

## The Look Man Report 2005 Week Seventeen: Kodachrome

*"Times have changed, you know? Like black-and-white TVs (and then) color. It was Pittsburgh, and now it's Cincinnati. That's the way it's probably going to be for a while now, so everybody just get used to it." - Chad (The Dentist) Johnson after the 38-31 Bengals victory Dec. 4 in Pittsburgh*

Week 17 wrapped up the seedings for the 2005 postseason tournament. It also included the most coaches fired since the 1990, opening the window of opportunity for a host of young guns to relocate themselves and their families. With luck, some of them might actually live in these new cities for 3 years, though this is unlikely based upon past history.

The five year plan in the NFL has become the two year plan. Win or go home no longer applies simply to the postseason. Coaches either win in this era of free agency, or they find themselves looking for employment elsewhere.

The Three Mikes got the ax as Mike Sherman, Mike (Megalomaniac) Martz and Mike (Fried) Tice obtained a version of the home game. These terminations represent a loss of some good material for the LMR, as well as the Raiders firing of Norv (Tina) Turner in a continued *Commitment to Excrement*.

NFL coaching vacancies become the game show du jour as Herm Edwards looks to take over in KC for the Crying Man. Other coaching candidates include the Iggles OC Brad Childress, D-Coordinator Tim Lewis, Ron Rivera, Ted Cottrell and Donnie Henderson. And of course, retreads like Megalo Martz, Sherman and Fried Tice are always in vogue. College coaches like Pete Carroll, Iowa's Kirk Ferentz and Charlie Weis (Noodles) are getting some love. One can only hope that Detroit's Matt Millen actually interviews a minority candidate this time before selecting Blitzburgh O-Line coach Russ (Benjamin) Grimm.

Week 17 saw the elimination of the Pokes, Chiefs and Vikings from the postseason tournament. Of the 12 NFL 2005 playoffs teams, seven weren't in the postseason in 2004. There's a new sheriff in town for these teams as parity reigns supreme in the National...Football...League.

The 2005 season also featured the benching of starters for several NFL teams that were playoff bound despite the potential to advance seeding. Now in addition to four meaningless preseason games, we are witnessing games in the stretch run that have little or no impact. Fans are left paying full ticket price to watch backups. This, in a league that already has starting QBs that already belong in the Arena Football League. The Look Man won't name names, but you know who you ahh dahlink.

So the postseason begins, but before it does, Week 17 in review.

### **WEEK IN REVIEW**

#### Bengals at Baby Backs:

The Bengals limped into KC looking to avoid playing the Stillers three times in 2005. Unfortunately, New England had different ideas as they, too, wanted to avoid the

juggernaut Stillers. Dick (The Crying Man) Vermeil announced that this game would be his swan song in KC, so the Baby Backs played with fire despite their slim playoff hopes. It was a recipe for an ass-kicking, replete with backup QB Jon Pickna, who baked up turnovers early and often at Agarn.

But the story of the day was the running of Larry (Grandmama) Johnson, who went over 2 bills rushing on the afternoon. Grandmama's physical running and the hard hitting of the Baby Back D went a long way to making it a long day for the Ugly & Black. Grandmama's rushing totals in the last nine games are 107, 132, 211, 119, 140, 143, 167, 131, and 201 against the Bengals. All he did was nearly win the rushing title in 9 games instead of 16. "Coach Vermeil said he would let me run for 400 today, but no one wanted to see him cry even more, so I took it easy. Plus, we might face them in 2006, so no need to do something to embarrass them even more," said Johnson.

The Crying Man cries no more, but his final press conference was sponsored by Kleenex. "Carl, Norma - - - all of you folks. We didn't give you a Super Bowl, but maybe we did accomplish some things...some things for me (like another \$15M in the bank for me and my mom, Carol)," wailed Vermeil. "If only I was 10 years younger... but age really has nothing to do with it. It was just time (my Kleenex contract expires after this and NBC needs a third in the booth for MNF next season. I still have close ties with Costas after my years in St. Louise)."

There were tears on the field and off as KC knocked the Bengals into a head-on collision with the Stillers in the Wild Card weekend. The Look Man forecasts more tears in Cincy after next Sunday's game with the Stillers.

#### Chicago at Minnesota:

The Bears didn't need a win over the Vikes, and decided to start Kyle Orton ('ears a Ooo) over (T-)Rex Grossman. Funny, since Grossman has started less games than Orton, but we digress.

