

History favors Chargers according to Namath

Joe Namath, football's patron saint of lost causes, has some advice for the 19-point underdog San Diego Chargers, facing the longest odds in Super Bowl history.

Relax. Anything's liable to happen.

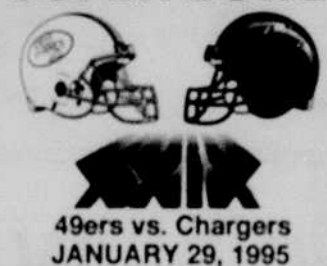
Until now, Namath's 1969 New York Jets were the Super Bowl's biggest underdogs, given no chance against the Baltimore Colts, who went into the 1969 game as 18-point favorites.

Final score: Jets 16, Colts 7.

"First of all," Namath said, "the Chargers have a little advantage. They know a heavy underdog can win. History says that and history can repeat. They were angry going into Pittsburgh (for the AFC championship game) because they felt they were not getting respect. If they handle it right, they can use that anger, make it an advantage rather than a negative."

Namath, speaking by confer-

SUPER BOWL



ence call, believes the Chargers' cause isn't quite as hopeless as the betting odds might suggest.

"It's happened before," he said. "I know it can again. Who knows what will happen? What if, on the second play, somebody twists his knee? Who knows who's going down? That's why they play the game, because we don't know what's going to happen."

Namath, though, insisted he knew against the Colts. He had so much confidence in those Jets he guaranteed the victory.

Climbing out on that limb didn't worry him one bit.

"I was angry," he said. "The guarantee stemmed from that. We felt we had done a great job when we beat Oakland to win the AFL championship. Those guys were good. Then they tell us we're 17-, 18-, 19-point underdogs to the Colts. It was a real insult. To begin with, we felt we were gonna win. We wanted respect."

So Namath spoke out. Coach Weeb Ewbank wasn't thrilled about giving the Colts bulletin board material, but the quarterback shrugged off his complaint.

"I knew what I said. I wasn't scared or afraid," Namath recalled. "I felt bad upsetting Weeb but I told him if they need clips to get fired up, they're in trouble. It was just the way I felt. I liked the idea of letting the fans know how I felt."

For years after the game, Bubba Smith, centerpiece of the Colts defense, refused to accept

the defeat.

"The last time I saw him," Namath said, "he was still insisting it was fixed."

What if Namath had failed to deliver on the guarantee?

"If we had not won, I know what I would have done," he said. "I'd go back to work hard. Bite the bullet and take it. You've got to do that or dig a hole and hide."

Namath said he has never watched a full tape of the Jets' Super Bowl and never mentioned it to people like Don Shula, who coached those Colts.

"I never talked to anybody from Baltimore about it," he said. "When you win, you don't have to talk about it. That would be rude. That would be bad taste."

There was a sense of urgency about that Super Bowl for the AFL after Green Bay had beaten Oakland and Kansas City handily in the first two games. Now,

San Diego faces a similar pressure because AFC teams have lost 10 straight times in this game.

Namath knows the Chargers' task will not be easy.

"San Francisco has done nothing to show they don't deserve the edge," he said.

And yet, Namath notwithstanding, there are no guarantees.

"It still comes down to blocking and tackling, throwing the rock and running it," he said. "I think everyone outside of San Francisco would love to see an upset. Lots of fans look at an underdog winning and something inside them says, 'I can do that.'"

That's what makes upsets so appealing. Will there be one in this Super Bowl? Namath hedged for just a moment.

"I'd love to see San Diego do it," he said. Then he went conservative, adding, "I don't think they can."

Wrestlers face road warmup against Vikings

Trevor Kearney
Oregon Daily Emerald

Facing three upcoming meets on the road, the Oregon wrestling team faces Portland State at McArthur Court tonight at 7:30 p.m., marking its last home meet until February 4.

With a two-four overall record after dropping to top-ranked Wisconsin last Saturday, the Ducks host the Division II Vikings, who dropped to Pacific University 21-15 on Wednesday, before hitting the road to meet seventh-ranked Oklahoma on January 27 and Stanford two days later.

The Vikings, who are also two-four overall, are led by 177-pound junior Travis Bonneau and his 28-5 record. Junior Dave Vizzini, according to Finley, is also a strong talent at the 150-pound weight class and appears to have recovered from a broken hand he had been nursing for the past few weeks. Freshman Craig Otto has posted a 16-10 record at the 126-pound weight class and rounds out the Vikings' top individuals.

"I think Portland State is one of the better

Division II teams," Finley said, adding that despite not being as balanced as some of the teams the Ducks have faced this year, talented individuals would account for some strong competition. "Over the years we've had some fantastic dual meets with them."

However, the Ducks match-up favorably against the Vikings, holding the series lead at 40-21-6. In terms of schedules, the two teams have wrestled several common teams, including Cal State Bakersfield and Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo. The Vikings dropped both meets, including a 36-3 loss to Bakersfield, while the Ducks split the meets, beating Cal Poly 20-17 and dropping to Bakersfield 22-12.

Both teams were also involved in the Las Vegas Invitational, in which the Ducks took 10th while the Vikings placed 25th out of 26 teams, and the Oregon Classic, where Oregon captured second and Portland State surged to sixth in the 20-team tournament.

According to Finley, the team is juggling its lineup to allow some wrestlers to sit out and rest a week. The Ducks' probable line-

up includes the addition of redshirt freshman John Taylor to the 118-pound weight class, bumping up junior Kevin Roberts, who normally occupies the 118-pound spot, to the 126-pound weight class and usual 126-pound redshirt freshman Jeremy Ensrud up to the 134-pound spot. This possibility would give sophomore Scott Norton the chance to rest the sore ribs that he suffered against Fresno State two weeks ago.

The possible shift would not necessarily open up a weak spot on the team. Finley quickly added. Roberts and Ensrud can hold their own in either of their weight classes, and, according to Finley, Taylor is solid at his slot.

"He ranks right in there with Kevin and Jeremy," Finley said of the lower weight class wrestlers.

"We definitely need to get back on the winning track," Finley said. "They should rebound real well from that meet. If you pick up a loss along the way, the sign of a good team is to bounce back."

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STREAKING
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the lead to the Cougars. After six minutes of even basketball, the Ducks began making strides at turning the game into a blowout. Jessica Schutt and Boyer were on fire for the Ducks in the second half as they combined for 23 points.

With just a little over 11 minutes remaining in the game, Oregon seemingly had the game in hand as it held an 18-point advantage. The Cougars would not give up, though. The three-time quick release of Susie Jarosch from beyond the three-

point arch moved Washington State back within 12 points, with six minutes to go.

Once again, however, Edamura took her team home as she hit two free throws and a three-pointer to erase any Cougar ideas of a comeback. It was a perfect ending to a career night as Edamura finished with 15 points.

"I was really pleased to see her step up tonight," Oregon head coach Jody Runge said of Edamura.

Next up for the Ducks are the visiting 13th-ranked Washington Huskies. Tip-off is at 2pm on Saturday.

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