



SUPER CHARGERS. SUPER RIVERS. SUPER BOWL?

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-Garden Of Eden

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He was once a New York Giant...for a few seconds.

He's been a proud Charger for the past 15-years, and while the player he was traded for on draft day back in 2004 (Eli Manning) is being booed by many Giants fans these days, Chargers fans couldn't be happier that Philip Rivers is still their undisputed quarterback of the moment.

Yes, of course, he plays for the used-to-be San Diego Chargers, but now, he plays for a Chargers team in a city that hardly notices the franchise is even there.

No worries. Philip Rivers just keeps chugging along, keeps playing, keeps throwing, keeps smiling at his good fortune and the way his life has been blessed by a God he has always put first above everything else.

Like many of you, I presume, I too watched Rivers lead the Chargers to one heck of a comeback victory in Kansas City last night, letting the air out of both the Chiefs and Arrowhead Stadium in the process. At one point during the 4th quarter, it looked like a good bet that the Chiefs and their fans would not only secure win number 12 on the season – but the AFC West title at the same time.

But the Chargers mounted an inspiring 4th quarter comeback, led by Old Man Rivers, that keeps them alive in the race for the top spot in the AFC West and at the same time, they broke a 9-game losing streak to Kansas City.

Did I say inspiring? Allow me to throw in the word ‘impressive’ as well, especially considering the venue. Arrowhead is a cauldron of intense noise for opponents and the Chiefs entered the game with a perfect 6-0 mark in their home stadium. In addition, the Chargers overcame two 14-point deficits last night, including, being behind by the count of 28-14 with less than 4-minutes to play in the game.

Down 28-14, Rivers led his team on an 11-play 75-yard drive that culminated with Justin Jackson scoring from 3-yards out. Then the Chargers defense came up big-time and forced Kansas City into a 3 and out getting the ball back at the Los Angeles (it still feels funny to refer to this team as LA) 40-yard line.

Facing a 4th and 8 with the game on the line and with the Arrowhead crowd roaring at a deafening decibel level, Rivers calmly stayed in the pocket and found Travis Benjamin for 26-yards and all kinds of positive and energetic momentum for the Chargers.

During the drive, on a second and goal from the Chiefs ten-yard-line, Rivers was chased from the pocket and ran with the ball before going into a slide – and was tackled from behind by Kansas City’s Justin Houston and from the side by the Chiefs Dorion O’Daniel.

O’Daniel came flying into the play as Rivers was going down and some felt he should have been penalized for either a late hit or a helmet to helmet infraction. No call was made at all – and in this person’s opinion – no flag should have been thrown on the play. It was a bang-bang play in the heat of the moment with all players involved moving at full-speed. It was what I’ll refer to as; a football play. Rivers immediately got up and spent about 8-seconds complaining and looking for a flag all while the clock continued to run and he’s lucky it didn’t end up costing him and his team the game.

The next play brought more questions, including one from this writer, who is still wondering how in the hell a pass interference call was made on Chiefs cornerback Kendall Fuller, who as I watched both in real time and on multiple replays, appeared to do nothing but defend Chargers

wide receiver Mike Williams in almost textbook fashion. This gave the Chargers a first and goal at the Kansas City one-yard line.



On the next play another controversy of sorts. Rivers found Mike Williams in the front corner of the end zone, Williams made a clean catch in my estimation, but of course, in this mans NFL, everything goes to replay. Some thought Williams bobbed the football before going out of bounds, but I felt it was clearly a good catch (confirmed by some replay person) and the Chargers found themselves down a point with only 4-seconds left.

Chiefs fans, no doubt were thinking that while it sucked to give up a 14-point lead in less than 4-minutes, at least they could take solace knowing they would have a chance to win the game in overtime after the Chargers kicked the extra point to tie things up.

However, Chargers coach Anthony Lynn wanted no part of overtime and elected to go for the win with a 2-point try. It was a pure-guts move by Lynn, and his team rewarded his roll of the dice as Rivers found a WIDE OPEN Mike Williams for the score that gave the Chargers an eventual 29-28 win.



