

Big Show Diary

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MightyHershNet/files/Diary.pdf>

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VALLEY COTTAGE, N.Y., Monday, Jan. 22 -
Jim and Mary picked up their Super Bowl tickets at Giants Stadium today.



We are fortunate, especially since the Giants did not provide tickets to important folks such as Senator Hillary Clinton. We do know that the Giants are very loyal to their long time season ticket holders.

The tickets feature a three-dimensional, moving hologram showing the Lombardi Trophy towering over sailboats, palm trees and the Tampa skyline. Counterfeiters will have a tough time with these masterpieces.

Jim and Mary drove separately to the stadium so they could each go to work. Mary took the tickets because Jim was too excited and nervous to take them into Manhattan. Jim could foresee himself calling Mary to say, "I just had an car accident!" with Mary asking, "Are the tickets OK?"

We will leave for the Big Show on Wednesday. This will be our third Super Bowl with the Giants. So far, we are 2-0.

Getting Ready for the Auto Train

VALLEY COTTAGE, N.Y., Tuesday, Jan. 23 -



It was a hectic day at work as Jim tied up loose ends so he could get the heck out and start thinking about football. Mary was doing the same thing at her job although her task was more important; she puts the payroll together.

Jim managed to do some football related stuff in the office. He contacted the Rockland Journal News because he heard that the newspaper is interested in speaking to local residents attending the Big Show. Jim may be contacted during the game. A reporter from the Christian Science Monitor called Jim later in the day. The Monitor is interviewing fans in New York and in Baltimore for perspectives on the Super Bowl:

<http://www.csmonitor.com/durable/2001/01/26/fp3s1-csm.shtml>

Now, Jim and Mary are getting their Giants paraphernalia ready for tomorrow's trip. They will be driving to Lorton, Virginia for the Auto

Train to Orlando. It should be fun. Hopefully there will be a good mix of Giants and Ravens fans on the train. They are calling this the Auto Train game, after the Subway Series. The caravan begins.

Survived Auto Train

PINELLAS PARK, Fla., Thursday, Jan. 25 -



Mary and Jim survived the Auto Train ride to Sanford, Florida. We drove through enemy territory (Baltimore) on the way to Virginia and noticed some Ravens signs on businesses and stores. Not good.

We were told that our 8,000 horsepower 34-car train was carrying 287 people and 155 vehicles.

We were expecting a raucous trip with beer flowing in the aisles and with numerous Giants fans jostling Ravens fans. Not so, there were no more than 5 or 6 football fans on the train - a senior crowd with other interests. Isn't everyone preoccupied with the Super Bowl? We watched "The Perfect Storm" in the lounge car.

The Auto Train is sort of a poor man's Club Med on wheels where you get to meet people that you would ordinarily not run into. We dined with a lawyer from New Jersey who once argued a case before the Supreme Court and a lady writer from Washington D.C. who writes grants for non-profit organizations.

We are now in Pinellas Park staying with Jim's Uncle Bill and Aunt Martha.



We drove through Tampa and saw the billboards purchased by the Ravens. We also saw a couple of Ravens limos. No sign of the Giants.

Tomorrow, we will be down to serious business as we get the lay of the land in Tampa. We will check out the Giants' hotel, visit Raymond James Stadium, book a parking spot for the game, and visit the NFL Experience. We will be dining with J.R., Bob, Gail and Fred before returning to Pinellas Park. Saturday will be another day of research leading up to the Big Show. We will be meeting friends Paul and Barbara before the game.

A Fun Day in Tampa

PINELLAS PARK, Fla., Friday, Jan. 25 - We had an exciting day. Our first stop was the Wyndham Hotel where the Giants are staying. We saw many players including Kerry Collins, Tiki Barber, Howard Cross, Mike Barrow and several others we did not recognize. Most were walking through the lobby on the other side of security barriers. Tight end Pete Mitchell was happy to pose with Mary.



We also saw team owners Wellington Mara and Bob Tisch and general manager Ernie Accorsi. All were cordial and friendly. Mary spotted Steve Serby, her favorite columnist for the New York Post and we had a nice chat with him.



Jim was tagged for an interview by a Connecticut Cablevision Station.



We then headed for the downtown Hyatt Regency where we had fun watching a live broadcast of WFAN's Mike and the Mad Dog Show. Mike and Chris telephonically interviewed Giants coach Jim Fassel during the broadcast. The most fun was when Mike and Chris made their Super Bowl picks with flair and theatrics. Just to get folks riled, Chris "Mad Dog" Russo picked the Ravens by 33-0. Mike Francesca, in a more thoughtful rumination, picked the Giants to prevail by 17-10. Let's hope Mike is right.



