

## **The Look Man Report 2006** **Week 5: (Un)Civil Disobedience**

*"If I'm a Hall of Famer for you, that's all right with me." - Negro Leagues superstar Buck O'Neil during a commencement speech.*

### **OPENING**

Henry David (HD) Thoreau shocked the world with a nineteenth-century tome on individual rights and opposition to social conformity. Among his best known works are the book *Walden* and the essay *Civil Disobedience*. In the first, Thoreau regales us with a two year diary of his life celebrating nature in the woods at Walden Pond in Massachusetts. One of the most famous lines from the novel is, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation."

Perhaps that desperation came from the fact that Massachusetts did not have an NFL championship in 1854. In 2006, it's because folks must witness Terrell Owens pouting and acting out like a two year old at a grocery store. To quote Joe Buck, "THAT was a disgusting act. We're sorry we had to show you that on our air."

In other news, the Chicago Bears continued to steamroll opponents, Indy won a squeaker, and Blitzburgh fell further into despair with a loss in San Diego. Indy and Chicago remain unbeaten through five weeks, sparking talk of the 1972 Marine Mammals perfect season. On the other side of the ledger, Tampa, Oaktown, Tennessee, and Detroit are maintaining perfection of a different sort, still looking for an elusive "W."

The second quarter of the NFL season has begun, and for many teams it's over before it ever started really. This kind of futility leads to a bizarre ritual known by the Look Man as Point Spread Week. Point Spread Week is when the quiet desperation of a few teams leads to ridiculous odds by Vegas touts. It also constitutes a great opportunity for the betting public to get paid, but only if you call the Look Man at 1-800-GET-RICH for his special lead pipe Pepto Picks of the Week!

Without further teasers of providence, the **Week in Review**:

### **WEEK IN REVIEW:**

#### *Cleveland @ Carolina:*

The Browns went into Carolina on an offensive high after an 18 point comeback win in Oaktown. The difference between the Grayders and the Black Cats cannot be limited to DE Julius (Cayenne) Peppers, but the athletic All Star made life a living hell for Browns QB Charlie (Biggie Size) Frye.

Frye began the game with a pass into the rotating zone that was picked for six. Dennis Northcutt should have caught the medicine ball, but he was too busy protecting his rib cage. Still, the Browns should have been going deep with the temporary absence of Cayenne Peppers for an ankle. Instead, Mo Carthon called the underneath pass and Charlie's TD pass total increased even if half of them are to the other team.

The Browns installed safety Brodney (Dead) Pool at CB, and he blanketed Keyshawn Johnson. His job was made easier when safety Brian Russell deceleated Key on a 3<sup>rd</sup>

down incompleteness. Afterwards, the Carolina receivers were looking more for number 27 than receptions.

Biggie Size was hit early and often, and many of the hits were due to his own stupidity. If he keeps this up, he will become Bubby Brister. Charlie, here's a little tip. Throw the ball away or get out of bounds. You'll live longer.

The Browns defense allowed only 13 points and shut down Steve (Jacob Jingleheimer) Smith. They also knocked rookie sensation DeAngelo Williams out with an ankle. If only they could have scored, the Browns might have won the game. Defensive Coordinator Todd Grantham needs to be paid two salaries, because he may be their best chance for offense. Despite excellent talent and a solid defense, these guys are 1-4 going into the bye week.

#### Blitzburgh @ San Diego:

Bolts head coach Marty Schottenheimer eschewed Martyball and allowed his rookie QB Philip Rivers to throw. The result was a Bolts win that showcased NT Jamal Williams, who busted through double teams like there was free food in the backfield. He hounded Big Ben Roethlisberger and punished the Stillers.

Speaking of Big Ben, there is something obviously wrong with his right elbow. He threw more red zone picks and left the game with his arm in a sling. Either Cowher puts him on the injury list this week, or the league needs to conduct an investigation. Hines (57) Ward is healthy, but his chances of seeing the rock are slim and none, and Slim has his coat on.

