

The Look Man Report 2003 - Week 20

Twenty-Four

As the NFL season winds its way down to the Highlander Bowl, last week's episode was more like a Fox TV show than Conference Championship week. That is to say that if your number was 24, you were instantly transformed into a super hero capable of saving the world in just a few hours. Cornerbacks Ty Law and Ricky Manning Jr. each pulled off a stunning hat trick of interceptions and will now request to be known heretofore as "Jack Bauer." Since both are appearing in the Super Bowl in Houston, we will soon be able to ask the real Jack Bauer to please stand up.

The AFC Championship game kicked off in Foxborough, pitting Peyton Manning, MD against a New England secondary that was releasing the deadly Pick 3 Virus on the World. Chowds CB Ty Law starred as a policeman responsible for cleaning up all the ugly throws by dancing Doctor Manning. While Peyton Manning may not be a doctor, he nearly put his receivers in the hospital last Sunday in Beantown Heights. He fought the Law and the Law won, while singing, "Bad boys, bad boys, what you gonna do? What you gonna do when they come for you?"

Three hours later, dateline Philly, QB Donovan (Filthy) McNabb(sty) starred as President Palmer while Carolina CB Ricky Manning Jr. was Enrique Salazar, a rogue centerfielder from Cleveland intent on assassinating the President. Salazar did just that with the Pick 3 Virus that sealed Palmer's fate, and left Filthy in a lot of pain. It appeared that Salazar had cloned himself based on the fact that he was all over the Iggles WRs. He also got more than a little help from his friends on the D-line, linebacking corps and secondary. No word on whether he ever freed his brother from jail, but backup QB Koy Detmer's dream of taking over the Vice Presidency went awry.

So the contestants for the Super Bowl XXXVIII in Houston are set. It's Cats vs. Pats in a Wild, Wild West shootout. Ironically, Reliant Stadium features a dome, and based on the weather the roof will either be open or closed at various times during the game. The temperature is unseasonably cold in Houston much to the dismay of the assembled reporters, players and Ladies of the Evening. Still, it should be a good matchup and a fabulous time for the glitterati.

Indy Horsies at New England Clam Chowders:

In a new jinx created by the Look Man himself, Co-MVP Peyton (ExtraTerrestrial) Manning came crashing back to Earth while doing the Snoopy dance in the pocket. ET was throwing worm burners in the cold snowy confines of the Blade with incredible regularity. CB Ty Law was picking off those same passes with similar regularity, including a sweet one-handed grab while covering another receiver. Law duped ET into throwing the pass to Starvin' Marvin Harrison while Law covered another receiver in a short route. The wind at Gillette knocked the pass down and Law gobbled it up like a it was a crack cocaine addict on Cops. Starvin' wasn't really open on the play, but Snoopy was dancing around visually locked in on him anyway. Law simply read Manning's eyes and followed the "Ball Go, I Go principle." Since Manning was backpedaling on nearly every throw, he had nothing on the windswept ball. Manning finished with a QB rating of 33.

After one series, Hunter (the Punter) Smith couldn't handle a high snap, and tossed in a 2-pointer in his only attempted punt in 3 weeks. Punter was called for illegally kicking the ball out of the endzone on the play. Penalties from Walt Coleman (Lantern) and crew weren't rare, either, as the Horsies got flagged repeatedly, while the Chowds mauled the receiving corps with impunity.

As a result, the receivers had the following numbers:

- (Starvin) Marvin Harrison - 3 catches and a fumble

- Reggie (Millionaire Playboy Bruce) Wayne - a few catches and plastic surgery on his face following getting it taken off on a medicine ball from Doc Manning
- Brandon Stokely (Carmichael) - a few catches and a trip to St. Elsewhere on a ball over the middle that was ruled incomplete
- TE Marcus Pollard - a couple catches, a couple drops, and held more times than a newborn baby

Edgerrin James from the U had a good game rushing the football, but didn't see the rock enough for the Look Man. Edge was on the verge of breaking a big one on every touch, but didn't touch it enough to break open the game due to a poor game plan by the O-Coordinator, Tom (Roger) Moore. Agent 007 looked shaken but not stirred, and called an horrific game against a physical Chowds D.

