

The Look Man Report 2006 **Week 1: Road Field Advantage?**

"I don't think this is an example of life and limb being at risk. I like the fact that our fans care. Besides, those plastic bottles don't pack much of a wallop." - Cleveland Browns President Carmen Policy, after the Cleveland 'Bottlegate Game'

Opening:

Week 1 of the 2006 NFL season featured eleven road teams posting wins on enemy turf, proving that change is the only constant. Only 1983 had more road wins on a single NFL weekend with twelve. Visiting teams felt at home on the road, due to either home-away-from-home cooking by the Zebras, or simply the desire to start strong in their pursuit of the playoffs. At this rate, it won't be long before we can expect another Bottlegate episode from the fans.

Remarkably, three of these historic road wins were shutouts. Bal'mer, Chicago and the Bolts all hung zeros on their opponents, the most in one weekend in the last fifteen years. Two of these three teams failed to make the postseason in 2005, and they are serving notice that they are hungry for a return to prominence.

Many fans will jump on the bandwagons of the Burgh, Bal'mer, Indy and the Nati, but in the words of ESPN talking hairdo Lee Corso, "Not so fast, my friend." The NFL season is a marathon, not a sprint. These teams will ultimately seek their own levels, owing to brutal scheduling, injuries and karma.

The Look Man went against conventional wisdom in picking the Dumpster Ducks to win the AFC Asgard Division (see the Look Man's picks). Those who said Steve (Air) McNair was washed up failed to realize that any team that could win a Super Bowl with Trent (The Pickle) Dilfer could cruise with a real QB. More importantly, just reducing the amount of three-and-outs will provide needed rest for an explosive defense. With Jamal (Bam-Bam) Lewis, Mike Anderson, Todd (Uriah) Heap and Derrick (Free) Mason on offense, the Ducks have more than enough weapons to overcome coach Brian Billick(goat)'s inestimable ego.

Bal'mer may still ultimately go the way of Stringer Bell in HBO's *The Wire*, but not before they wreak havoc with the playoff hopes of the Stillers and Bungals. Any way you slice it, the Road to Super Bowl XL plus I goes through the Asgard Division.

Scoring was decidedly down in Week 1, as teams used kickers to put points on the board and W's in the win column. Seattle and New England depended largely upon special teams, with the Chowds actually winning on the strength of a safety. Hopefully, this trend won't continue, but with the high volume of holding calls in Week 1, the Zebras seem content to allow threes instead of sevens.

Without further pontification, the Week in Review:

Marine Mammals at Stillers – Thursday Kickoff Classic

The NFL Kickoff Classic is a recent move by the league to allow the Super Bowl champs to revel in the glow of the season's inaugural home game. The game featured fireworks, rock stars and Zebras from Altoona, PA wearing yellow and black striped uniforms.

Well, maybe the last item didn't happen, but it did seem like an extension of the officiating from Super Bowl XL in Detroit.

Walt Coleman (Lantern) and his crew made calls early and often in this one, helping backup QB Charlie Batch (File) feel right at home. The Stillers running game allowed Batch to throw infrequently, but he was very effective. At one point in the first half, Big Ben's understudy had 86 yards passing for 2 TDs. He finished the night with a controversial 87 yard TD to Heath (Bar None) Miller.

On the other side of the ball, Daunte Culpepper and the Fish looked pathetic. Big Daunte did a mean Peyton Manning impression, and his failure to set his feet resulted in a lot of ugly worm burner passes. Despite several nasty hits by MLB Zach (Scrubs) Thomas, Culpepper's two turnovers late sealed the deal. On the second one, LB Joey Porter (Paints) returned it for six, doing the patented Culpepper muffin roll move for effect.

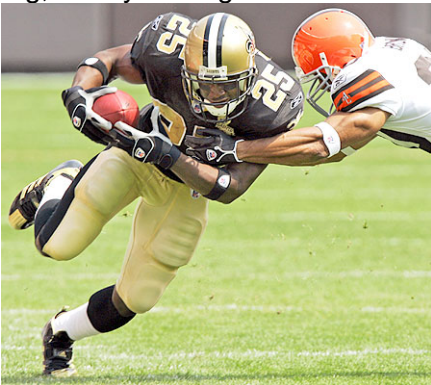
Religious Icons at Browns:

The New Orleans Religious Icons came marching in, and Reggie (Baby Matrix) Bush was nothing short of presidential. Of his 25 touches, seven resulted in first downs. The Icons put together an ugly win for rookie head coach Sean (Astin) Payton, sending the Good Guys to their seventh loss in eight home openers since Browns Version 2.0 in 1999.