#### Dallas at Philly: Game of the Week

The over-hyped Dallas-Philly game ended up being a fantastic, if flawed contest. The game featured incredibly hard hitting defense which forced turnovers leading to scores. There were wicked hits, flea flickers, and a pick six that sealed the win when it looked like it was going to an overtime that would ruin Fox TV's planned football-baseball doubleheader. It even included a Dallas kicker getting concussed when he tried to drill a kick returner.

The Iggles proved they have mastered the sandbag move, playing key starters Brian Westbrook and Lito Shepherd. WR Donte Stallworth couldn't answer the bell, but who needs him when you have rookie Hank Baskett and TE LJ Smith running uncovered most of the night? Pokes S Roy (Rogers) Williams must have been doing some of Trigger's horse tranquilizers before the game, because he looked awful. Almost as awful as a certain suicidal Dallas wideout.

Owens' performance in the Pokes loss to rival Philly on Sunday was one of the worst displays in a career of ugly outbursts. He screamed, showed up his teammates, dropped balls and generally acted a fool. If anyone wondered when the first TO explosion would occur, they aren't now.

Owens may simply be doing a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of civil disobedience in an homage to Thoreau. When asked about his outburst, he said, "Why am I here? I came here to help this team win. I just feel like I wanted to be involved more. There were opportunities." Later, when a reporter asked him whether he knew of Thoreau, Owens replied, "Yeah, I played against him when I was with San Fran. He was a decent cornerback, but he

couldn't cover me. Hell, God couldn't cover me." When Owens was told that Thoreau was a writer, he said only, "Let's get back to talking about me."

The Look Man's prediction of a Starhead win went by the boards, largely due to the concussion sustained by Bledsoe on a first half TD "run." Big Boi got pounded at the pylon, leading the Look Man to fret at the half despite the Pokes' 14-13 advantage. Big Boi never looked the same, and his two late picks sealed the deal and the Pokes season. All that was missing was Bill Paxton's line from Aliens, "Game over, man. Game over."

The Starheads had a great opportunity to win the game, but forcing the ball to TO actually cost them the contest. Their 2 TE sets featuring Anthony (Big Tony) Fasano were a mistake. Teams simply cannot insert rookies into pressure cookers like this one and expect good things to happen.

Meanwhile, head coach Bill (The Tuna) Parcells is thinking about buying a cabin in the woods outside Dallas to contemplate his fate. In the course of about eight weeks, he has gotten more gray hair than Grecian Formula, and there appears to be no end in sight.

## **LAGNIAPPE**

### *Silk Degrees:*

Philly Fan singing *The Lido Shuffle* after Lito Shepherd's 102 yard TD return was classic. The Linc gets a well deserved rap for bad behavior, but this was just good fun. The Lito Shuffle was a direct result of Philly's film study since the Pokes tried to force it to TO, and they tend to go to Witten almost exclusively in the red zone. Boz Skaggs was a special guest of Iggles owner Jeffrey Lurid, continuing the celebrity in the owner's box trend in 2006. "Oh oh oh ooooooooooooooh! One more for the roooo-ooo-ooo-oooad."

### *Election Year:*

The negative political ads season is in full swing. Just check out the following ad from Chicago:

*"They say Lovie Smith is leading the Bears to their best season since 1985. But Lovie Smith selected convicted drug addict RB Curtis (The Butler) Benson in the first round. He allowed alcoholic backup QB Kyle Orton to ruin the 2005 season, then rewarded Brian (Beerbatter) Griese with a fat contract he hasn't worked a day to merit. And he made Brian Urlacher a team captain after Urlacher had a love child ---- OUT OF WEDLOCK. We can't afford another year of Lovie. Can you?"*

*This message was paid for by Brett Favre and The Citizens for Green Bay Committee.*

### *Sand Box II*

Field conditions continue to be an issue as The Blade and the Bank of America Stadium fields compete for Worst Sandbox in the NFL. The field at BOA cost rookie RB DeAngelo Williams an ankle and the center of the Blade is little more than painted green dirt. Now that Ketchup Field and Pall Bearer have cleaned up their playing surfaces, the time is right for NFL groundskeepers to clean up the Litter Box at Charlotte.

