

## **The Look Man Report 2004 Week 8: Black(and Gold)Jack**

If you missed Week 8, you missed a lot. While the marquee matchup featured the undefeated Patriots going into Ketchup Field to face the surging Stillers, the Look Man would be remiss not to mention Baltimore at Philly, the ATL at Denver or the AFC Divisional Playoff rematch of Indy at KC. The two latter games ended up featuring over 1000 yards of total offense.

There were several other solid games, including the always epic San Diego and Oakland, and the battle of the Turkey Day Tough Guys Detroit at Dallas. Suffice it to say that the Look Man actually enjoyed the Browns Bye Week in order to fully appreciate the balance of the league.

Finally, Week 8 represents a coming-of-age week for most NFL teams. Due to the bye week, we are not yet typically at the halfway mark, but teams have begun to develop offensive character in order to manifest their cold weather personas. The running game development is critical as the leaves begin to fall from the trees and inclement weather becomes a reality for offensive coordinators.

Without further ado, Week 8 in review:

### Detroit at Dallas:

The Cadillaccs roared in from the Motor City on a roll. They had just beaten a surprising NY Jyntz squad for their third road win of the year, and the Pokes had just lost an ugly game to the Cheeseheads at Lambeau.

The Pokes started off strong, but turnovers from Vinny Testaverde kept the Motor City hitmen in the contest. Vinny was reverting to his old Cleveland Browns form, throwing TDs to the wrong colored jerseys. Of course, he did have some help when Meshawn Johnson decided to run a different pattern without telling anyone. After Vinny capped a 2 minute drill with a pick in the endzone, one had to wonder if Parcels was looking to Tony Romo for a change.

The gamebreaker came on a couple of Testaverde runs. The Starheads went to the spread offense, taking away the strength of the Detroit defense. The Detroit D is spearheaded by DTs Shaun Rogers and Dan Big Daddy Wilkinson, who stuff the run and force pressure up the middle. Vinny crossed them up by taking off running, converting on a short 4<sup>th</sup> and 1 and a 3 yard rushing TD.

Of course, the real reason that he converted might have been the laughter of the defense. Vinny looked like the old man in the Six Flags commercial on those runs. Of course, he threw like that guy in the first half as well. When he started scampering niftily, his posse knew it was time to step up, and Meshawn Johnson started to burn the Lions with the deep ball. The net result was a sneaky, but dominant Pokes win over a fast and feisty Lions squad.

### Flintstones at Iggles:

Meanwhile, Baltimore rolled up the road to the Linc in Philly, expecting to stuff the Iggles who had been tenderized by Cleveland the week prior. The Flintstones had a score to settle with one Terrell (TO) Owens, who ghosted Baltimore for a chance to grab a ring

with the Birds. Ray Lewis and TO had been giving it to each other pretty good all week in anticipation of a brawl.

As it turned out, it was an excellent defensive game. Baltimore sent the high octane Iggles offense back to the Stone Age, forcing Donovan McNabb to cough up the rock en route to the endzone on the 2 yard line. TO had a bad case of alligator arms, dropping 3-4 balls in traffic in the first half. Without Brian Westbrook at RB, the Iggles had little running game and nearly no vertical threat.

The second half turned when Baltimore coughed up the rock deep in their own territory. TO scored on a sweet catch and run, scoring on S Ed Reed. The Iggles escaped with a 15-10 win, while TO did his best Ray Ray impression in the endzone. Ugly.

#### Indy at KC:

Defense was the last thing expected when these two teams met at Agarn Stadium. The only question was whether the teams would get to 50 - -- by halftime. The answer was yes, as Trent (Long) Green, Peyton Manning, Priest Holmes, Marvin Harrison, Reggie (Millionaire Bruce) Wayne all went yard.

There was zero defense, but the play of the day was the capper catch by Tony Gonzales in the endzone. Big T went way up the ladder to catch the game winner, landing on his back with a great grab. The Baby Backs are really back, and if they keep running the ball this effectively, they will be around come January.

#### Jynts at Minneapolis:

The Vikes faced the Jynts in the Metrodome, in a redux of last year's Vikings Waterloo. The Vikes were 6-0 and on a roll when the Jynts rolled into town in 2003. After an ignominious loss, Vikes owner (Rudolph the) Red(-Nosed) McCombs blew a gasket, and his team never had that competitive spirit again. The Vikes missed the playoffs in an even worse loss to the Deadbirds in the season finale.

