

Super Bowl lives up to hype



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As I write it has been less than a week since the New York football Giants thwarted the New England Patriots' bid for an undefeated season in the Super Bowl XLII, an "instant classic" if there ever was one. Though I think a 4 PM EST kick-off would better accommodate all viewers and fans, we annually host the regulars on Super Sunday. No matter what time it starts, the game is never easy to follow anyway with 11 kids in the house.

But last Sunday because the game started at 6:30 and included a long halftime, after three quarters our guests had corralled their children, clicked on their car radios, and headed down the mountain toward home, leaving us to witness history as a family. After the entire hubbub, I enjoyed that last quarter in relative peace and quiet.

It was terrific to see the game's signature play live, Eli Manning eluding tackles to connect with David Tyree and his helmet. As long as there are highlight clips, that play will never be forgotten. Quite amazing that one family could have back-to-back winning QBs in Super Bowls!

Speaking of highlight clips, I bet I'm not the only one who checks out the condition of the turf during such ubiquitous highlights as Jim Brown mauling DBs during a rush, Brooks Robinson stealing another hit from the Big Red Machine, Dwight Clark's leap against the Cowboys, or Al Gionfriddo's catch in the left field corner at Yankee Stadium, where the video cuts to Joe DiMaggio uncharacteristically kicking the dirt near 2nd base.

Of course there was no 24/7 sports media in decades past so perhaps that's why I don't remember hearing much about "turf conditions" as a young fan. I liked playing in muddy conditions as a kid and like watching games in inclement weather. We spoiled fans today are accustomed to beautiful fields at all levels of play. "It's the same for both teams" always works for me as the ultimate equalizer when "field condition" is mentioned after a contest (usually by the loser).

Lots of past "important games" (isn't that an oxymoron?) have been won and lost on turf at which today's youth travel teams would scoff. Too bad many users of all ages don't realize how good they have it.

The Giants for sure should know how good they have it now, each of them \$67,000 wealthier after a memorable win in front of the second largest-ever U.S. television audience. A game played on a perfect field that was nurtured precisely outside and rolled inside for one famous day in Arizona.

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