## **CELEBRITY OBIT OF THE WEEK**

Legendary Negro Leagues baseball star Buck O'Neill died this week at the age of 94. O'Neill emerged from anonymity after Ken Burns immortalized him in his baseball documentaries on PBS. O'Neill became a celebrity again for the first time at a ripe old age and used his fame to establish the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) in Kansas City. He served as honorary board chairman until his death.

O'Neill was a career .288 hitter with four seasons above .330. He sandwiched a WWII tour in the US Navy around a career that saw him become the second oldest man ever to play in a major league game. Despite his on and off field accomplishments, O'Neill was never inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

O'Neill was born in rural Florida, where he was denied the opportunity to attend high school due to Jim Crow laws. He eventually completed high school and some college before leaving Florida to play semi-pro ball with the legendary Satchel Paige. O'Neill signed with Memphis in the Negro American league in 1937, and was sold to the KC Monarchs, where he served as player/manager on two league titles.

The Chicago Cubs signed O'Neill as the first African American coach in 1962. Once there, he was instrumental in the development of future Hall of Famers Lou Brock and Ernie (Mr. Cub) Banks. Brock was later traded to the Cardinals and the Cubs have sucked ever since.

O'Neil became a KC Royals scout and he was named "Midwest Scout of the Year" in 1998. He parlayed his newfound fame into several national interviews and guest appearances on Late Night with David Letterman. He also became a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame Veterans Committee, playing a key role in the induction of eight Negro League players. His own nomination failed to garner him admission by a single vote.

O'Neill's tireless civil rights work and compelling narration of Burns' documentary are legendary. The failure of MLB to recognize him is a travesty. Then again, what do you expect from a league that contests the NLCS and ALCS games opposite each other on the same night - - - TWICE.

O'Neill's 95th birthday in November will be commemorated with a tribute to his long life in baseball and civil rights. Rest well, Buck. You will be missed.

## **ZEBRA OF THE WEEK**

The Look Man complained last week that the Zebras have been allowing offensive pick plays at an alarming rate in 2006. Ironically, this foul figured into the ZOTW selection in Week Five.

There were several contestants this week, as the Zebras affected the outcome of several games. Welcome to *The Flag is Right* with your host, Bob Barfer.

### *Browns at Carolina: Zebra Walt (Disney) Anderson*

Walt (Disney) Anderson is again the king of fantasy after overturning a fumble call and phantom roughing the passer fouls. The Browns held the Black Cats to 0 for 11 on third

down conversions, but still managed to lose. It may be the first time in the history of the NFL that a defense performed this feat without a reward.

Carolina fumbled after picking up a punt on the sideline. A Browns defender swiped at the punt returner, grabbing nothing but air, and the call on the field was a fumble recovered by the Browns deep in Carolina territory. Browns head coach Romeo (Montague) Crennel said, "He seemed to be fumbling the ball and then he gets hit. The ball came out and it's really close. You would have to say whether or not the guy had possession. That would be the question. They deemed that he had possession. They made the call they made." The Look Man said, "That call was better than Fantasia and Romeo needs to grow a set and quit mooning over chicks on balconies."

The roughing-the-passer call against DE Alvin McKinley was even more questionable, but Walt Disney and crew evened that up with an equally bogus RTP call on Carolina later.

#### Marine Mammals at Chowds: Zebra Ed (The Hulk) Hochuli

The Marine Mammals needed a win so badly that they even benched Daunte Culpepper for Hall of Fame backup Joey (Howudoon?) Harrington. Harrington played fairly well, but the defense was off the hizzy. They blanketed the Chowds in a very close ball game, leading up to The Call.

After a Tom (Zoolander) Brady red zone incomplection and a 2-yard run by RB Laurence (Boney) Maroney, Brady threw to WR Doug Gabriel at the right end zone pylon. The pass was badly under thrown, largely because Mammals CB Will Allen covered Gabriel like a blanket. The coverage was so good that Gabriel was all but invisible to Zoolander, and the ball hit Allen in the back.

Allen was called for defensive pass interference in the end zone and Tom Terrific hit FB Heath Evans with his first career TD on the very next play.

