

Coming down to the big one

By Larry Pritchett

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Big weekend of playoff football and I am doing this article on Saturday this week so I don't know who the winners are at this time.

My boys and I have been Bronco fans for as long as the boys have been old enough to pick favorites.

This is a good weekend because we are headed that way Sunday morning and will watch the game with Troy and then catch the second half with Troy, Travis and his family. Could be some distractions in the second half since the grandsons have a tendency to distract their Grandpa but Grandpa doesn't mind.

Monday night we are attending the Ohio State and Nebraska men's basketball game. OSU is in a three game losing streak which probably won't be good for the Huskers. On the other hand, playing at home in front of an enthusiastic fan base maybe will help the Huskers pull an upset.

When I was growing up in Kansas, I was a Chicago Bears fan and later a Chief's fan.

In those days, we had three stations on the old TV set and while I was in high school we got one professional football game a week and that was on Sunday afternoons and we got the Bears every Sunday. So I was a Bear's fan.

They were pretty good at that time and it wasn't too hard to watch them play. Then when the Chiefs came along and got into the NFL we got their games and I became a Kansas City fan. After graduation from college I moved to Grant and it wasn't too long and I actually got to attend a Bronco game and kind of attached myself to them.

The Broncos soon became a family favorite because the boys were Bronco fans also. Sunday might not be all fun and games since Peyton Manning doesn't have a great record when he faces Tom Brady and the Patriots. Hopefully the mile high air and the Broncos will be successful.

The other side of the playoff bracket has San Francisco and Seattle. Seattle has a great home field advantage and is difficult to beat on their home field. The 49ers are pretty good also so it should be a great contest. The teams are led by two of the better QB's in the league in Seattle's Russell Wilson and the 49'ers Colin Kaepernick.

At this stage of the season and the playoffs all the teams are good or they would not still be playing. Should be two good football games where the winners get to go to that game named Super Bowl. Problem with that is that we will have two weeks of non-stop hype before the game and then you just hope the game is half as good as the commercials that are shown during the game.

I watched my first professional basketball game of the season this past week and I only picked it because I like to watch Kevin Durant just to see if he can hit 50 in a game—and low and behold he did. He got a career high of 54 and I am more impressed with him each time I see him play.

The Thunder played the Rockets twice last week. The first game I think was on Thursday and the Rockets scored 71 points in the first half. Then after what must have been the worst half time adjustments ever made by the Rockets, they burnt the nets for 19 points and lost to the Thunder.

How do you score 71 in one half and 19 in the next? I guess you miss a lot of shots and turn the ball over a lot. I don't know. At the professional level you just can't grasp that or least I can't. At the high school level I can believe anything can happen.

One season when I was at Imperial, we played Sidney at Sidney and we were ahead at the end of the first quarter 25 to 12 or somewhere close to that. At half-time the score was 30 to 25 and the 25 was still on our side of the scoreboard.

Half-time was not pleasant as I remember and we lost the game. We were not that bad of a team, and that was the only time in my coaching career we got a big goose egg in a quarter but it can happen.

The Rockets and the Thunder played again two nights later and the Thunder got 71 in the first half, but continued to score in a game where defense was only mentioned but seldom played.

As coaches at the high school level, we want our teams to be consistent. However, you can see that sometimes even older players who get paid outstanding amounts of money struggle in that area also.