The Vikes were playing for Mike (Fried) Tice's future as well as respectability. Hornheads' owner Zygi Wilf disabused them of that notion by firing Tice a scant 45 minutes after the Vikes' win. The assistant coaches had to hear about it on the way home from the Baggie Dome.

#### St. Louise at Dallas:

Dallas mailed this one in as Drew (Big Boi) Bledsoe was a little off in Week 17. Big Boi could hardly be blamed since he was wearing Lambs' DE Leonard Little as jewelry most of the night courtesy of RT Rob Pettiti.

The Lambs' 20-10 win could be the swan song for Bill (Tuna) Parcells, who is trying to broker an extension on the basis of his 2005 performance. If you saw the comical halftime interview between Jerry Jones and Suzy Kolber, you were probably laughing like the Look Man.

No one was laughing in St. Louise as interim coach Joe Vitt and Mike Martz shared a hospital room after the game. Seems like the fans aren't the only ones made sick by the play of the Lambs, who suffered through the play of backup QBs Jamie Martin and Ryan (Seacrest) Fitzpatrick.

### Jynts at Raiders:

Kerry (Tom) Collins faced the team that sent him packing in a vendetta game. With RB Lamont Jordan out, the Raiders decided not to try against the pathetic run defense of the Jynts. Collins discovered he has a receiver by the name of Randy Moss, but he couldn't overcome the Jynts, who march into the playoffs on the strength of Tiki Barber and not a lot else.

### Washington at Philly:

The Iggles were game in this matchup, looking to avoid becoming the first team ever to go winless in their division after sweeping it the year prior. DC QB Mark Brunell couldn't do too much on a bad knee, but he was able to take off on a crucial fourth quarter scramble.

Luckily Brunell had help from the Zebras, who decided to overlook Santana Moss' take down block on (Bill) Clinton Portis' game sealing 22 yard TD jaunt. Apparently Washington lobbyist Jack Abramoff had a financial interest in the Genocide Victims as well as his Indian casino holdings. Tom DeLay and the rest of the GOP were laughing all the way to the bank from their Lincoln Financial box seats wallpapered with Abramoff's money.

One Philly Fan who wasn't laughing was the lady who decided to pour her adult beverage on Portis' mom, Rhonnel (The Hitwoman) Hearn. The Hitwoman was sitting in the end zone at the Linc when Iggles Fan asked if she wanted a beer. She responded by punching the woman in the face. Since the fight had not been sanctioned by the WBA, The Hitwoman then watched the balance of the game from the Genocide Victims' sideline.

"She busted some lady in the nose, but that'll just teach you about messing with her," said Portis. "I think fans take that too serious. People come to the game to have a good time, that's what you should do. If you decide your team is losing and you want to cause trouble, then you're going to get what you're looking for. And (Sunday), whoever that fan was, they got what they were looking for. I feel their pain."

Clinton rushed for a buck-twelve on the day, but re-injured his shoulder and wrist on a fourth quarter horse-collar tackle by Iggles LB Trent Cole. "They didn't even call that personal foul," said Mr. President. "I think Ken Starr may have been officiating."

### Miami at New England:

Miami Jedi Nick (Light) Saban ended the season on a high note by beating the Chowds 28-26 at the Blade. Though the Marine Mammals played an inspired game, Bill (Darth Sith) Belichick decided to bench Tom (Zoolander) Brady after the first quarter, going instead with young Jedi Matt (Sand) Cassel. All Sand Cassel did was nearly engineer a game winning 2 point PAT and ruin the plans of the Dark Side.

"The force is strong with that one," said Darth Sith afterwards. "We had hoped that we would lose today and avoid a disturbance in the Force against Darth Chin and da Burgh, but he nearly blew it."

The game also featured Doug (Skywalker) Flutie, who scored a PAT with the rarely used drop kick. Light Saban and Company figured it was simply a Jedi mind trick when Flutie

lined up in the backfield, but their laughter turned to tears as he did something not seen in the NFL since two weeks after Pearl Harbor.

Though Ray (Scooter) MacLean is largely credited with the NFL's last drop kick in 1941, the best at it was Tom (Mister) Driscoll, who kicked four in a single afternoon. Mister Driscoll's 50-yarder was an NFL best until such records were dropped from official recordbook. Although records are not currently maintained, the rule remains on the books, and if executed during a play, drop kicks count as three point field goals. When asked if he knew that, Saban asked, "Whatchutawkinboutwillis?"