I've always liked Philip Rivers, always had an appreciation for him as both a football player and as a man. In an NFL where it becomes more apparent that less and less real men play football, replaced instead by obnoxious and immature children seemingly hell-bent on making a mockery of the game with all of their pre-scripted and sophomoric end zone celebrations and other nauseating theatrics, Rivers is one player in the league who still comports himself as a professional, an adult, as a man.

Rivers has always walked in a straight line, has never been in any kind of trouble off the field, doesn't seek out attention for himself, isn't a prima donna, places his team above himself...in other words, Philip Rivers is the last person that Nike wants to head up their next national advertising campaign.

A good old boy from Alabama, the son of a coach, Rivers married his high school sweetheart in 2001 and they're now expecting their 9th child together. Nine. Kids.



Rivers has never sought to leave the only NFL team he's ever known and has become the undisputed face and heartbeat of the franchise over the last 10-years, and, a player who despite some sterling seasons and seven Pro Bowl selections, it may be argued that Philip Rivers is one of the NFL's most underrated and underappreciated quarterbacks since he came into the league.

Rivers won't ever be awarded any style-points for the way he throws the football, an unorthodox side-armed delivery that goes against the grain of what many quarterback coaches would consider to be proper throwing fundamentals, but for Rivers, it's always worked. He's thrown for 371 touchdowns which is good for 6th best in the history of the league while completing 64% of his throws during his brilliant career.

The Chargers have gone 4-5 in the nine post-season games Rivers has played in – and the closest they have come to finding themselves in the Super Bowl with Rivers was back in 2007 when the then San Diego Chargers lost in the AFC Championship game to New England.

After last night's game I find myself rooting for this Chargers team for some reason...maybe it has to do with Rivers and me wanting to see him climb to the top of the NFL mountain before it's all said and done? He is, after all, 37-years-old, so who knows how many more years he has left?

Maybe I find myself attracted to a Chargers team that as we all know, plays in a city that doesn't even want them while playing their home games in a mini-sized soccer facility?



Maybe I really like Chargers coach Anthony Lynn and the job he's done there over the last 2-years?

Maybe I'd like to see this Chargers franchise, an organization that previously won the AFL Championship all the way back in 1964, but never a Super Bowl, perhaps I want to see the Chargers get that very first Lombardi Trophy?

Maybe because I'm such a fan of the aesthetics of athletics I'm hoping the Chargers get to the Super Bowl and wear their gorgeous powder blue jersey tops in the game?



Maybe I'd love to see the team that nobody in Los Angeles gives two hoots about winning a Super Bowl this season, while the LA-NFL football darlings owned by Stan Kroenke look on with incredible envy? Yeah, I'll admit, that thought brings a smile to my face.

I think in the end it all comes back to Philip Rivers.

Rivers is a good guy in a league with too many bad ones.

Yeah, I think I'm pulling for the Super Chargers to win the Super Bowl this year – why not?

They're now tied for the divisional lead – but Kansas City enjoys the tie-breaker currently.

The Chiefs still hold destiny in their own hands as they close the season with games at Seattle and at home against the hated Oakland/Las Vegas Raiders.

Meanwhile, the Super Chargers have the Baltimore Ravens at home before closing the regular season in Denver against the Broncos.

That game last night felt like the kind of season-defining game that could propel the Chargers to bigger and better things. We'll see.

In the names of players like LaDainian Tomlinson, Dan Fouts, Ron Mix, Lance Alworth, Junior Seau, Paul Lowe, Nick Hardwick, Rolf Benirschke, Natrone Means, and coaches like Don Coryell, Sid Gillman, Tommy Prothro, and Bobby Ross, and others, here's hoping that the Los Angeles Chargers win Super Bowl LIII.

A few days later the city of Los Angeles will grudgingly hold a parade for the victors.

Then again, would anyone show up?