

Look Man Report 2003: Week 1 - Instant Replay

Well, the Look Man finally got the crust out of his eyes, and just in time for a dramatic Week 1 of the 2003 NFL season. Week 1 featured: an improbable win by the upstart Houston Slim Shades over the Miami Marine Mammals; the Buffalo Bills came due over the New England Chowderheads; the Browns lose to Payless Dogboy and the Horsies on a last-second heartbreaker; and the New Look Cincinnati Bakers took out the new look Denver Donkeys. Of course, as we all know that last item is inserted merely to determine if the readers are also awake, and has no basis in fact. The truth is that the Donkeys were able to knock off the NLCB despite a paraplegic performance by its new starting hurler, Jake (Roto Rooter) Plummer. The Look Man refers to this week as Instant Replay since the games had a distinctly *deja vu* feel. Sometimes it is better to start from the end than the beginning.

Zebra of the Week Award:

This week's Zebra of the Week award goes to Ron (the) Blum (is off the Rose) for his part in calling 28 penalties in the Oaktown Faders at Tennessee Flaming Thumbtacks game on Sunday night. For those of you who thought this was a typo, guess again. The flags on the field outnumbered teeth in the stands of the former Adelphia Stadium crowd. The Blumster had more face time than Ruben Studdard of American Idol fame.

While the Look Man expected the ZOTW to go to one of the new officials replacing Dick Hantak and other retirees, The Blumster dug deep in his pockets to win the Johnny Grier Award. The veteran zebra actually had to go to the locker room in the first half to replace his yellow hanky, which was worn out from overuse. "I shouldn't have used BB's in there, but Jeff Triplette told be they worked pretty well for him.", intimated Blum. Shards of glass from Blum's broken eyeglasses replaced the metal weights in the flags in the second half, but caused no damage to the flags or the players.

The majority of the calls were illegal procedures by Raidas linemen who couldn't adjust to the crowd noise. The later calls consisted of flat out blown calls on sideline and endzone catches where the receiver would clearly have been out of bounds. Based on the 25-20 win by the 'tacks, any one of the 28 flags could have been the margin of victory. The Blumster must be hoping to get the award renamed after him. He has a long-standing feud with NFL Referee Johnny Grier over a whistle that both coveted back in Referee College. The renaming of the ZOTW award would be a feather in Blum's cap. Vegas oddsmakers are split on the topic, and Blum faces stiff competition from Terry MacAulay though Grier seems to have improved recently. Still the competition is neck and neck. May the best zebra win...

Celebrity Obit:

This week's shout out goes to Charles Bronson, who died after a distinguished acting career. Bronson was the star of many films, including *The Magnificent Seven*, *The Dirty Dozen*, *10 to Midnight*, *Telefon*, and the *Death Wish* franchise. Bronson's strong, silent persona was in strong contrast to many of today's pretty boys (not to mention names, but Tom Cruise in "Mission Impossible"?!! Get real!). Who could forget his death trying to protect the young boy in *The Magnificent Seven*, or that he was the only surviving member of *The Dirty Dozen*? While rocker Warren Zevon preceded him in heading to Zion, Bronson is most worthy of recognition in the LMR. Rest in piece, Carlos.

Lagniappe:

The Look Man was involved in a King of the Hill NFL pool in which each contestant picks one team per week NOT to lose. At the end of the 16-week season, the last person standing receives the entire pot, thus the name King of the Hill. A more appropriate name might be Boomhauer, since the difficulty factor rivals that of understanding the actor in the eponymous animated TV show.

In selecting Week 1 picks, the LM noticed the Marine Mammals favored by 14 over the hapless Houston expansion squad. His immediate take: there is no way the Fish would cover and that the slight could result in a Pepto Bismol Upset of the Week (PBUOTW). Despite some serious trepidation, he picked the Fish to dreidel their way to a win at Pro Payers Stadium, where the Zebras often require vision correction to interpret the plays on the field. Result: the Slim Shades knocked off the Mammals 21-20, and the LM is reduced to Boomhauer-like mumbling about not listening to his instincts.

The other "safe" pick was the resurgent St. Louis Mouflons over the NY Jynts at the Meadowlands. Jim (Poker Chips) Fassel's G-Men faced off against Mike (K-)Martz' Lambs squad in the return of QB Kurt (the Extra Terrestrial) Warner. Since the Look Man sees that the Lambs were 1-4 when playing on the natural surface last season, he thought the G-Men would take this one. In true Peggy Hill fashion, he chose to avoid this early season matchup, fearing the offseason controversy sparked by Jynts TE Jeremy Shockey (the World)'s magazine interview comments.