A New Orleans defense that included waiver wire starters turned Charlie (Biggie Size) Frye into Ben Gazarra. Frye was running for his life, with the Hamburglar defense in pursuit. He finally decided to take matters into his own hands, er legs, and ended up as the Browns' leading rusher.

The Barking Dawg defense played pretty well, shutting down Icons QB Drew (Cool) Brees in the red zone three times. Failing that, this one would have been a blowout. As it was, the Browns tenderized the Icons, knocking both fullbacks out of the contest, and sending Baby Matrix limping to see Morpheus the Trainer twice.

The bottom line in Browns Town is that O-Coordinator Maurice Carthon, whose 2005 offense ranked 32nd in total points owns a lot of the blame. Mo must go after the following transgressions in Week One: (1) he used backup RB Lawrence Vickers instead of stud Reuben Droughns on 3rd and short - - - twice. He installed RB Jerome Harrison on 3rd and long, and LB Scott Fujita (Film) tossed Harrison right onto Biggie Size's plant leg, nearly ending his season.



Neo taking on Agent Smith

One bright spot was Kellen (The Soldier) Winslow II, who scored for the first time as a pro. The Soldier could've had 20 catches, and he nearly made a circus TD catch late in the game but for a pass interference penalty. Winslow showed speed, strength and heart. Now all he needs to do is cut down his YAC (*Yacking after Catch*) before he costs his team 15 yards. He was woofing to defenders and zebras alike after nearly every play in the game on Sunday.

Toothless Tiggers at Baby Backs:

While the Browns were getting worked by the Religious Icons and the refs, the Nati was struggling early in KC. (Johnny) Carson Palmer putted to a 3-0 lead before they went to a power running game and hurry up offense. The winded Baby Backs went down like free beer thereafter, as the Jail Blazers cruised to a 23-10 win over Herm Edwards' new team.

The only notable play was the near decapitation of KC QB Trent (Long) Green. Tiggers DE Robert (Guillotine) Geathers launched himself at the hook-sliding passer, bouncing Green's dome off the ground like a basketball. Green was replaced by Damon Huard, who was tossed around like a blow-up love doll for the balance of the afternoon.

The loss of O-Coordinator Al (Colonel) Saunders and All Pro OT Willie Roaf may have hurt the Baby Backs more than we thought. The Backs couldn't run, couldn't pass and couldn't win against a surprising Bungals defense. The loss of Green could spell hard times for them as they look like this year's version of Herm's Jets.



Before and after shots of the French Revolution

Ponies at Jynts:

The Manning vs. Manning matchup featured action that nearly matched the pregame hype. Eli's coming, but he ain't there yet as indicated by key mistakes, including a pick to seal the win for the Ponies. On the other hand, the Jynts DBs dropped at least three Peyton picks that might have turned the tide. Both guys were gripping in a pressure cooker matchup with Mom & Dad in the stands.

Bottom line: the Ponies miss Edgerrin (The Edge) James more than they are letting on, but the injury of WR Brandon Stokely is nearly as big. Peyton threw some sweet passes to TE Dallas Clark, but a deeper defense will make them pay.

Swedes at Genocide Victims:

The term Viking denotes the ship-borne explorers, traders, and warriors hailing from Scandinavia for nearly three centuries. From 793 to 1066, these guys owned the British Isles, France and most of Europe. Their skill at navigating long ships allowed them to colonize, raid and trade all over the region. The term "Viking" literally means "the people from the bay."

It seems like it's been nearly that long ago since the Minneapolis Swedes have dominated in the NFL. They got within one game of the Super Bowl in the 1990's, and then fell into disarray with scandal after scandal. The bad news culminated in 2005 with the Love Boat fiasco featuring strippers and lewd behavior.

If the game against the DC Genocide Victims is any indicator, the Swedes are back, Baby. Even though their new uniforms make them look like Denver North, they were the Belle of the Ball in a beautiful win over the high salaried GVs.