"I may only be in the league for another 50 years, so I wanted to give the fans something special," said Flutie. "Plus, it was a little shout out to Jim McMahon. I know he would have wanted me in the record books instead of himself."

Flutie was referencing the last drop kicker in the NFL, who once played for a championship Bears team in a time long, long ago in a place far, far away. McMahon was a punky QB who used to go to Ditka before each game to tell him he was "...ready to try a drop kick if you need me." The Punky QB was a one time teammate of Flutie in Chicago and he declined a request to be interviewed for this story, mumbling something about "...America's Midget stealing his glory."

#### Houston at Frisco:

Houston and Frisco engaged in a comical affair by the Bay to determine who would get the first pick in the draft. When QB David (U Can Drive My) Carr faked an injury, the Slim Shades were forced to insert backup QB Tony (Montana) Banks, who kept shouting, "Say khello to mah li'l friend!" each time he threw a pass.

The Niners' laughing stopped when they subsequently lost a coin flip to Oakland, and will now draft seventh instead of first. They may now be relegated to selecting USC's Matt Leinart, loser of the Rose Bowl and a Three-Pete for Pete Carroll. The Niners could lead the league in stud-turned-dud QBs by the end of next season.

The game also featured FG misses by PK Kris (Miss) Brown, who will be missing kicks for a different team in 2006.

### **CELEBRITY ARRAIGNMENT OF THE WEEK**

Former boxing champion Thomas (The Hitman) Hearns has been arraigned for striking his son during an argument. Police were summoned to his suburban Detroit home around 7 pm on Sunday. Detectives said Hearns, 47, was arguing with his 13-year-old son prior to a physical altercation. Hearns declined comment to The Associated Press, but neighbors heard him exclaiming about a beer incident in Philadelphia before the ruckus.

Hearns' son sustained only minor injuries, and the senior Hearns was released on a \$10K bond. Apparently, the boy got the better of Hearns, who has demonstrated bizarre behavior since a failed comeback in the ring in July. "The Hitman had bruises on his head, and seemed very disoriented," said Detective John Harris. "The boy took his best shot, and by the time we got there, Tommy was staggering around the backyard. He finally fell through the fence before we counted him out and cuffed him."

Hearn held 7 various belts with the WBA, WBC, WBU and IBO between 1980 and 1999. His record is now 60-1-5 with 47 knockouts and one arrest. No word on whether he will go toe-to-toe with Clinton Portis' mother on HBO.

## **LAGNIAPPE**

### Fade to Black:

The end of Primetime as we know it as ESPN loses Sunday Night Football. The new version on NBC will be hosted by Bob Costas and John Madden, but what of the post game highlights? Sadly, this feature is what made MNF as Cosell did his infamous, "That man! He could...go...all...the...way!" NBC could make a killing with the new flexible game format, or they could drop the ball by losing the highlights.

BTW, the goofy Paul Maguire, Joe Theesman, Mike Patrick farewell on SNF was horrible. Not only did Theesman come off as more pompous than usual, Patrick and Maguire were left looking like losers (not a very far stretch). The Look Man used to enjoy Maguire in his days with NBC, but his shtick on ESPN got old quickly. As for Patrick, he never did embrace his play-by-play role, instead adding color commentary.

The concept of SNF on ESPN never quite lived up to the majesty of Primetime, which preceded it. Of course, Primetime would have been helped dramatically by having anyone else but Tom (Side Talker) Jackson.

### Lucy Pulls the Football from Arizona Fans Again:

Many of you will remember that the Deadbirds beat the Vikes on the last play of the 2004 season, thus knocking the Hornheads from the playoffs after a 6-0 start. The Football Gods showed a sense of humor as these same Deadbirds lost on an overturned TD versus the Colts on Sunday.

Arizona was trailing 17-13 with 7:28 remaining, when they staged a 17-play drive. The drive ended with a fourth down TD sneak by Josh (Tears of) McCown with 13 seconds remaining. The Zebras overturned the TD, giving the emotional win to the Colts. Colts DB Mike Doss (Headphones) snatched the call and presented it to Dungy for a curtain calling celebration at the Hoosier Dome.