K-Martz once again proved that he is an idiot. In typical Sam Wyche-ian fashion, K-Martz refuses to understand that Marshall (Dillon) Faulk is the Mouflons MVP, not ET, and not the coaching staff. Despite adding solid O-linemen (former Browns C) Dave Wohlabaugh and (former Religious Icons T) Kyle Turley, he goes Wicky Wacky, and throws 50 times/game. The result is obvious to everyone non-smug person who doesn't wear goofy glasses. In the words of former Yankee Yogi Berra, "It's déjà vu all over again." In the words of Marshall Dillon: "Festus! Tell Miss Kitty to go upstairs so K-Martz can give me that #\$\$%^&* ball and let me win the !@#\$(* @ game!"

Even though ET was knocked senseless early on, K-Martz refused to go with proven backup Marc (The Scarecrow) Bulger. ET failed to call home while coughing up the rock 6 times despite throwing for 342 yards. When queried about when he knew his alien QB was concussed, K-Martz said, "I'm not sure when it happened, but it might have been on the (Holmes) touchdown. It is kind of difficult to know with his alien physiology. I defer to team physician DeForest Kelley." The Lambs Team Physician then added, "With that blasted green blood of his, who knows when it could have happened? I'm a doctor, not a dad-gummed quarterback coach!" When queried by CBS Analyst Jim Nance about the status of the QB's future, Kelley would say only, "He's dead, Jim."

Warner complained of an upset stomach after the game and lay in the trainer's room. Dr. Bernard (Art) Garfinkel, the team physician, said he sustained a "mild to moderate" concussion. He was to be kept overnight at an undisclosed hospital, but when doctors tried to examine him, he had mysteriously disappeared. He was last seen on a bicycle flying in front of the full moon.

Warner found out about the Giants the hard way. Besides being sacked, the two-time MVP was hit about a dozen times, including a brutal shot late in the first half by linebacker Mike (Wheel)Barrow, who had two sacks and a forced fumble. Meanwhile, The Scarecrow is waiting in the wings for his opportunity to "pull a Holcomb" and send ET to Furniture Fair to do commercials alongside Anthony Munoz and Tim (Sofa Boy) Couch.

Halfback Tiki Barber (of Seville), who dislocated a finger in the first quarter, led the Giants' offense with 146 yards rushing on 24 carries. Barber kept roaming the sidelines asking players to "...pull my finger. Pull my finger!", but he had no takers.

New Look Equals SOS:

Meanwhile, at Pall Bearer Stadium, the Bungals unveiled a new uniform look to go with new head coach Marvin (Jerry) Lewis. Lewis and the Bungals Braintrust decided a monochromatic black uniform would give the Ugly & Black a more intimidating appearance. Unfortunately, they chose the hottest day of the young NFL season to do so, and Donkey Head Coach Mike (The Rat) Shanahan immediately went to the ground game to wear out the opposing defense. "We saw

that ridiculous looking uniform in warm-ups, and after we quit laughing, we thought, why not just pound them with the run and see what happens. The only down side was that The Rat had to pay a royalty fee to Marty Schottenheimer, who used the same Marty Ball Strategy last season in the 'Nati opener. The result was a 30-10 Donkeys win over the (still) Hapless Ones, eerily similar to Marty's 30-6 win last season. Well-crafted banners stating, "In Marvin We Trust" were hastily torn from the walls of the stadium, disappearing faster than a Bungals playoff possibility.

The Bakers are now said to be suing former NIOSH scientist Chris Reh, who they say misled them. Apparently, Reh told them that the laws of thermodynamics would not apply in the season opener, due to the proximity of the planet Mars to the stadium. "He made us believe that Mars, being orange, would filter the sun's rays, allowing only a certain non-heat-producing spectrum to appear. I simply referred to my favorite movie guide that appeared in the Enquirer, and figured, like Wesley Snipes, 'always bet on black'. I guess it didn't pan out this time", said Jerry. Long suffering Toothless Tiger fans are thinking the same thing after only one week with the African American head coach.

Reh offers the following explanation: "Beth and I were talking about eating cheese coney's with the kids. I am not sure what happened there, but those guys must be idiots. Somebody in that organization needs a basic course in thermodynamics." Reh, when queried further by the Look Man, went on to say, "I was amazed yesterday on how many QB's just looked pathetic! Warner, Brady, Carter, Favre, Kitna, and the list probably goes on." Since "Carter" refers to Quincy (Klugman) Carter of the Cowpokes, The Look Man suggested that Reh stick to science and leave the football analysis to the pros.

In truth, the game hinged on the Hapless Ones' QB, Jon Pickna, who insists on making the same turnovers. Sunday's game included a tragi-comical play by Pickna which was nearly identical to one last season by former Baker QB Gus Frerotte (means "little brother in French"). While being harassed by Donkeys DE Trevor (The) Pryce (is Right), Pickna threw an ill-advised two handed shot-put pass that was promptly ingested by Denver LB Ian Gold(finger) for a TD. Bungals RB Corky Dildo was left grasping at air when Goldfinger flashed by like a piece of bling bling. "I tried to catch him, but he was headed for that south endzone with bad intentions. Hell, I think we ought to rename him "Jon Sh!ttna" after the way he threw the ball today," said the beleaguered RB. Jerry Lewis later pulled Corky to the side and asked him to gather the guys together and tell them to "slow down, and take it one turnover at a time."