The game was the inaugural Monday Night Football game on ESPN, featuring the MNF: The Next Generation announcers Mike Tirico, Tony Kornheiser and Joe Theismann. MNF TNG got off to a rocky start, with Theismann obviously rooting for DC and home town journalist Kornheiser having to challenge him with insightful comments. The tension in the booth was awful, punctuated by a bizarre visit by an intoxicated Jamie Fox.

Adding insult to injury was the sight of Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes in the Genocide Vix owner's box. Dan Snyder was going for a *Mission Impossible* motif with arthritic QB Mark Brunell at the helm. It prompted an exchange between Snyder and Cruise that was picked up by the LMR Secret Hidden Microphone. The transcript follows:

Snyder: "So, Tommy, what do you think about our team this year?"

Cruise: "Open your eyes, Dan! Dan, Dan, Dan, you don't even — you're glib. You don't even know what a screen pass is. I played a QB in All the Right Moves. I know the history of the screen pass."

Snyder: "I'm only asking isn't there a possibility that — do you examine the possibility that Counter Trey can work for some teams? That yes, there are tackles for loss. And yes, maybe they've called it far too often in certain games. Maybe there are too many running plays. Maybe Al Saunders —"

Cruise: "Too many running plays? Dan."

Snyder: "I'm just saying that this Saunders and his 700 page play book deserve a chance ---- Hey! Is that a secret hidden micropho-----"

The transmission went dead at that point, but you get the drift.



TomKat with a ventriloquist dummy at FedEx Field

Rookie Swedes head coach Brad Childress game planned like a Hall of Famer in this one. Former GVs QB Brad (Jr) Johnson won the battle of the oldest QBs in the league with a virtuoso performance. He threw the rock through a keyhole more than once, and only big drops by Troy Williamson kept the Vikes from pillaging Old DC.

The Purple Helmet Wearer's defense also rose to the occasion after a few adjustments. Despite the benching of starting safety Dwight Smith for an indecent behavior arrest, the secondary punished the receivers, shut down the run and harried Brunell. Smith's benching was punishment for getting busy in a Minneapolis nightclub stairwell with some shorty. At least the Swedes are performing their lascivious acts on dry land these days.

Coach Childress did make one coaching error late in the game. Up by only three, he attempted a long FG that went wide, giving the Genocide Vix a short field and a chance to tie. Luckily, FS Darren Sharper (Image) and the rest of the PHW defense held as Washington missed a game tying three. Fittingly, it was wide right in the mode of another politically incorrect team with a Native American motif.

Pokes at J-Ville:

With DT Marcus Stroud injured and sack leader Reggie (Susan) Heyward out with an Achilles tear, the Pokes jumped out to a big time early lead. RB Julius (Dr. J) Jones and Drew (Big Boi) Bledsoe looked great in the first half. Of course, veteran fans know that Big Boi doesn't just lose games; he tears your heart out with the poorly thrown pick at the worst possible moment. Great throws, horrible throws, who knows? One thing is sure, the Tony Romo (the Place for Ribs) QB watch is on in Big D.

J-Ville looked great as the game wore on. Fred (Sheriff) Taylor is in a contract year, the defense stepped up, and (Lord) Byron Leftwich even ran a QB draw for six. Amazingly, new offensive coordinator Mike (Fried) Tice carved up Doomsday Lite and the Jags won despite an incredible TD catch by Terrell Owens.

LAGNIAPPE

Run, Forrest, Run

One of the basic truths in comedy is that few things are funnier than seeing fat men run. Robert Conrad of the old detective show Cannon had to do three things each week: eat, play with his dog and chase criminals. George Costanza and Newman in Seinfeld were often seen running down the streets of New York. Nothing gets a laugh quicker than a big man picking them up and putting them down.

Rookie DT Haloti Ngata (Chance) of the Dumpster Ducks got in on the fun last Sunday against the Expensive Corn Kings. Ngata picked off a Chrissy Simms pass and rumbled, bumbled, stumbled to the nine yard line before running out of bounds. The amazing thing is that the glory of scoring a TD didn't inspire him to keep going. Ngata, who is euphemistically listed at 360 pounds, simply had nothing left in the tank after "sprinting" sixty yards.

Greatest Show on Turf?

Former Lambs head coach Mike (Megalomaniac) Martz is the new O-Coordinator for the Detroit Cadillacs. Megalo Mike was brought in with the idea of turning Detroit into GSOT II, but his offense posted only two field goals in four quarters with the Shehawks.