The Look Man would remind The Hulk that there is no face guarding in the NFL. The replay of that PI call clearly showed Allen turned to see the ball, on which he had a better chance for than the WR. What happened on Sunday was yet another example of Zebra Love for the Chowds, who only throw those passes because they have confidence that calls will go their way.

Tailpipe Chris (Sea) Reh thinks the Look Man is starting to sound like Michael Irvin. "Even the commentators said it was a good call! Even Tom Brady said it was a good call! (And he cannot tell a lie). SeaReh continued, " Granted the AFC east may be the least, but don't throw away your Jarvis Green's Boston baked beans recipe for this season's supa bowl pahtee. Dr. Evil and Mr. Moynihan will add more finger bling, and Brady gets the contract extension. And if you ask "what if" they face Denver in the playoffs - Pats win regardless of location. Nobody beats the good Dr. and his minions 4 times in a row."

The Look Man cannot deny that the Chowds would take Denver in any rematch, but that call was bogus. And by the way, Sea Reh was never charged in the death of Steve (Croc Hunter) Irvin.

Stillers at Bolts: Zebra Bill (Czech Winemaker) Vinovich

The Stillers got two in the grasp calls when Big Ben clearly coughed up the rock, and one tuck rule call. Neither affected the outcome, but if Big Ben had broken free the announcers would have intoned, "That was the greatest play ever by a QB who had an appendectomy less than two months ago!"

Tampa at New Orleans –Zebra Gene (Simmons) Steratore

Zebra Gene (Simmons) Steratore is one of two rookie Zebras in 2006 [Jerome (Bogomil) Boger is the other]. Gene Simmons left the music biz and was promoted to referee following the retirements of Bernie (The Kook) Kukar and Tom (Snow) White.

You may remember that Steratore took over for The Kook during a 2003 regular season game between Carolina and the Jynts. The Kook was drilled in the back while watching a bowl rolling out of bounds after a Jynts second punt block of the game. The ball was headed out at the one yard line, so Jynts DB Clarence (Matt) LeBlanc properly issued the palm shiver in order to get the rock and score. The Kook stayed prone for nearly five minutes before being carted off on a golf cart. LeBlanc never got the ball, and is no longer playing in the NFL. He did, however, get his own TV show on NBC.

The Look Man provided this backup data to show malice and forethought by the Kiss musician. In this game, he called the following:

- an offensive PI call on Corn Kings WR Joey Galloway erasing first and goal at the three;
- offsetting pass interference penalties in the end zone, eliminating a fourth-quarter Tampa TD;
- intentional grounding against Tampa late in the first half;
- a flag pickup on a 4<sup>th</sup> quarter block in the back on the Reggie Bush punt return for six.

Any one of these calls would have been ugly, but Steratore essentially stole this game from Tampa. A great defensive performance and a gutsy start by rookie QB Bruce (The New Polish Rifle) Gradkowski were wasted when the Zebras openly rooted for America's Team.

Tampa coach Jon (Chucky) Gruden commented, "There were some bizarre calls in that game. There were some calls that I hadn't heard in some time, but they're doing the best they can to officiate the game. I guess the tagline 'Chucky Gets Lucky' goes out the window for this game. It sucked."

The Look Man agrees. The Zebras have routinely allowed the pick play, and this particular pick was not even flagrant. There is no such thing as offsetting pass interference; it either is PI or a no call. Same thing for the block in the back on the punt return. Unless you are the most marketable player for a team in which the NFL has invested \$50 million for dome repair. So it's "Winner, winner, Cajun chicken dinner!" for Steratore. Congratulations, Gene. You are the Look Man's Zebra of the Week.

**THE LOOK AHEAD:**

Many of you have scoffed at the Look Man's picks, but after careful review, he is 13-9 on the year, and a stellar 4-2 in Week Five. It sounds even better when you realize that the

Look Man picked the 1-4 Browns to win every week. Remember, that number once again is 1-800-GET-RICH.

The Look Man will now go completely ape with the Week Six Picks.