Chowds' QB Tom Greg Brady threw his first pick of the season at home in 330 passes although the Horsies should've had 3. The Colts dropped passes like they were on covered with fecal matter. Chowds C Matt Hochstein (Cow Boy) replaced Damien Woody and played extremely well. RB Antowain Smith had a C Note rushing and Cow Boy made some nice seal blocks on 2 trap plays featuring the TE. It's easy to get run when nobody touches you until you are 5 yards downfield.

Lost in the shuffle was the admirable play of the Colts defense, which kept them in the game and down only 21-14 late in the 4th quarter. The D forced several Adam (The Winemaker) Vinatieri FGs, though the referees may not have been checking the ball temperature. While the Colts D played well enough to win it, forcing a pick, several near picks and 5 for 5 out of the Winemaker in the snow, Manning was unable to convert when TE Marcus Pollard was getting tackled by LB Roman Phiffer on consecutive plays.

Chowds OC Charlie Weis(se Angel) nearly gave the game away, calling 2 passes and a QB keeper outside the 2-Minute Warning. The clock stoppage gave the Colts extra chances and the overturned Brady fumble could have easily tied the game. Instead, Manning choked, and the Chowds tacked on a FG to ice the game and packed their bags for H-town.

Carolina Confederate Black Cats @ Penn Central:

The Confederacy went north of the McNabb-Donovan Line, and into frigid Philly for the NFC Championship game to face the Iggles. CB Ricky Manning Jr. played centerfield for the Cats, picking off McNabsty 3 times when WRs like James (Take Out the Papers and the) Thrash and Pinkston decided to run routes that weren't in the playbook. They were so bad that ESPN commentator (and noted idiot) Michael Irvin aptly referred to them as "Trash and Stinkston".

RB Stephen (Jefferson) Davis and his mammoth offensive line crushed the undersized and outmanned Iggles. When Jeff Davis got a blow, RB DeShaun (Bananas) Foster broke tackles like the Panthers were the team with an extra week of rest. Bananas broke 6 tackles on one TD run, making it seem like Iggles tacklers were slipping on banana peels. Foster bowled the last 2 guys into the end zone and pretty much broke the spirit of the low flying Birds. The Cats runners combined for a typical day at the office against the Iggles, including a C note rushing.

Black Cats QB Jake (the Man) Delhomme was efficient with underthrown and perfectly thrown balls. First, he accidentally underthrew Muhsin (Bullwinkle) Muhammad for a TD that ate up 2 all pros Brian (Ball-Hawk) Dawkins and Bobby Taylor. It's hard to blame the DBs, because the ball came out like a wounded cormorant due to the pass rush. The Man tried to act like he planned it that way, but the Look Man knows better. Still, the Iggles backfield looked like Boris and Natasha as Bullwinkle came up with the TD.

Delhomme came back with a throw to Jeff Davis that whistled right by LB Marc Simoneau's fingertips. WR Steve Smith tossed in several free throws from the charity stripe, and the Black Cats beat the Iggles much worse than the final score would indicate.

When McNabbsty tripped over his own offensive lineman and landed awkwardly, Cats LB Will Witherspoon dropped on top of him like Michael Jackson on a 10 year old boy. There was no roughing call, ending any Houdini impressions in Week 20 for Filthy. He spent the rest of the game grimacing and throwing bad balls while Koy (means "goldfish" in Japanese) Detmer played cards on the bench.

That single no-call got the Iggles in trouble, but the lack of in-game game planning is what really hurt them. The Basic Rule: get the ball to your best player - Duce Staley, but former Coach of the Year Andy (The Walrus) Reid wanted to throw against a Cats defense on the road. McNabb's ribs worsened after the half, and Reid waited too long to put in the Goldfish. On his first series, Goldfish threw a pick to Manning. It really didn't matter because Stinkston couldn't catch a cold naked in Alaska. The Iggles combined for 6 dropped balls including a couple of sweet ones to Duce Staley and TE Chad Lewis.

The Thrash pick was on McNabb, who threw into coverage out of desperation. Face it, with receivers like these, what was Filthy going to do? Run the football with no rib cartilage? McNabb has done it all with no supporting cast all year. RB Bryant Westbrook is good, but young, and he was out. The LBs are special teamers at best, and the WRs are not even starters for 28 other NFL teams.