Megalo Martz and the Caddies picked up former Bungals QB Jon (Pickna) Kitna to run the GSOT. Pickna didn't throw the ball to the wrong team, but he did hit a lot of receivers wearing green-on-green uniforms. The locals booed him lustily, and the chants of "We Want Joey" resounded at Ford Field. Joey Harrington is now a backup with the Marine Mammals.

Furniture (Un)Fair

A Chicago area furniture store owner put his money where his mouth was, and must now make good on an offer to provide customers with free furniture for a Bears shut out. Over 200 customers cashed in on \$300K of furniture after the Monsters of the Furniture Mart won 26-0 at Flambeau.

Randy Gonigam, the store owner, made the offer after he "got tired of players bragging about their defense." Gonigam, a self proclaimed Bears backer, got the idea after getting fed up with LB Brian Urlacher's claim the Monsters would have the best defense in the league in 2006.

"This is beyond our wildest dreams," said Gonigam. "'As a Chicago sports fan, you get frustrated," he said. "I thought, 'Prove it. I never realized that Favre was going to start giving it up like Paris Hilton in a home sex video.'"

Favre commented, "My folks down there in the Gulf needed to replace everything they lost in Katrina", said the Pope. "I figured if this guy wanted to give it away, I would just reel him in like a big ol' catfish. I put the ball up for grabs, and my homies get free furnishings. It's great."

The league is investigating whether The Pope really did throw the game or whether he simply needed to be turned over and cooked on the fire for another five minutes. Gonigam is now suing the Cheesehead QB for fraud and impersonating cooked meat.

BOOM! POW! ZOWIE!

Fox Sports is coming across with a new pickup truck after its on-air prank backfired in Charlotte. Fox analyst Tony (Fois Gras) Siragusa announced that the network was giving away a free Porsche to a lucky fan in attendance. When the fan turned out to be Greg "Catman" Good, Fois Gras gave him a toy car instead, saying, "You're gonna need some butter and oil to slip into this one, fella."

Catman was heartbroken to find out he had been duped. He is a social worker who badly needed to replace a vehicle with over 100,000 miles. He might now have to promote fights on the side in order to afford his end zone seats.

The story had a happy ending when Fox Sports CEO David Hill came across with a Ford F-150 pickup. Hill also promised "internal discipline" for the prank. "It was a lack of judgment on my people's part. I take the reputation of Fox Sports very seriously, and I don't want it to be sullied. Once I heard about the story ...I believed something needed to be done quickly and unilaterally here," said Hill. "After all, we here at Fox are fair and balanced."

Speculation is that Siragusa will be forced to go on a diet, eating only ten times daily instead of his usual forty. Good was said to be ecstatic with the pickup, which is to be presented personally by the CEO. "I've always been a Ford man," said Catman. "I can't wait to tell my sidekick, Chipmunk Boy."



Crime fighter or boxing promoter?

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

The ZOTW competition is taking up right where it left off in 2005. In point of fact, there were so many contestants that the Look Man had to go with the bulletized list approach as follows:

Marine Mammals at Stillers: Zebra - Walt Coleman (Lantern)

- TE Heath (Bar None) Miller out of bounds at the five, but scores when Nick Saban throws the challenge flag too late;
- two questionable illegal contact calls aiding a ball control drive during the 3rd quarter. This drive caused the Mammals D to tire, later giving up big chunks of yardage.

One of the latter calls was a hands to the grill call that was 50 yards away from the friggin' play! Walt Coleman (Lantern) took what looked at the time like an insurmountable lead in the ZOTW polls.

Religious Icons at Browns: Zebra - Jerome Boger (Dawson),

- holding call on first play from scrimmage negates 74 yard TD to Braylon Edwards.
- Illegal formation penalty on NO on 3rd down, with an inadvertent whistle. Boger then ruled the play counted, allowing Cleveland to decline the penalty and force a punt on 4th down.

- Holding call on WR Denny Northcutt on a key first down.
- Holding penalty of OG Cozey Coleman, negating a Joe (Sid) Jurevicius 20 yard catch. Sid had to leave the game due to a brutal rib-busting hit on the play.

