

*SUPER BOWL DIARY: GALS JUST HAVE FUN Capital Times (Madison, WI) January  
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**HEADLINE:** SUPER BOWL DIARY: GALS JUST HAVE FUN

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**BODY:**

Yes, I know lots of women follow, love and appreciate football. It's just that I was never one of those women.

It always seemed to me to be a male event, one I was left out of enjoying.

My husband once told me I had to watch the Super Bowl. The Super Bowl, he said, isn't about the game; it's about the event. It's about having friends over, having a few beers, and watching the commercials and the halftime show.

That didn't sound so bad to me. So a few years ago I let him drag me to a Super Bowl party. I was one of only a few women there. It was the year the New England Patriots played the Packers -- the year the Packers won.

But we were living in New England and so we didn't have the Packers excitement. I couldn't follow the game, and it moved too fast for me to ask questions. I was so bored that not even the commercials entertained me.

This year I thought it would be interesting to watch the Super Bowl again, but this time with women only. I wanted to see if the power of the Big Game could beat the power of the Big Dame.

What would happen? Would we watch the game, the football experts patiently explaining the first down and the field goal to those of us who are football neophytes, or would we ignore the game and talk about shoes?

My husband made himself scarce, and seven female friends stopped by. We had too many snacks, including homemade brownies, tea and finger sandwiches. We started off with the best of intentions. My friend Kristin explained how she decided which team to root for if neither team was the Packers.

"I first look at the color schemes," she said, "to see which ones make the best use of color and decorations." She decided to root for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers this year, because Raiders steal from dead people, and how hard is it to steal from dead people?

We watched Celine Dion belt out "God Bless America" and critiqued her eye makeup. We all liked the Dixie Chicks singing the national anthem. The game started. Monica asked, "Who's playing?"

There seemed to be two teams, a red team and a silver team. Jamie said, "Who's got the cutest quarterback?" This launched us into a lengthy discussion of the players' posteriors. We wondered if the padding affected their behinds, and if their behinds really looked like that or if it was the padding, and whether the padding made their butts look fat.

We had to decide which players were cute. "Red 14 has a nice butt," said Naomi, and Narda said, "Red 9 has a nice butt and a nice face!" We didn't like John Madden, whom we declared "annoying." Kristin said, "I really think he's dead, and they just make him talk somehow."

We started gossiping, guiltily, while sneaking glances at the TV. The two party guests who followed football were cheering at what seemed to the rest of us to be random times. We wondered what our boyfriends and husbands thought we were up to. "In their minds," Kristin said, "we're all wearing lingerie and having pillow fights."

This raised the subject of lingerie in general, thongs in particular, and who would wear a panty liner with a thong?

We decided the Super Bowl could be marketed to women better if the players went without clothes.

Then we all stopped talking because it was time for the halftime show. Shania Twain sang "Man! I Feel Like a Woman," which seemed appropriate to our pro-female evening, as was No Doubt singing "I'm Just a Girl." We liked Shania Twain's outfit, because it was both revealing and modest. We thought she looked fabulous and agreed that if we had her body, we'd dress like that too.

Consensus was that Gwen Stefani also looked great, and we screamed with lusty delight when Sting came on. One woman who thought she didn't like him anymore promptly changed her mind. He sang "Message in a Bottle," with Stefani joining in for the last verse. After that they hugged, prompting much sighing and jealousy.

Everyone agreed that the halftime show was the best part. Kristin suggested that they have a quartertime show, and Sting would progressively strip as the game advanced. "That would keep me watching," she said.

The halftime show effectively distracted us, and we didn't even bother to pretend to pay

attention to the second half of the game. By then the conversation had heated up, and we were all having a great time sharing true confessions. We all took turns revealing something that was "too much information."

The game ended, and we hadn't noticed. The Buccaneers won! In case you haven't been following my exemplary coverage of the game, that was the red team.

We watched Bon Jovi play the post-game show and tried to decide if he'd had a face lift. Then we talked about plastic surgery, and what work we'd have done if we had time and if money were no object.

Then everyone went home and nobody would take leftovers and we all agreed it was the best Super Bowl we'd ever seen.