Jim's prediction is Giants 31, Ravens 10. Mary says the Giants will prevail by 17-9.

The Super Bowl is a circus. On the way to the Convention Center, we saw Jason Sehorn doing a Purina Dog Chow promotion. A guy was throwing a football. Jason tried to catch it but missed. The football was caught by one of the dogs in the promotion. Jason assured us he would do better in the game.

Our final stop was the Convention Center and "Radio Row" where dozens of radio stations and TV stations broadcast their sports shows. While there, we met Bill Daughtry, an announcer we like on Madison Square Garden Network. A nice guy and very friendly.



Later, we had a tasty dinner at CK's, the revolving restaurant atop the airport Marriott. With J.R., Bob, Gail and Fred.



Time to go to bed. We have a lot of ground to cover tomorrow. We will secure a parking spot for the game and decide where to meet Paul, Barbara, Andrew and Mark for our pre-game brunch.

Plan A Goes Awry

TAMPA, Saturday, Jan. 27 - Mary and Jim like to think they plan things out pretty well. Their mission today was to scout the Raymond James Stadium area and pick a place to meet our friends for brunch on Sunday. We also planned on buying parking spots for the game.

The idea was to have breakfast with them at the Brunchery on Hillsborough Boulevard and head for our secure parking spot. That is the schedule we followed here in 1990 for Super Bowl XXV.

It is different now. At about 10:30 a.m. we stopped at the Brunchery and made a test run to the stadium. We found that the stadium area was an absolute zoo with people arriving in droves to see the NFL Experience in a large tent city adjacent to the stadium. We immediately scrapped Plan A. Instead, we will have breakfast with Bob and J.R. at their home in Tampa. Gail and Fred will be there too. Then, we will head for the stadium to arrive about 10:30 a.m. for the 6:18 p.m. game. We will meet Paul, Barbara and their two sons at the NFL Experience and take things from there.

Later, we re-visited the Giants hotel. Lots of anticipation and excitement. Many folks are looking for tickets. We received a \$5,000 offer for our two tickets. Naturally, we declined. We did not ride the Auto Train down here to sell our tickets.

Finally, we drove to downtown Tampa to see some of the Gasparilla Parade activity. No such luck. We could not even get close. Getting out as quickly as possible, we motored to J.R. and Bob's house. That is where we are now, getting ready for tomorrow's Big Show.

It Was The Referees!

TAMPA, Sunday, Jan. 28 -



It was the referees! Just kidding. The Giants were whipped in every phase of the game. The turning point of the game was Ray Charles' rendition of "America the Beautiful. It was down hill from there. Mary described it best: "Bummer". Jim lost a cap to his binoculars and scratched the lens to his eyeglasses. It was fun speaking to other fans at the game. Giants fans surprisingly outnumbered Ravens fans by far even though this was Baltimore's first trip to the Super Bowl. Evidently, the Giants are more generous to their season ticket holders. We met some people that were not that interested in the game. The lady next to Jim said she was there for the half time show. Sacrilege. We met a couple from Trent Dilfer's hometown in California who were there to see him do well, and well he did. We met two guys from Pearl River, near our town of Valley Cottage and bumped into Jack and Jim who sit next to us in Giants Stadium.

It turned out that our seats were on club level so we experienced the amenities in the food court available to the club box holders.

We did enjoy meeting our friends Paul and Barbara and their two sons before the game. We were all excited and full of anticipation. We had a pre-game champagne toast in the parking lot.



We are looking forward to meeting some of Jim's old high school friends Monday morning for breakfast. Then, it will be off too the Auto Train. Maybe we will go for the sleeper berth.

We Are Back

VALLEY COTTAGE, N. Y., Monday Jan. 30 - We visited our old friends in Florida yesterday before boarding the Auto Train in Sanford, Florida.



Unfortunately there were some disgustingly happy Ravens fans with us on the train. They did not want to gloat, but couldn't help it. Two of them told us what a great guy Ray Lewis is. The poor devils were delirious. One guy, whom we named "Rave On", stuck to us like a fly on fly paper. Although he did not follow us into our sleeper berth, you can guess who joined us for breakfast this morning. There were a few Giants fans on the train. They were more fun to talk to.

Now, we are back to snow and to reality. Tomorrow, we will be back to work and the daily grind. The Super Bowl was a pleasant diversion and lots of fun.

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