So the Iggles go 0-3 in NFC Championships, with RB Duce Staley, CB Troy Vincent and others likely to depart via free agency. The Linc will be as hip as *The Mod Squad* in '04 when Joe Gibbs, the Tuna and Co. shore up their NFC Least teams, so the future is not bright in the City of Brotherly Love. At least they can now go to Pat's King of Steaks for some comfort food. Rumor has them taking Terrell (TO) Owens as a free agent wideout who can actually catch, but after the number of dropped balls he had this year, he will fit right in with the Iggles corps.

Miscellaneous:

Michelle Wie, a hottie and a great golfer, played from the men's Sony Open in Hawaii, and nearly made the cut last week. Wie, a greyhound who is built for speed, is a tall drink of water at 6 feet tall. She earned her nickname, the Big Wiesy, with a sweet swing and some serious drives. At the age of 4, Wiesy could hit the ball 100 yards off the tee. She can now blast drives in excess of 300 yards. Two years ago, she made history again by qualifying for the LPGA's Takefuji Classic, the youngest to ever do so. The Look Man has his eye on Wie, who is amazing.



"Flavor of the Wie-ek"

Patriot Act:

Tom Brady was a guest at the State of the Union address last week where Dubya told Congress that "to help children make right choices, they need good examples." The Prez went on to say, "Athletics play such an important role in our society, but, unfortunately, some in professional sports are not setting much of an example. The use of performance-enhancing drugs like steroids in baseball, football, and other sports is dangerous, and it sends the wrong message: that there are shortcuts to accomplishment, and that performance is more important than character." Bush

added, "Of course, shortcutting the judicial process by going duck hunting with Supreme Court judges is fine in my book."

Gene Upshaw, of the NFL Players Association, said the president could not have been referring to pro football. "I don't know who Bush is talking about, but he's not talking about the NFL, because we've already dealt with steroids, performance-enhancing drugs and all of that," Upshaw said. "I would call on the president to produce Weapons of Mass Destruction before he takes on professional sports", he added as an afterthought.

Dubya's contention that gay marriage and steroids were 2 of the biggest issues facing America was comically rebutted by Eva Mendes and Meryl Streep at the Golden Globes, but one still has to wonder about the message. Was Dubya taking a gratuitous swipe at Kahl-E-Forn-E-Ah gov Arnold Schwarzenegger?

Brady sat in First Lady Laura Bush's box where he was honored for his community service. The First Lady was later seen with her head in Brady's lap providing her own version of Patriotic service.



"How do you like these Weapons of Mass Production?"

Fireball Five:

Is the Look Man the only one disturbed by the new Orbitz commercials? Those marionettes from Fireball Five/Thunderbirds/Supercar are a bit freakish. But no more freakish than Chowds Coach Bill (Dr. Evil) Belichick in a postgame interview. His mouth barely moves when he forms words. It's like a bad Outer Limits episode where the aliens use telepathy to communicate. You're never quite sure whether their lips are moving or if thoughts were placed in your brain by the antagonists. Scary.



Belichick postgame: "Another job well done!"

Advertisement of the Week:

A new commercial for an erectile dysfunction drug called *Cialis* debuted last week. In the ad, there are 2 middle-aged folks in separate bathtubs holding hands. The subtlety is comical, but if it were young folks, they would be in the same tub! *Cialis* is known as "Le Weekend" in France, for its long-lasting effects, and it is now competing with *Viagra* as "the Official Wood Drug of the NFL." Kid Rock is expected to star in Super Bowl *Cialis* commercials with the tag line, "Somebody's gotta feel this!"

Celebrity Obit of the Week:

Since Martin Luther King Day fell during the week, the Look Man was tempted to recognize him as the COTW. Many will remember that Phoenix ran into trouble with the Super Bowl Committee for failing to do likewise. King shared the same birthday as the Official Mother-in-Law of the Look Man, and he would've been 75 last week, and likely beaten Bill Clinton to being the first black President. Still, based on his contributions to kids everywhere, and the fact that he was a personal favorite of the Look Man as a child, we will instead recognize Robert Keeshan.