"We'll have to send Pickna some flowers because that was a gift," Donkeys linebacker John Mobley said of Gold's catch and run, which gave Denver a 27-3 lead. Said Lewis: "The thing that was most disappointing about Jon's thing was trying to make a bad play worse." Asked if he considered pulling Pickna for backup Shame Matthews, Lewis said, "No, I didn't. I gave him the Buddy Love Potion later in the game and he actually improved. I even had him saying, 'what'll it be, hmmm?' by the end of the game. He kept asking me if I knew Janet Jackson's phone number."

The crowd got ugly well before this latest creation from the Easy Bake Oven QB, and began chanting for the backup early in the 2nd Quarter. While the crowd was excited in warm-ups, the Jungle Fever of the Bungals Faithful died almost immediately after the Star Spangled Banner. When Denver scored its first TD, most of the crowd simply pretended it was a golf match with petit fours sponsored by Pickna.

Even veteran CBS announcer Don Criqui was affected, calling for rookie (Johnny) Carson Palmer to see action. Criqui even went as far as doing an Ed McMahon impression, yelling, "Heeeeeere's Johnny!" several times during the game. His TV Partner Steve (a tisker, a) Tasker has decided to grow facial hair and take up trumpet lessons since it is likely that the duo will have to endure many more Nati games in 2003.

In his defense Easy Bake Oven did finally produce a nice, deep TD pass to Chad (The Dentist) Johnson. The Dentist did a full horizontal, with a quarter twist to avoid having the rock pop out on impact. Since no Donkey DBs touched him, he rolled into the South endzone for six. "I was kinda afraid my teeth might get cracked, so I roll-tated to my right. I promise you it won't be like this. Not this year. This year, I am going to catch over 2000 yards in passes, even if I have to go "Veisse Angel" on Pickna's punk @ss! Is it safe? Is it safe?! He may tell me it's safe, but I'll get it out of him with my drill and clove oil."

Although Denver would win by 20 points, Denver QB Jake Plummer wound up with a QB rating of 21.7 after his 3 picks. Only a virtuoso 120-yard rushing performance by Clinton Portis (means "bad mo-fo" in Ebonics) saved the day for Roto-Rooter. Plummer's career, once thought to be revived by a new venue, is now really in the toilet, so to speak.

The Tigers now head for Oaktown, and the Black Hole, with hopes of better success. "We call Marvin 'Black Jesus' and he will take us to the Promised Land. What with the Black Hole, black uniforms, and those guys wearing silver and black, we might be able to pull off a win", said Bungals CB Artrell (Stephen) Hawking. "I have been taking over 20,000 units of vitamin C a day. I can feel myself getting faster," said the DB, who has been burnt more times than toast. Actually, the absence of half the Faders team due to injury may bode well for a Nati victory, but only if science can actually create an event horizon on Earth. Actors Laurence Fishburn and Sam Neil are expected to attend the game on Sunday for the singularity, while Rod Woodson and Jerry (The Ice Man) Porter will miss the game.

Horsies at Browns:

The Browns and Indianapolis Horsies met in a rematch of last season's "meaningful game" on Sunday. While the Browns had hoped to break the trend of lost home openers, the game amounted to a replay of the Seattle She-Hawks home opener two years ago. That game ended 9-6 on a late field goal as well. If you add last year's 36-33 season opening loss to the Kansas City Chefs (The Inaugural Dwayne Rudd Helmet Toss Game), an ugly pattern begins to emerge. Although Butch (Hurricane Boy) Davis' close finishes are well documented, the Browns seem to be hovering in place without learning new lessons. In this league, if you aren't moving forward, you're actually retreating.

There is not a lot to be said about the game. Both Kelly (Tires) Holcomb and Horsies QB Payless Dogboy threw 2 picks. KT's picks came in the first half on seam routes, and thereafter, he seemed as if he was doing a Tim (Sofa Boy) Couch impression. The Browns also drove inside the 3-yard line twice, but failed to score TDs on either trip. The Look Man attributes this to coaching, although William (The Exorcist) Green missed the hole on one carry. Hurricane Boy should have forced the issue by calling wham blocks in the interior line until the point was made. One doesn't back down from a bully, and one doesn't throw repeatedly inside the five. By the time Manning drove for the game winning FG by noted "idiot kicker" Mike (Yacht Boy) Vanderjagt, the game had already been won psychologically.

2003 NFL Season Forecasts:

Finally, please send your picks to the Look Man for the 2003 season. I have gotten precious few picks, and with the nice view into the season, those prizes are there for the taking. Don't delay! Send your picks care of: www.getalife.com. But seriously folks, we would like a little friendly competition to add some life to what is shaping up as a bizarre season. Who knows? In the words of Don Criqui, "You may have already won."

Out.

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