



## **JIM AND THE JETS. MAKE IT HAPPEN**

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December 26, 2018

-The North Pole, USA

The Jets have to make this happen.

But I don't think they will.

Perhaps this is just the pessimist in me because when you're a Jets fan pessimism courses through your veins 365 days a year. Otherwise, I tend to be perpetually optimistic about just about everything else in life.

Make Jim Harbaugh the next Jets head coach.

I know, it's a pipe dream, right?

Of course, it is.

It all makes perfect sense if you ask me. Can you see how I just went from overly pessimistic to making a pivot back toward the optimistic side of things in a single sentence?

The Jets brain trust – and I use the words 'brain trust' very loosely – is apparently intent on swinging big for the next head coaching hire, and really, who can blame them?

Allow me to interject this here before I go onward, there is something about the current Jets head coach, Todd Bowles, that I'm going to miss a little bit. I've written about him previously, told of how I have a lot of respect for him, feel that he's a good football coach, a good man and all, but that Bowles first attempt at a head coaching position hasn't gone all that well and that the Jets really do need to move on from him.

The problem is in finding that next coach at a time when there are really no slam dunks to be found at this time – outside of clearly the most proven candidate – Jim Harbaugh.

I really like Saints offensive coordinator Pete Carmichael, but he'd be a first-time head coach and I'm thinking that the Jets, who have hired first-time head coaches exclusively since Bill Parcells walked out the door all those years ago, really need to go with someone more proven for the role this time around.

Harbaugh's Michigan experience has been a mixed bag to date, and maybe even less than that if you ask any Wolverine fan how it's felt to lose to Ohio State in each of the 4-years Harbaugh has been at the helm in Ann Arbor.

But then again, Urban Meyer is no longer his nemesis and Michigan recently had what is considered a Top-5 recruiting class, and oh yeah, not only has Harbaugh repeatedly said he's staying at Michigan, but in addition, Jets acting owner Chirs Johnson issued a statement after rumors linking Harbaugh to the Jets surfaced, saying that he has no intention of approaching Mr. Harbaugh.

Johnson can say anything he wants to at this point, and it was probably the classy and proper thing to say given the fact that the Jets currently have a head coach, if only for a few more days anyway.

Once Todd Bowles has his building card key taken from him the Monday after the Jets final game against New England later this week, my thinking is that the Jets official position on Harbaugh as well as any other potential head coach will shift in a dramatic fashion.



The question for Harbaugh, among a few questions, is, does he see himself as a college coach, or does the pull and tug of an NFL job hold more appeal to him at this juncture? That, and of course, how much money it would take to get Harbaugh to think twice about his intentions of staying in Ann Arbor?

Next season is a big one for the Jets as they will be heading into the 2019 campaign with seven consecutive years of no post-season football on their resume. Not only that, but all of these non-playoff years in a row has taken its toll on Jets attendance at the Big Air Conditioner (my cute way of referring to MetLife Stadium) on the side of the New Jersey Turnpike, and there has been a general malaise around the team for a long time now. The Gotham City Football Club needs a seismic change to alter its perception and reinvigorate a demoralized fan base.

ENTER JIM HARBAUGH!

Also, don't forget that the Jets will be introducing a new uniform design next season. A source has indicated to me that the Jets helmet will feature a script (or cursive) 'JETS' look on next years dome. Think something similar to (but not exactly like) that of the Winnipeg Jets third-uniform. I add this information for you uniform connoisseurs out there like me.



Back to Jim and the Jets. It has such a nice ring, doesn't it?

I say the Jets should offer Harbaugh absolute and total control of all football operations, the draft, free agency, coaching hires, and the Jets should even rename the team the 'Harbaugh's' if this will make this deal happen.

Understand this, to leave his lofty perch at Michigan and before they even get around to discussing contractual parameters, everyone is already aware that Harbaugh isn't coming to the Jets or any other team in the NFL unless he has total say and complete control. The last thing Harbaugh would be interested in is another power struggle between himself and a GM, the same kind of a deal that led him to leave the 49ERS.

Anyone seen Trent Balke lately?

Money? Hey, it isn't mine, so if it's my call, I'm prepared to offer Harbaugh a deal of 8-years in length for somewhere in the vicinity of \$100 million for starters.

Also, the Jets should buy him whatever house happens to catch the eyes of Mrs. Harbaugh somewhere in the rolling and bucolic hills near the Jets training facility in Florham Park, New Jersey. A brand new Mercedes to sweeten the pot, some shares of Johnson & Johnson stock, 5% of the team's gross revenue for all the years he coaches the Jets, and regular theater tickets so the Harbaugh's can see whatever plays they want to attend on Broadway.

