

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Gone Country

*The Frankfurter Incident*

By Mikie Baker

The Bandera Prophet

Normally, I don't take stories right out of the news for my columns, but this one's so serious, I'm afraid the Weiner Mobile might just do a mustard-squirting drive by. It seems this year's Fourth of July 2024 Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition is not something to relish. Just sit your buns down and read on.

As you might have heard, the same guy wins every year. His name is Joey Chestnut and I wonder why he's so into hot dogs. I'd think he'd be more into nuts or, possibly he just is one. Joey has won the competition 16 times, and he eats more dogs in an hour than I will ever eat in my life. But I digress.

I'm not sure if Nathan's came up with the idea for this eating extravaganza, but it's such a big deal that there is actually the Major League Eating organization that sanctions the event. I wonder if they have one for chocolate covered crickets, too.

With all this winning, Joey has gotten pretty cocky, it seems. He has a management team (they must work out details on grilled or boiled) and bring the barf bucket for the Champ. But now they're up to some pretty sneaky stuff.

Joey's been in negotiations with Nathan's, demanding a \$1.2 million contract for the next four years (they paid him \$200,000 in 2023).

They've even agreed to let him participate in another Unbranded Hot Dog Eating Contest on Labor Day. What's wrong with this guy, anyway? Some days you just gotta have a burger.

Well, Joey and his team got kind of carried away and boy is Nathan's boiling mad. He has reportedly made a deal to be the spokesperson for Impossible Foods, which manufacturers plant-based substitutes for meat products, including "hot dogs." Joey, say it isn't so.

When Major League Eating found out about this, they grilled Joey, but he wasn't about to let go of that fake meat sponsorship.

MLE announced, "Joey Chestnut is an American Hero. Unfortunately, we have gone to great lengths (bun length?) to accommodate Joey and his management team, but now he's gone too far."

So, guess what they did? They officially banned him from the 2024 competition because, well, he was just a faker and only a real hot dog would do. This is one Chestnut that's really cracked.

I don't think anyone relishes the thought that he's out of the competition, but at least this will give the rest of the hot dog eating nuts a chance at the big prize. Who knows, maybe a new champion will emerge, one without a management team.

If you're a gambler, I'd check the odds on the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. There are so many competitors in the game, you might see better odds than Mystic Dan, who won the Kentucky Derby by a nose. Whoever wins the hot dog eating match will probably win by a stomach photo finish.

Laugh if you'd like, but I'd rather grill Joey on his plant-based meat choices because everyone knows that there's nothing All American about a fake hot dog. If you're that concerned about your health and not eating meat, why not skip fake hot dogs and just have a Kale Eating Contest instead. Then again, it might be hard to get any contestants.

As Joey likes to say, "Stay Hungry!"

And to Joey, I say, "Joey, face it. You're a real dog."