

EVENLY MATCHED

Chiefs and 49ers close to parity on the field and online

Today's NFL championship game is predicted to be a very close matchup between two very good teams. The betting line is that the game is a pick 'em, leaning slightly in Kansas City's favor by a point and a half.

Since neither team seems to have a great advantage on the field, I thought I'd look at their websites to see how they stack



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InSites

up against each other. It turns out their sites are as closely matched as the teams. In fact, they appear to be built with the same template. A quick look at some other NFL team sites leads me to believe that all the teams use the same format, probably overseen by the league.

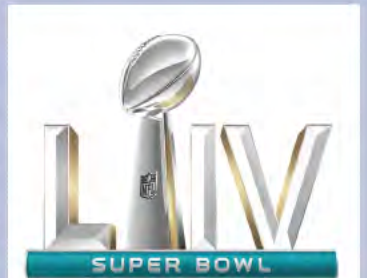
Unfortunately, the design preferred around the league is not very visually dynamic. The sites function well and are full of good content, but they don't convey the excitement inherent in the sport. I have a theory that as more people view websites on the small screens of mobile devices, web and app designers are moving away from

interesting visuals in favor of simplicity and ease of use.

While the sites won't blow you away with great graphics, they do provide fans with lots of information, photos and videos of their favorite teams. It's all easily accessible from the navigation bar across the top of the page or by scrolling down through the site.

A News feed keeps you up-to-date with the latest Super Bowl shenanigans. You can also look back at articles from the playoffs, the regular season and team history. The Video sections let you view highlight reels, interviews with the team and coaching staff, special events and promotional videos. The Photos sections contain lots of galleries from games, practices, Super Bowl week, and of fans, cheerleaders and more. A link to the NFL's Game Pass lets you pay to watch any game from the season.

The sites have profiles and stats of team members and staff. There are schedules for the regular season, and you can buy tickets right on the sites. And of course they have an online shop where you can buy clothes and gear branded with your team's logo.



If you watch

What: Super Bowl 54

When: Tonight, 6:30

Where: Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Fla.

Watch: FOX Sports will broadcast it live on television; FOX Sports app will stream it live online and on some smart TVs.

Performers: Demi Lovato will sing the national anthem at the beginning of the game, and Jennifer Lopez and Shakira will be the entertainment at halftime.

The sites are useful to keep track of one's favorite teams. I just hope the game is more exciting than the sites.

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