### Leinart in Big Easy?

Houston gets the first pick overall as a result of a comical Bush Bowl in Frisco, but they may trade the pick. With Gary Kubiak (bear) as the likely successor to Dom (Diego) Capers, they could address numerous holes instead of adding to an area of strength (RB). That would leave New Orleans looking to replace Aaron Brooks (Bros) with USC alum Matt Leinart.

Of course, that would mean another few years of futility as Leinart lives down to the Heisman Jinx. He already has to live down being badly outplayed by Vince Young Wednesday night.

The Religious Icons could go another way by selecting Mike Sherman of the Pack. Sherman might convince Brett (The Pope) Favre to return to his Gulf roots, thereby triggering the renaming of the local district to Fork-Back Parish.

### Brees to Join Circus:

If you saw the gruesome shoulder injury to Drew (Cool) Brees in the Denver finale, it will come as no surprise to learn that he is joining Ringling Bros as a contortionist. Brees was injured late in the second quarter when he was blindsided by safety John Lynch (Mob). When Brees dove for the ball DT Gerard (Big Money Wasted) Warren landed on him, tearing his labrum.

Brees had hoped to get a long term deal with the Bolts, who could then deal backup QB Philip Rivers. "It was a 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours' situation," said Brees. "But now, courtesy of the injury, I can scratch my own back. You wanna see?" After the assembled scribes regurgitated at the sight, Brees continued, "I figure they can start Rivers next year now and I get a big contract with Ringling Bros. That's what they wanted to do anyway."

The question remains whether Marty Schottenheimer will be around to see Rivers play. Marty's team missed the playoffs after blowing winnable games at home versus Dallas and Blitzburgh. Granted, Saint Don had the toughest schedule around, but with their talent, they should have been in the mix.

### Peterson to be Ringleader:

Baby Backs' GM Carl Peterson's proposal to add two more wild cards just won't die. If we witnessed nothing else this weekend, it was the extent to which parity has watered down the level of play. Once Washington slipped past the Iggles and the Stillers knocked off the Lions, none of the games mattered. Even in games with limited impact like the Bengals-Baby Backs and Chowds-Miami, head coaches benched starters, forcing us to pay full price to watch backups.

The league refuses to clamp down on this behavior, and the net result is an inferior product. Now Peterson comes along with a proposal that would effectively reduce the regular season contests' meaning, and he is taken seriously. Please send letters to your congressmen protesting this atrocious proposal. Or maybe just a letter to lobbyist Jack Abramoff instead.

### Bootsy's Rubber Band:

Speaking of the scatological, the Browns continue to be mired in it as they fire team president John (Bootsy) Collins. Bootsy was foisted upon ownership by the league following his role in the Janet Jackson halftime show. He insisted on minimizing GM Phil (Sgt) Savage's role as codified by contract. Coach Crennel went to bat for Sgt Savage, and as a result of his power play to get Savage fired, Collins is now swimming with the fishes.

Now Bootsy is said to be looking to get back in the NFL executive committee for Super Bowl entertainment. He favors the Rolling Stones over Motown's finest, and was at a loss when asked if he had ever heard of the Temptations. "You mean that movie by Mel Gibson about Jesus? I really don't want to get into any religious discussions," said Collins.



*But Ah'm Really Serious Bahbay!*

#### Genocide Vix Keep Williams Off Market:

Washington issued a pre-emptive strike to keep D-Coordinator Gregg Williams off the coaching market. The Genocide Victims offered him a 3 year \$8M extension in order to ensure continuity during their playoff run. The terms of the deal do allow Williams to leave after next year, but only for a head coaching opportunity. They would also give Williams a third 'g' in his first name, making him the only three-G Greg in the NFL.

#### Bears RB Receives Knighthood – BRILLIANT!

Bears RB Thomas (It's Not Unusual) Jones was listed among the new knights of the realm on Saturday. Jones joins Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Cliff Richard, Sir Mick Jagger, Sir Elton John and Sir George Martin, The Beatles producer.

Jones began his career as a singer in Wales, only coming to the USA as a teenager. After a failed attempt at running the football in Phoenix, he decided to take up football after his smash remake of the Prince hit, Kiss. He now carries the rock for the Chicago Bears, though he is said to take frequent trips across the pond to kick it with Queen Elizabeth II.

#### Northcutt's Curtain Call:

Denny scored a 62-yard punt return for a TD in what be his last game with Cleveland. He also scored two other punt return TD's, but both were called back for bogus penalties (Cincy and Indy). This one featured nice blocks all over the field as Northcutt broke out of a tackle for loss, pirouetted, and went north and south. LB Mason Unck threw first block, and WR Frisman Jackson's peel back block at the 10 yard line settled the deal.