Some of the Tailpipe Posse will recognize Keeshan under the 'nom de tele' of "Captain Kangaroo." Long before Steve Irwin and Mel Gibson brought the Land Down Undah to prominence, the Captain charmed children of all ages with his avuncular style and large marsupial pockets. His partner, Mr. Green Jeans, embodied cool in a way that made us suspect he was smoking the Chronic back when it was still a felony charge. While the talking Grandfather Clock led to many a night terror with his dangerous lips, we loved the show and the host.

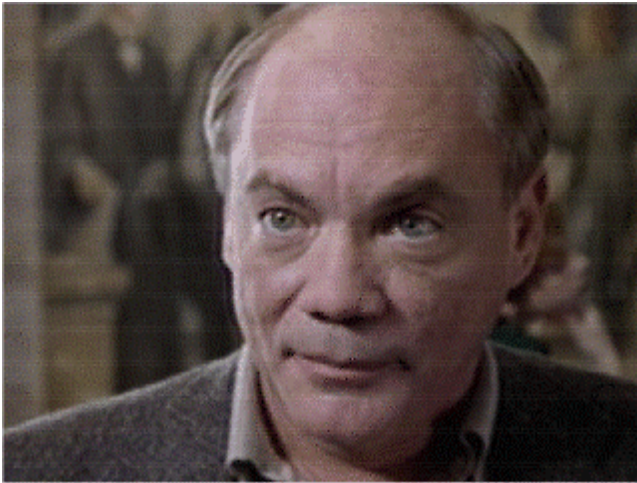
The Captain's regular features included visits from zoo animals, knock-knock jokes, Mr. Moose and the animated Tom Terrific cartoon. Tom had the ability to morph into any shape he could imagine in order to rescue his loveable (and lazy) dog Mighty Manfred from the villainous Crabby Appleton and other antagonists. These story arcs would later form the basis for the Look Man's belief that the evil Zebras could not determine the outcome of NFL games, despite their attempts to control the outcome. Tom Brady of the Pats has been called Tom Terrific in an ugly adulteration of a positive role model. That Tom Terrific, what an actor!

Although Keeshan was only 28 years old when the show debuted, he represented a new icon to a generation of children never before exposed to video entertainment. The gentle pace and kind nature of Keeshan was a counterpoint to the frenetic pace of previous shows like *Howdy Doody*, from which Keeshan was unceremoniously fired due to his relationship with Buffalo Bob. Apparently, Buffalo was a Bills Fan and since Keeshan unabashedly routed for the Browns in the NFL, friction was unavoidable. Keeshan went on to decades of success while Buffalo Bob had tragic Super Bowl fiascoes due to bad karma.

Keeshan will be fondly remembered by his fans and children of all ages.

Celebrity 'Bit of the Week:

The Look Man had a "Brush with Greatness" via a chance meeting of character actor Daniel von Barga. Von Barga is best remembered as the jury foreman in the Oscar winning film, *Philadelphia*, as well as portraying George Costanza's boss on *Seinfeld* in the "Coco the Monkey/T-Bone" episode. Von Barga is a native Nati-an, who frequents the Look Man's neighborhood in his down time. He is quite a character in real life, and a genuine nice guy. He offered this exclusive Look Man Report photo:



"Sorry George, we already have a 'T-Bone'"

Zebra of the Week:

The Zebra of the Week competition was hot and heavy. , Bernie (the Kook) Kukar failed to call a roughing the passer when a LB crushed an already prone Donovan (Filthy) McNabb(sty), causing an injury. This, after last week's call of 'In the Grasp' of a 190 lb safety. The league really should step up following Tony Siragusa single-handedly knocking Air McNair and Loose Gannon out of the playoffs with his pancake move. The Ravens intimidated their way to a ring, and now it looks like the league is sanctioning the same for others.

In the early game, Walt Coleman (Lantern) went all out for the award with the following:

- Incomplete pass call for Stokely Carmichael on a '3 feet down Bernie Kukar special'
- no personal foul on a Reggie Wayne headhunting tackle by S Eugene Wilson
- defensive holding on WRs and TE's too numerous to name

The Zebras called everything on the Horsies, and zippo on the Chowds, resulting in a one-sided physical game. Tony (Hume Cronyn) Dungy went reverse-Mike Martz and failed to review the play despite the evidence. Although Hume did bumrush the officials after a number of heinous calls, he should've gone Bill Cowher and drawn the 15-yarder to spur on his team.