Chowds at Bisons: Zebra: Terry (Bottlegate) McAulay

- Bottlegate made several bad calls, including a block in the back on a Donte Whitner pick that would have been six points. Not only did the call negate the TD, the whistle blew so fast that Whitner didn't even need to run it out.
- Multiple holding, block in the back and jaywalking calls on the Bisons, resulting in zero offensive rhythm

The zebras made sure New England was going to win this one the Huey P. Newton way: "by any means necessary. "

Pokes at J-Squareds: Zebra - Gerry Austin (City Limits)

- On the Pokes' first offensive play, TO caught an inside slant, was tackled, and J-squared SS Donovan Darius takes 2.5 steps and spears him; no call
- Two Dallas TDs called back for offensive pass interference
- J-Squared WR Reggie (Hoya) Williams and Pokes CB Anthony (O) Henry get tangled up in the endzone, so Hoya yanks O'Henry's helmet down, and snatches the TD; no call.

Indianapolis Ponies at New York Jynts: Zebra - Walt (Disney) Anderson

- Walt Disney calls offensive pass interference on Jynts WR Tim Carter, negating a first down. Eli Manning throws a game sealing pick on the very next play;
- Numerous fouls on the Jynts, who began to self destruct at the opening gun.

Swedes at Genocide Victims: Zebra – Mike Carey

Mike Carey has gone over to the Dark Side. Flags were flying in this one, mainly with the intent of keeping Washington in the game. The calls included:

- Santana (Devadip) Moss getting a goofy illegal contact call, then "re-establishing himself" after going out of bounds and being the first to touch the rock
- ridiculous holding calls on the Swedes
- Brunell grounds the ball while still in the tackle box, but no grounding call.
- Flags flying 20 minutes after the play was over
- Late hits and minor facemask calls when Washington was trying to tear folks' heads off

The Look Man has never heard of a receiver ""re-establishing himself" after going out of bounds without someone else touching the rock first. More likely, Carey was simply going Admiral James Loy on us, assuming we will not question his declarative post penalty explanations.

Bungals at Baby Backs: Zebra: Larry Nemmers(kull)

- Nemmerskull makes no call on a vicious shot by DE Robert (Guillotine) Geathers that knocked Trent (Long) Green into midseason. Long Green was sliding feet first on the play, and the Bungals claimed that a 180 lb WR pushed the 270 pound Geathers into the train wreck.
- No personal foul was called by Nemmerskull, and the league ruling stated that it

was Green's fault for sliding too late. Apparently, Green should have started his slide when he got off the team bus.

After watching what the Baby Backs now call "The Zapruder Film," league Sr. VP Ray (Kenny) Anderson proclaimed that Louis XVI's hit on Long Green was legal. "In other instances this contact might be illegal, since a defensive player has the responsibility to avoid unnecessary contact even when he is blocked by an opponent," said Kenny. "However, in this case, the late slide and the block in the back were mitigating factors."

Mitigating factors? The penalty is called 'unnecessary roughness' for a reason. Irrespective of whether it is a passer, a defenseless receiver or a 400 pound lineman, any play that is likely to cause serious injury is a foul.

The Sr. VP continued, "Look guys, it's not like when Keith Gary twisted my head all the way around the night before Halloween. Man, I looked like Linda Blair on the cover of the Enquirer the next morning. You could read the name on the back of my jersey and see my face at the same time. Now THAT was roughing the passer."

Just for giggles, here is some of the text of the league ruling:

1. When a runner begins to slide feet-first, a defensive player must pull up and avoid unnecessary contact.

2. Quarterbacks who desire to take advantage of the protection provided to a sliding runner are responsible for starting their slide before contact by a defensive player is imminent.

Not only is this wording idiotic, it defeats the intent of the 1985 rule. New age linebackers like Lawrence Taylor, Carl Banks, Otis Wilson, Mike Singletary and a host of others decimated QB ranks in the early 80s, causing the NFL to implement a rule to ensure that Dan Pastorini wouldn't represent the AFC in the Pro Bowl. The rule worked pretty well until 2000, when Tony (Fois Gras) Siragusa knocked Rich Gannon and Steve (Air) McNair out of the playoffs with sufflex tackles.

Rule 7, Section 4, Article 1 provides that the ball is dead and the down ended when any part of a sliding runner's body, other than his hands or feet, touches the ground.

This statute also mandates that no defensive player must touch the QB down in order to end the play. Unbeknownst to most folks (including Mr. Tonight Show in Cincy), the QB cannot slide, then get up and advance the ball. If "contact is unavoidable," and a defender has already committed himself, he can hit the QB with impunity as long as he does not initiate helmet to helmet contact, elbow the QB, or generally turn into Likes to Fight Guy.