The Jets should also tell Harbaugh that they're prepared to name the team's newly constructed Hall Of Fame (there are no plans for a NYJ Hall Of Fame as far as I know) after Jim himself. Yes, welcome to the Jim Harbaugh Gotham City Football Hall Of Fame.

If Harbaugh plays overly tough to get then Chris and Woody Johnson should throw this at him. He can coach both the Jets and Michigan simultaneously. This can work. Michigan plays on Saturday's and the Jets play mostly on Sunday's, right? If Harbaugh is as good a coach as he says he is then he'll accept this never before done challenge.

Imagine impressing people with this line:

Question: "Hey man, what do you do for a living?"

Answer: "I'm the head coach of the New York Jets and Michigan University. People call me the JetWolve."

Imagine Jim Harbaugh winning both the Super Bowl and the college football national championship in the same year. Vince Lombardi who?

What else is in this for Harbaugh? You mean besides the fact that the Jets (or any other NFL franchise) could financially blow away Michigan or any other collegiate program?

An attractive job?

Hey now.

For starters, the Jets like to think they offer any head coach coming in a young potential franchise quarterback who has looked very impressive his last few games. Sam Darnold has been the beneficiary of watching from the sidelines for 3-straight weeks after he was injured earlier this season. Since he's come back the game looks as though it's slowed down for Darnold and his recent play has been an eye-opener.

The Jets will also have a very high draft position for the 2nd year in a row and should be able to get a player they really like in the first round, preferably a pass rushing linebacker/defensive end, a guy like Kentucky's Josh Allen would look more than good in green and white next year in this writers opinion.

Then again, if Jim truly believes that Michigan offers the Jets a better pass rusher I can be easily convinced of this.

Also, the Jets will offer Harbaugh or whoever is the next Jets head coach an inordinate amount of salary cap room over the next offseason, more than \$100 million will be available – and the Jets can hopefully use a lot of that to address multiple needs on both sides of the ball.



Harbaugh offers the Jets possibly the best of both worlds, previously a very successful head coach in the 4-seasons he was in San Francisco, including an 11, a 12, and a 13-win season, which also included a trip to the Super Bowl back in 2012. Harbaugh's 4-year coaching record in San Francisco was a collective 44-19-1 with a post-season mark of 5-3.

Also, Harbaugh was a former quarterback himself (duh) and his tutelage of Darnold can hopefully go a long way in Darnold's continuing advancement and growth as a quarterback over the next few years ahead.

I'm feeling this one folks.

Harbaugh, it can be argued, is made for the bright lights of New York, he's a spirited and animated ball of fire and he just might be the instant adrenaline shot to the heart of this franchise that is so desperately needed. I could see a Jets fan base that would be extremely fired up if it was announced that Harbaugh would be walking the sidelines next season at MetLife Stadium.

Jim Harbaugh to the Jets would impact the franchise in several ways, a previously successful head coach, a fiery and energetic individual who would wake up a dead franchise, a guy with the ability to compel people to purchase season tickets, the appeal and the perception of the club would change instantly the moment Harbaugh was announced. Optimism and excitement would surround the club heading into the 2019 season with Harbaugh calling the shots.

Could a Harbaugh-Jets marriage fail for any one of a number of reasons? Anything can fail and any coach any team selects comes with a few risks, however, based on his past body of work in San Francisco, I like Harbaugh's chances of succeeding if the Jets were able to pry him away from Michigan.

Some have suggested that the Jets should wait to see if Harbaugh's brother, John, wrangles himself free from his current situation in Baltimore. That Harbaugh would be my second pick of coaches should he become available. Wait, make that my 4th pick, maybe even my 5th pick, because if the Patriots decide to break up the band in New England following this season then

Bill Belichick becomes my first, second, and third choice to coach the Jets next season. I mean, can you imagine?

If Belichick were to become available then Jim and John, or even Pete, Sam, Rodney, Cleon, Mike, and Phil, could all stay put where they now are for as long as they wanted to, I wouldn't care.

Lastly, there is a previous Jets-Harbaugh connection that goes beyond the fact that Jim Harbaugh lost out to Rex Ryan the first time he was interviewed by the Jets back in 2008 that many aren't aware of.



Jim's father, Jack Harbaugh, actually played for the Jets organization at one time. Well, technically they were known as the Titans Of New York, the precursor to the Jets, but Jim's father was a defensive back for the Titans and played for the franchise all the way back in 1961 under then head coach Sammy Baugh.

The Jets should offer Harbaugh a package that he cannot say no to.

The elements are in place.

The time is right.

This is gonna happen.

Jim Harbaugh will be the next head coach of the Jets.

Yes, he will.

No, he won't.

Even though he should be.