So the Vikes figured to avenge last years loss to an improved G-Men team. Instead, their longboats crashed into the rocks as Randy (Mouth) Moss didn't see much action. Without Mouth, the Vikes were unable to stretch the field, and got dusted off by Kurt Warner and the G-Men.

The Look Man wonders if Rudolph is trying to torpedo the team's playoff hopes again? McCombs openly campaigned to move his team to the imminent LA venue at the league owners meetings the week of the game. Big Red claims he is losing money in Princeville, and would love the revenue generated in SoCal. Whatever the reason, he has a talented team led by the lowest paid coach in the NFC Norse division. The Vikes face the Horsies in the RCA Dome next Monday Night, and if they lose, its LA or Bust.

Vikes Fan Kevin (K-Gunn) Dunn was unable to see the game due to "candy-gathering" activities. Either this is code for getting some tail, or K-Gunn is seriously under the influence of the whip. Kevin did have this to say when the Look Man queried him on the McCombs situation: "As for BIG RED, what the hell is he doing? If you want to move fine but shut the hell up until the season is over. He just can't stand to win past the 7th week of the season can he? If they do move, I have to pick a new team, no way to cheer for anything from LA." K-Gunn and Crew are headed to the RCA Dome for MNF and

continued, "We get to see a confused Viking team against a pissed-off Colts squad, I saw the same game in '01. it wasn't pretty." No, K-Gunn it wasn't.

#### Nati @ Tennessee:

The Look Man wonders if anyone heard him laughing at the fake punt pulled on the Bungals in this one. The Flaming Thumbtacks were dominating everywhere but the scoreboard and decided to fake a punt for the second consecutive week. The Tacks sent 5 guys go to one side in an unbalanced formation. When the Bungals countered by leaving 1 defender vs. 2 guards, a center and the punter, the Tacks punter took a direct snap and ran for 7 on a 4<sup>th</sup> and 1.

First off, if you don't recognize the formation, you MUST call a timeout. It doesn't take a rocket propulsion expert to figure that out. This thing looked like something out of a bad Jerry Lewis movie.

The final score of 27-20 wasn't indicative of the whipping here. Tennessee TE Shad Meier, playing only 2 weeks after an emergency appendectomy, managed to catch a TD on the 4th and goal gamble by Jeff Fisher. The Look Man understands they are slating him for elective spleen removal prior to the stretch run.

RB Chris Brown asked to be taken out before the clinching TD run because his turf toe was hurting so badly that he grimaced most of the game. Lucky he was injured, or he might have run for 275 against the Ugly & Black. To quote Marvin Lewis, the Bungals "...have to tackle better." That and quit wearing that putrid road uni.

#### New England at Blitzburgh [Game of the Week]:

The Stillers looked pretty strong yesterday and Big Ben Roethlisberger did NOT look like a rookie QB. He knew he was going to get drilled on several deep balls, but he hung in there and delivered strikes. (Johnny) Carson Palmer could learn something from this kid. Of course, Big Ben is a hoss; on one play a blitzzer bounced off of him like bullets off of concrete, and BB threw a first down strike. He is scary good.

The officials really let them play from the opening gun, and it actually favored the Pats early on. Their replacement OTs were tackling the speed rushers, locking them up in the neck/shoulder pads area. New England routinely gets these calls in order to keep their marquee QB from getting decleated and disfigured. Later, the refs let them play, allowing Plexiglass and Ward to grab some serious jersey in the secondary. Also, Richard (Big Dick) Seymour head butted Jerome (the Bus) Bettis and got away with it. That is, until the Bus extracted his own vengeance by busting people up on the rest of the series. Blitzburgh broadcaster Myron Cope exclaimed, "Y'uns can't tell me Bettis has lahst a step. He hit that hull like he was on a 'biskull.' Or a bus!"

This game was one of the most complete games of the year. The Stillers just kept coming, with Dick LeBeau(nhead)'s creative blitzes and tough, physical running. LB Joey Porter (Paints) had his best game since catching a bullet in his gluteus maximus, with 3 sacks and several disruptions of Brady. The zone blitz was in full swing despite the absence of NT Casey Hampton and CB Chad Scott (Herron). It didn't hurt that the offense held the ball for 43 out of 60 minutes.