This new guideline states that a QB must "make his intentions clear" because if he "...waits until the last moment to begin his slide..." he can be tackled just like "a regular ballcarrier." If that ball carrier was in the Pokes-GV game, that would include trying to unscrew a guy's head using his facemask.

This interpretation is so subjective that it invites controversy instead of defining punishable behavior. Defenders all over the league are now scratching their heads, while QBs are sliding as soon as they run out of the tunnel. Next season, expect QBs to

be required to signal their "intent to slide" with a fair catch signal.

The Look Man finds it odd that a Sr. VP was required to address this issue. Typically, Head of Scapegoat Operations Mike (Pariah) Pereira makes these statements, followed by his weekly show on the NFL Network to explain. Roger (Rabbit) Goodell is off to a great start as Commish. He is expected to announce Stevie Wonder as Head of Officials next week.

Green was released from the hospital on Tuesday and should be able to feed himself in a couple of months. He is currently rehabbing at the Ichabod Crane Halfway House.

At any rate, Larry Nemmerskull, you are the Lookman's ***Zebra of the Week!***

The Look Ahead

One might expect that the Look Man would be out of the prediction bi'nness after last week's pick. Alas, the Look Man will never bow to the stink of respectability. By the Hammer of Grabthar, he shall prevail!

Browns at Bungals

The Battle of Ohio Part 1 takes place in Pall Bearer Stadium on Sunday. Nati Fan will be like a pack of well-behaved dogs in the home opener, courtesy of the new Bungals complaint line, 1-800-JERK. Fans who observe unruly behavior are asked to call this number on their cell phones in order to maintain order. Of course, the violence on the field could be sufficient to get some of the players arrested and sentenced to see Guillotine Geathers.

Chad (The Dentist) Johnson and Kellen (The Soldier) Winslow II have already begun the war of words. The Browns are getting no media love after losing to New Orleans last week at home. Look for the Barking Dawgs to rise to the occasion, shutting down The Dentist and punishing Rudi (Ray Moore) Johnson. Romeo (Montague) Crennel will have the offense ready to run the ball right down the throats of the Ugly & Black. If they can't, look for O-Coordinator Maurice Carthon's resignation on Monday.

Browns cover the 10.5 AND win this game, spoiling the Ugly & Black season opener and sending the Beng Faithful home crying like Kimo did in January.

Washington at Dallas

It's Cowpokes and Native Americans as these two attempt to get off the schneid in Week 2. It may be too early to call this a must-win, but it is a must-not-lose.

Drew Bledsoe is playing for his starting job after last week's fiasco, while Genocide Vix QB Mark Brunell is simply trying to justify O-Coordinator Al Saunders' pay grade. (Colonel) Saunders and head coach Joe Gibbs account for \$8 million in salary, and if you add the \$2 million for D-Coordinator Gregg Williams, you have the highest compensated staff in the league.

Expect Pokes owner Jerry (The King of Pop) Jones to feature actor/director Mel Gibson in his loge for the game. The King of Pop will be financing Mel's films now that he is persona non-grata in Hollywood. Either that or it's a ploy to out-Snyder Washington.

The Look Man is unsure who will win this one. The DC defense is like a pack of Philly Lawyers out there and Bledsoe looks tentative whenever heat is applied. The Pokes need to win this one as payback for last year's ignominious late loss to the Casino Owners, but it will be a war.

New Orleans at Green Bay

This is a must-win for the Pope and their rookie head coach. The Browns tenderized the Icons by knocking both FBs out of commission, and this is their second road game in two weeks. Pack wins a close one.

Carolina at Minnesota

Battle of the Titans as the Black Cats head to the Land o' Lakes. Jake (The Man) Delhomme was extremely salty after getting stomped by Ron Mexico at home last week, and All-World WR Steve (Jacob Jingleheimer) Smith, MLB Dan Morgan (Fairchild) and LT Travelle Wharton are likely out. It could be another long afternoon for the much hyped Cats.

Detroit at Chicago:

Big early matchup for the Cadillacs, who need this one to legitimize the New Greatest Show on Turf. Unfortunately, with Jon Pickna at the helm, the Monsters of the Midwest D could get double digit picks in this one. Chicago is not as good as advertised and Detroit is better than advertised. This could be a great game. If it was any other QB than Pickna, the Look Man would take Detroit. As it stands, it's a pick 'em.