Northcutt is expected to be cut in the offseason rebuilding program in C-Town. His role as a third WR could be diminished with the acquisition of Braylon Edwards. Edwards had successful ACL surgery last week, but the Look Man hopes to see Northcutt in orange and seal brown in 2006.

### **THE LOOK AHEAD – WILD CARD WEEKEND**

Saturday, January 7

4:30 p.m. -- Washington (10-6) at Tampa Bay (11-5)

The Genocide Vix are giving 3 to the Expensive Corn Kings, but this game is a rematch of a wild Tampa win featuring a 2-point PAT conversion. The GVs finished strong after this loss, and the Corn Kings were able to staunch the bleeding after recent weeks

where young QB Chris (Molly) Simms was sacked mercilessly. The punishment culminated in a Week 15 sackfest at New England. TB Coach Jon (Chucky) Gruden then installed a max protect scheme to keep Molly perpendicular, or at least allow her to use personal lubricants before each game.

There is no love lost between the Look Man and the Genocide Vix, and the Look Man expects the Corn Kings to put the panties on Marc Brunell at the Big Sombrero. Tampa wins and covers against a banged up DC offense.

8:00 p.m. -- Jacksonville (12-4) at New England (10-6)

Jack (Vanessa) Del Rio has announced the installation of QB (Lord) Byron Leftwich in this one, much to the dismay of J-Squared fans everywhere. All backup QB David (Samuel) Garrard did was to arrest both Wesley Snipes and Harrison Ford en route to a 4-1 record as a starter. When asked if he minded being benched for the slower Lord Byron, he shouted, "I DON'T KAIR!" Vanessa Del Rio is expected to leap off Niagara Falls if the Jags lose this one.

The Look Man disdains talk of the Jags' weak record, as well as a 7.5 point spread. They went 12-4 and deserve the shot. Unfortunately, they are making this move at the wrong time, as they prepare for Bill (Dr. Evil) Belichick.

Look for the J-Squared defensive line to put pressure in the face of Tom (Zoolander) Brady. Zoolander has already proven that outside pressure means nothing by completing passes while getting his head torn off against Tampa. The same is not true when he cannot step up in the pocket and do his patented "right arm in left pocket" follow-through move. Marcus Stroud and John Henderson provided the push up the middle and the Jags get the W, moving on to the next round.

Sunday, January 8

1:00 p.m. -- Carolina (11-5) [+3] at N.Y. Giants (11-5)

Not only did the Jynts get an extra day to prepare against the Black Cats on Sunday, their extra "home game" with the New Orleans Religious Icons is the only reason they are even in the playoffs. The Look Man doesn't care for this kind of homerism, nor do the Football Gods. Black Cats win as they prove Eli (Cheesecake) Manning is not ready for prime time.

4:30 p.m. -- Pittsburgh (11-5) [-3] at Cincinnati (11-5)

Chad (The Dentist) Johnson served notice that the road to the AFC Asgard Division goes through the Nati after they beat the Stillers in Blitzburgh to gain a split season series. Now the Dentist's words may come back to haunt if the Stillers drill the Bengals on Sunday.

The Look Man allowed himself to join the Bengals bandwagon this season before their basic chinks were revealed in the stretch run. The Ugly & Black still have no TE, and their run defense is suspect. The return of DT Bryan (Mrs.) Robinson in the middle will help, but the lack of a decent safety or solid run stuffing Mike LB cannot be hidden in the second season.

With (Johnny) Carson Palmer's groin hurt, he cannot run the ball, and if he gets pressure he will grip it and rip it. Look for Mr. Tonight Show to throw a couple of picks while doing his best Jon Pikna impression.



Further, Jerome (The Bus) Bettis has been eating his way to untacklability in preparation a trip to Super Bowl XL. The Bus has gained an extra tire around his middle, and it is unclear whether any Bengal has the wingspan to actual get his arms around this brobdingnab. When the Ugly & Black put a safety in the box to stop Bettis and Parker, the Stillers will simply send Heath (Ledger) Miller to the seam.

Once they get up by a few points, look for the Stillers to reenact the FedEx Ground commercial starring Bettis, and answer the chants of "Who Dey?" with a resounding "We Dey!"