Oddly, RB Corey Dillon and RT Tom Ashworth didn't appear unlikely from the injury report, then suddenly didn't play (from Questionable to Out in a heartbeat). Something

may be fishy with the Chowds, but the Look Man is betting that once Dr. Evil saw the field conditions, he sat his borderline guys to avoid long term injury. As it turned out, the Sandbox claimed Chowds CB Ty Law AND his replacement Randall (Guay) Gay. The Stillers really need to fix that field, but not until after next week vs. Philly.

The rest of the AFC North is in trouble if the Stillers haven't peaked too soon. Funniest moment of the day: Cowher refusing to let Belichick's hand go after the game. He was talking excitedly long after Dr. Evil tried to get away. The Look Man loves the postgame coaches handshake. The winner always wants to talk and the loser always wants to get away quickly. Check it out next time.

#### Quick Hits:

- Drew (Cool) Brees and the Lightning Bolts are quietly putting together a nice run. Cool Brees looked like Phil Simms in the Super Bowl, throwing 22 of 25 with four TDs and no picks. LaDanian (The New LT) Tomlinson is getting healthy, his backup (Lady) Chatham('s Lover) is solid, and the defense is playing Marty Ball. The Bolts feature OG Mike Goff and LB Steve Foley (Catheter), two of 10 Bungals castoffs starting around the NFL. Don't look now, but the Bolts are now within 1 game of the Denver Donkeys in the AFC West.
- Starheads WR Meshawn Johnson criticized Fox Sports reporter Pam Oliver (Twist) for a report that claimed Me yelled at Pokes coach Sean Payton (Place). Johnson criticized Oliver for making up the story, suggesting she could use a spanking. "I almost wanted to get on a plane, find where she is at, and sit her down and spank her with a ruler really, really hard, because it makes no sense. "You don't need to make up a story.", said Johnson. NFL players are said to be lining up to issue the punishment to the comely sideline reporter. Oliver retorted, "If he tries it, I will punch him in the mouth. May I have some more porridge, please?" Spicay!
- Craig Krenzel helmed the Bears in a rematch of his Fiesta Bowl matchup with QB Ken Dorsey. Krenzel started off with a sweet 49 yard TD bomb, but ended up looking lost with several fumbles, INTs, and general ugliness. Plus CK looks like a Moonie out there with that vacant look in his eyes. He may be a molecular genetics major but he reminds the Look Man of Elton John's infamous *Lucy in the Sky*.

#### Celebrity Obit of the Week:

With Decision 2004 in full swing, it was ironic that a political satirist of a bygone age passed away this week. Abbott Vaughn Meader was born on March 20, 1936 in Waterville, Maine, and made his fortune with a spot-on impression of President John F. Kennedy in 1962. Meader was discovered doing a nightclub act which featured the famous JFK phrase, " Now let me say this about that." JFK's incredible approval rating following the Cuban Missile Crisis triggered overnight success for Meader, who transformed his New England accent into a near perfect Kennedy drawl. His record album, *The First Family*, spoofed America's monarchy so well, that it rocketed to Number One, selling 4 million copies in 4 weeks.

Meader's success earned him immediate acclaim, including bookings on the Tonight Show, Ed Sullivan Show, nightclubs and variety shows nationwide. When JFK was assassinated in November 1963, Meader's career reached a similarly immediate nadir, and he plunged into a drug and alcohol induced spiral. Meader vowed never to do the Kennedy impression again, and his follow on efforts were simply pity pieces compared to

his previous success. He became a recluse, working as a kitchen manager in a small Maine hotel. Meader's later years were characterized by poetry writing and piano junkets around the country.

Many felt that Meader's parody was too irreverent, especially for a family that came as close to royalty as possible in America. Still, when queried about the impression, Kennedy deadpanned, "Yes, I've heard Mr. Meader's album. I thought he sounded more like Teddy."

It's difficult to imagine those halcyon days of American political satire in these mudslinging times. But Meader's work spawned the likes of Mort Sahl, Rich Little, and even Jon Stewart. Meader was 68 at his death on October 29, 2004. He will be eulogized by Senator Lloyd Bentsen.