Tampa Bay at Atlanta

Ron Mexico's home debut against a ticked-off Corn Kings squad; Chucky Gruden vs. Mora the Menace in the Young Head Coach Classic, featuring The Village People and YMCA at halftime. Tampa owns Ron Mexico and will win a slobberknocker.

Oakland at Baltimore

B-More began the year with stultifying defense against a good Tampa team. They now face the Grayders, who put the "fun" in "dysfunctional." Randy (Chronic) Moss and crew will REALLY be "walking on eggshells" after this bloodletting. Dumpster Ducks, baby, Ducks.

Arizona at Seattle

Deadbirds coach Enny (No 'D') Green attempts to legitimize the Arizona hype by beating a Shehawks team looking to win the NFC West. The Deadbirds allowed Niners QB Alex Smith to carve them up like a cactus wren in Phoenix, so Matt (Hair Club for Men) Hasselback is drooling. Unfortunately, the Detroit defense tenderized Seattle, so the Deadbirds steal one at Safeway.

New England at New York Jets

Mangini faces his old mentor as Bill (Dr. Evil) Belichick rolls into the Big Apple. Hanging Chad Pennington looked good in Week 1, while the Chowds cheated Fate with the help of the Zebras.

Mangini may not be Ivy League educated like Bisons' coach Dick Jauron, but he knows the Chowds' personnel. Will mentee beat mentor, or will Dr. Evil realize yet another puzzle piece in his bid for world domination? Dr. Evil has a habit of pounding his

disciples, but the Jets cover, proving that the Chowds do miss Shehawk WR Deion Branch.

Kansas City at Denver

Mike (the Rat) Shanahan is humiliated at losing yet again on the road in Week 1. Jake (the Fake) Plummer is on a short leash, so look for a lot of running by the Donkeys.

Herm Edwards shows up with Damon (Hears a) Huard at QB after the decapitation of Trent (Long) Green. Donkeys win with the help of their cousins in black and white.

Stillers @ J-Ville, ESPN MNF

What a matchup. The Stillers nearly got knocked out of the 2005 playoffs when the Jags won an overtime thriller. The Stillers had a backup in that one too, as Tommy (That Deaf, Dumb and Blind Kid) Maddox turned it over repeatedly. TDDBK has been cut, but Big Ben wants to play and it will be a game time decision.

The Look Man expects Iron Chin Cowher to figure out discretion is the better part of valor, and sit the Big Hurt for one more week. The Stillers will fail a BIG test in J-Ville, followed by a blood feud with da Beng in Week 3. Their schedule is BRUTAL and the Look Man doesn't expect Batch File to upload 3 passing TDs again in '06. If he does, look for he and Bill (Iron Chin) Cowher to start necking at the fifty yard line after the game. A kinder, gentler Iron Chin is promoting gay public displays of affection in this, his last year as Head Coach.

The J-Squareds are for real in 2006 despite the media calling them a "soft" 12-4 team. The Look Man likes them to upset the Ponies and win the AFC Souse. Unfortunately, three of their best defenders are dinged up and the Stillers look good on national TV. The Spotted Cats win, setting up a Stillers-Bengals war in Week 3.

EPILOGUE

This season is going to be a doozy for many reasons. There are a ton of rookie head coaches who will blow close games. Free agency and injuries have jumbled offensive lines, where continuity is key. Rookie zebras do not know what they are doing, and the issue is magnified by bizarre rules changes for Down by Contact and celebration.

All in all, look for wild and wacky to become the norm. At least four 2005 playoff teams will not make it back to the show, and young teams will replace them. The Look Man likes Miami, Arizona and Detroit to show up large in the standings.

Without further ado, the Look Man's picks for '06:

Division Winners

Minnesota Wicinga
Dallas Cowpokes
Carolina Black Cats
Arizona Deadbirds

Baltimore Dumpster Ducks
Miami Marine Mammals
Jacksonville J-Squares
KC Baby Backs

Conference Winners

Carolina Black Cats
Jacksonville J-Squares

Peace,

The Look Man

Wild Cards

Philly Iggles
Chicago Bears

Indianapolis Ponies
Pittsburgh Stillers

Super Bowl Winner

Carolina Black Cats