As a result, Walt Coleman Lantern is the **Zebra of the Week** without question. Many will remember the Lantern did the infamous 'Tuck Rule' game the last time the Pats went to the Show. Obviously, owner Bob Kraft has compromising photos of the Lantern fondling small boys.



PHOTO D.C. GORDON ©
Coleman Lantern (center) and cronies post-Foxborough

Looking Ahead to the Super Bowl XXXVIII in Houston:

Black Cats @ Chowds:

The Super Bowl matchup features stentorian Bill (Dr. Evil) Belichick vs. John (Surfer Boy) Fox in a battle royale of defensive head coaches. The matchup of two stellar defensive squads should be one for the ages, despite the fact that the best Super Bowls typically occur after only a one-week break. Still, despite the lack of interest by many fans, there are some great stories.

Fans forget that football really comes down to line play. Both teams have outstanding lines, but the Black Cats D-line is superior. The Look Man is fond of the old Madden adage, *to win championships, you must be able to run the football and stop the run on defense*. For this reason, the Look Man favors the Black Cats in a close game.

Here are the matchups:

QB: Tom (Greg) Brady vs. Jake (The Man) Delhomme; Brady gets the nod for his quick release and spread offense skill, but The Man is a cagey Cajun.

RB: Cats have 2 good ones, in Jeff Davis and Bananas Foster, while the Chowds have only Antowain Smith. Advantage: Cats

WR/TE: Steve Smith and Bullwinkle are underrated, but the speed of New England is awesome. Chowds' TEs Daniel Graham and Fauria have speed but no hands. Cats Jermaine Wiggins has hands but no speed. Advantage: Chowds

LBs: Chowds Teddy (Ineeda) Bruschi is a ball hawk, but the others have poor coverage skills. Cats LBs are athletic with MLB Dan Morgan the best run stuffer of the lot. Advantage: Cats

O-line: Black Cats may have a better O-line with Todd Steussie, C Jeff Mitchell, as the 2 best. Chowds C Matt Hochstein (Cow) will be tested by the best D-lineman in football, Kris Jenkins. Advantage: Cats

D-line: No contest here as Jenkins, Mike Rucker, Brenston Buckner and Julius (Cayenne) Peppers outpace the no-name Chowds starters. NT (Big) Ted Washington is a run stuffer who could actually eat Bananas Foster if given the chance. Advantage: Cats

D-Backs: CB Ty Law and Tyrone (Swimming) Poole and safeties Eugene (Levy) Wilson and Assante Samuel are all good cover guys, but the Cats counter with big hitting S Mike Minter, and the aforementioned Ricky Manning Jr. This matchup is close, but since the Confederacy often sends only 1-2 receivers out, the Chowds go zone, somewhat neutralizing their advantage. Advantage: Chowds.

Strategy:

The Look Man would practice the no-huddle, using about 5 total plays executed flawlessly. All of the scheming by Dr. Evil goes to waste if you simply execute and expose the conditioning of the Pats. Their LBs are horrid and if they bring Harrison into the box to stuff the run, go vertical. The Look Man has been wrong before in SB picks [see also Corn Kings-Grayders in SB XXXVII], but simplicity works. Take what the D gives you and you usually take home the Lombardi.

The Black Cats have a knack for keeping it close and went 9-3 regular season in games decided by eight points or fewer. They are 7-0 in 3 point games, allowing only 36 points in three playoff games. They are peaking at the right time, and the secondary is ball hawking like crazy.

Look for the Chowds to try the spread formation with 4 and 5 wide until the Cats front four mauls Brady a few times. Defense wins championships, and the Black Cats Confederate Crew is up to the challenge well south of the Mason Dixon.

Look Man Report reader and noted NFL historian GB Shaw reminds the Look Man that this is the official Year of the Cat. Cases in point: (1) the Cincinnati Kitty Kats rejoined the NFL at 8-8, (2) the LSU Tigers are NCAA National Champs, and (3) Roy of Siegfried and Roy got dragged offstage by a large feline. In keeping with this tendency, the Look Man proclaims that Tom Brady will be running like a watercolor in the rain on Sunday as the Black Cats D-line turns back time. Final: Black Cats 24-13 over the Chowds.

Out.

The Look Man