#### Dallas Mourning News:

DALLAS (Reuters) - Dallas County, the home to some of the biggest conservative supporters of President Bush (news - web sites), made history Tuesday night by electing an openly gay Hispanic woman as its sheriff.

Democrat Lupe Valdez, 57, pulled off one of the biggest surprises in the Texas races by defeating Republican Danny Chandler. "Dallas is an international county," Valdez told reporters. That is what I want to represent." She will be the first Democrat to serve as Dallas County sheriff in about 30 years. Valdez, an accomplished officer with U.S. Customs and other federal agencies, boasted that she has worked on law enforcement at a local, national and international level.. She was endorsed by the main local daily the Dallas Morning News, which saw her as the best person to clean up a scandal-tainted sheriff's department.

"We are tickled that Dallas County voters managed to shatter at least four different stereotypes in one swell poop, er, fell swoop," the Dallas Morning News said in an editorial. Ironically, sales of turkey basters rose dramatically in the days following the election. No comment from the sheriff-elect.

#### Dallas Mourning News II:

A referendum to build a new Dallas Cowpokes stadium in Arlington, Texas passed on Tuesday by a 55%-45% margin. Arlington residents will subsidize a 90,000 seat retractable roof stadium to be completed in 2009. The balance of the cost will be borne by the Pokes owner Jerry (Buddy Lee) Jones.

The new stadium will position the DFW metroplex for a future Super Bowl bid, and should reinstate Buddy Lee's squad the crown jewel of the NFL. Vinny Testaverde is expected to quarterback the team well past the opening of the new facility, using a motorized wheelchair ala George Costanza.

#### **Look Ahead:**

##### Iggles @ Stillers:

The Stillers are fresh off a whipping of the World Champs and Myron Cope will be even more unintelligible in this one. The Iggles are coming off of 2 straight physical games vs. AFC North teams, and the Stillers will be too much for them. The last undefeated team goes by the boards as Joey Porter does the Boot(y) Dance at Heinz.

The Look Man is very impressed with the Stillers but believes they may be peaking too soon. Ketchup Field has reverted to its Sandbox designation, with the worst surface in the league. The next meeting between the Chowds and the Stillers will be very different, especially if it occurs at the Blade.

Pokes @ Bungals:

The Hapless Ones proudly debut their new orange jersey, replete with airsickness bags at every seat. Everyone knows the Starheads have no power in the dark blue uniforms, so wearing home white is de rigueur. Except for these idiots.

It will be cover your eyes ugly, when the Gauchos roll into town with a newly discovered running game and companion deep strike offense, plus an octogenarian QB who can still pick 'em up and put 'em down. Stick a fork in the Ugly (Orange) and Black, who are looking squarely at a 5-11 season.

Browns @ Flintstones Sunday Night ESPN:

The Browns come off a bye week against a Flintstones offense that is finding its stride. Granted Kyle Boller (Hat) still hasn't found the keys to this machine and LT Jonathan (Apple) Ogden is out, but WR Travis Taylor is back and the defense is starting to click. Not to mention that Ray (Ray) Lewis is going to make someone pay for Terrell Owens stealing his dance moves. If he doesn't, can you imagine Dennis Northcutt doing the Ray Ray dance in the endzone? Ooooooh.

Look for the Browns offense to show some new wrinkles, pounding the ball right at Ray Ray, then going deep. Both teams are in a must win but something tells the Look Man that the Browns will play with passion and find the offensive explosion sans the turnovers that have plagued them. Cleveland Rocks and the Browns will roll on Sunday Night.

Vikes @ Colts on MNF:

The Vikes DBs must have some of the worst hands in the league. Safety Corey Chavous missed an INT vs. the Jynts that could have turned the game around, just like the Lions did the week prior. Once Warner throws a pick, he tends to get the yips. Of course it helps if you hit him in the mouth, and I saw little pressure last week.

The Look Man thinks Head Coach Mike (Fried) Tice has mismanaged Moss' injury. He should have sat right up to the Monday Night matchup vs. the Colts. Now he will likely miss that game or simply be ineffective. Plus his teammates won't step up if they think he will play.

Despite these shortcomings, look for Culpepper to shine against a Horsies defensive backfield that may be all second stringers. Daunte and Company will give the Colts what-for on Monday Night at Peyton's Place.

Out.

The Look Man