

IN MY OPINION

Caroline Porter

My life with da Bears, da Ditka, da Lovey and da Porter

During football season the quality of life in our household on Sunday afternoons has everything to do with whether or not the Chicago Bears win their football game that day. My husband is one of the many faithful gluttons for punishment who root for the Chicago Bears and the Chicago Cubs. Being the paranoid person he is, he has the Bears losing their games in the first few minutes, with nary a hope for victory. Of course, this year he is in a state of shock and awe and already nervous and agitated about the Super Bowl this Sunday. We'd better keep the nitro glycerin handy.

Bears' quarterback Rex Grossman has been the object of swearing, fist shaking, head shaking and all sorts of other gyrations, only to live up to coach Lovey Smith's loyalty and faith in him. As usual, the Bears' defense is awesome, but someone has to get that ball down the field and rack up some points. And that's the kind of remark that drives da Porter bananas. It just makes too much sense.

It also doesn't sooth my husband's brow to reassure him with comments such as, "Oh, Grossman is so young. Give him a chance! He's doing well now, don't you think?" In typical female fashion I see a young man with a baby face that makes him look about twelve and he gets all the sympathy and support he needs from me and probably loads of other women across the country. Also, most women don't see football games as a matter of life and death, but a game. I can get into them as much as the next guy, but it's all sport to me. I really lost my stomach for football when I saw a close friend of mine carried off the Knox College field with an injury so serious he had to have seven holes drilled in his skull to relieve dangerous pressure on his brain.

When someone gets s seriously injured like that, I'm quick to say football is the dumbest game I've ever witnessed. However, while my son played football for Alexis High School and coach John Elder, I learned that at the high school level, good training and coaching can prevent most serious injuries.

Quarterback Jim McMahon, of Super Bowl 1986 fame, was always a favorite of mine. During a later season, I've never forgotten watching him be lifted bodily by 300 pound plus "Mean Joe Green" of the Pittsburgh Pirates and flung like a rag doll to the ground. McMahon's shoulder was injured anyway, and that pretty much ended his career. That was the



intent, of course. It was awful. But who can forget the great Bears team posters in 1986 and the "Super Bowl Shuffle?" I can proudly say I saw "The Fridge," a huge tackle, number 72, carry the ball for a touchdown. He was about as wide as he was tall and I think it was a totally unexpected play.

Dedicated Bears fans will remember the game this season when the Bears were so far behind my husband turned off the television in disgust and went to sleep. Somehow they managed to win the game. It was big news the next morning, and I was able to wake up da Porter and practically scare

him to death in the process by shaking him and yelling, "The Bears won! Bears won! Bears won!" He wasn't sure whether to hit me or cheer.

One holiday I gave my husband a Bears blanket that I just dragged out for the week. We intended to hang it on the front porch, but it's a bit nippy outside for that. We may just have to wrap ourselves in it for the game.

Happy Super Bowl, and, for peace and tranquility in our home, may the best team be "da Bears."

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