually add to the catastrophe by bringing his own gas can out to the mound, fanning the flames. Pretty funny, huh?

So when I am being chastised by Dodger fans in regards to another late-inning flame-out, I admit to resorting to my defense mechanism, "It's still early."

Oh, and just to give credit where credit is due, some of the members of the Arson Squad included ex-Dodger hurlers Bill Singer and Jim Brewer. Singer had a great year, winning seven and dropping 15. And compiling an ERA of 4.98. Brewer was at the tail-end of his career, but I'll also heap

some of the blame on him.

Now I see the problem for the '75 Angels, who finished the campaign 72-89, sixth and last in their division. Too many has-been Dodgers mucking up the pitching staff.

And who managed the '75 Halos? That would have been one Dick Williams, who was a damn good manager, except for his crummy tenure with Anaheim. In fact, Williams was such a good manager before and after he piloted the Angels, he was elected into the Hall-of-Fame in 2008.

But looking into Williams' background, I noticed that the skipper played parts of five years for the Dodgers back in the early '50s when the carpetbaggers were still trying to escape Brooklyn and move to the left coast. So with an ex-Dodger running the show and a couple of washed up members of the Blue Crew desecrating the pitching mound, I guess it's pretty easy to see why the '75 Angels tanked.

Oh, and I almost forgot to include this gratuitous tidbit regarding Mr. Williams. He was arrested a few years back for indecent exposure. Nuff said there. Everyone makes a mistake or two, right?

Guess my cheap shots aren't going to further ingratiate me with *Dodger Girl*, will they? Maybe she won't have time to peruse this gem this weekend. Don't tell her what I said.

Anyway, it doesn't help that Angel fans like myself, brother Chris and Tony the Music Man seem to be outnumbered in the favored research spot while we are supporting the reigning AL West Division champs. And that each Angel loss seems to bring some inner

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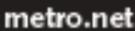
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The Gold Line heads East.

# Metro Briefs

SOUTH BAY

**Metro Rail Returning to East LA**  
Some 46 years after the last trolley crossed the First Street Bridge, rail is returning to East LA with the opening of a new branch of the Metro Gold Line. The soon-to-open extension will span six miles from Union Station in downtown LA via the Little Tokyo/Arts District and Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona Boulevard.

**Metro Bus Team Nation's Best**  
Teams from more than 50 public transit agencies recently competed to see who was best and Metro came out on top. Mechanics Frank Runkle, Rommel Vargas and Andrew Warren Jr. along with operator Juan Navarro founded the Metro team which won the overall championship at the 2009 International Bus Bonanza.

**Metro Service Changes Set for June 28**  
The expansion of Metro Rail to East LA is prompting several bus route changes beginning June 28. In addition, service in the El Segundo area is being restricted on that date. For complete details and timetables, visit [metro.net](http://metro.net).

**Hit the Beach Without the Hassles**  
Make the most of your day at the beach without fighting the summer traffic, searching for parking or paying high prices at the gas pump. Metro has convenient bus and rail connections that can get you to all the Southland beaches. Visit the Trip Planner at [metro.net](http://metro.net) for a wide selection of schedules and connections.

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