*Bengals at Corn Kings [lead pipe lock]:*

The Ugly & Black is coming off a bye week to face a dangerous and winless Tampa team. How, you might ask, can a winless team hope to defeat the vaunted Bengals' offense? Here's your answer:

Tampa is ridiculous as a home dog, and getting 6.5 at home is a slap in the face of this proud defense. Granted, they have struggled against the run, but they were flat out robbed in New Orleans last week, and they will be steamed. Look for D-Coordinator Monte Kiffin to come out of a bag against the Toothless Tiggers, blitzing (Johnny) Carson Palmer as soon as he steps off the bus.

The Nati looks to replace struggling center Eric (Carmen) Ghiaciuc with the guy they should have signed instead of T Levi Jones. (The Other) Eric, as in Steinbach, has played well at guard and tackle, while Carmen Ghia has allowed Mr. Tonight Show to be treated like a piñata. Fourteen of the fifteen sacks allowed by the Nati have come with him at center, making folks wonder if he is doing his Ed McMahon impression at the line. You know, shouting, "HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEREZ JOHNNY!"

Nati Coach Marvin (Jerry) Lewis got irritated with the local press when they queried him about the 'surprise' lineup change following the bye week. "He's practiced there all summer," Lewis said of Steinbach at center. "Our plan is to be our plan. No different than it's been."

When asked directly if there were any changes to announce, he replied, "No. Would I ever announce it? It's not like when I broke up Martin & Lewis. The guy can't even sing. Hey, laaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaddddyyyy!"

Look for the Bengals to struggle without suspended WR Chris Henry, while Tampa's running game takes advantage of the Florida heat with a no-huddle offense that turns NT Sam (Brewmeister) Adams into foam. Tampa covers and wins, sending Nati Fan running for the supplement and painkiller cocktail.

*Iggles at New Orleans:*

The Iggles got way too much love in a game where Dallas had fourteen minutes more possession time than they did. Philly leads the league in offensive drives of 90 seconds or less, demonstrating their offensive laziness. New Orleans takes advantage of the let down in Week Six, pounding the injured Iggles and former Icon Donte Stallworth. Icons cover and win with a defense that is much better than advertised.

*Kansas City at Blitzburgh:*

Though it is always tough to win at Ketchup Field, especially when the Stillers have their backs to the wall, look for the Baby Backs to do well. Despite the likely loss of uber-back Larry (Grandmama) Johnson to a neck injury, they should cover. Backup QB Damon (The Omen III) Huard quietly has a QB rating over 100 since Trent (Long) Green got the guillotine. More importantly, Big Ben left the Bolts game with his right arm in a sling despite not showing up on the injury list.

The Look Man thinks that something is bad wrong with Ben, and he ain't talking about broken facial bones or an appendectomy. Hines Ward and Troy Polamalu are healthy, but the offense is still struggling due to Big Ben's weekly Jon Pickna impression. Red zone picks are a no-no, and unless the Stillers get a downhill runner, they will become even more predictable in the red zone.

Look for a low scoring affair, with the Baby Backs covering the 6.5. Given the amount of love the Zebras gave Big Ben last week, one has to wonder if they can continue to do enough to keep the Stillers from looking Cleveland square in the eye at 1-4.

*Chicago at Arizona – Monday Night Football on The Disney Network:*

The Chicago Bandwagon has really picked up steam with blowout wins the last few weeks. (T-)Rex Grossman has looked like the best QB in the NFC, and that alone is as scary as a fourth Jurassic Park movie. Still, the Look Man wonders if the Monsters of the Furniture Mart are for real.

Chicago has a couple of guys banged up this week, including DE Wally Ogunleye (means "sneaky quick" in Swahili) and WR Mark Clayton (Powell). Zona counters with an injury to WR Larry Fitzgerald (Kennedy), but the Look Man likes the depth of receivers in the desert, and questions the untested secondary of da Bearz.

The Deadbirds also have an inexperienced but massive offensive line that has done little to spring runners. 'Zona Head Coach Enny (No D) Green, who never met an overweight lineman he didn't like, ought to allow common sense will prevail, and keep rookie Matt Leinart healthy by running the freakin' football.

The back-story in the Big Windy has been that RB Thom (It's Not Unusual) Jones wants to prove that Arizona made a mistake in trading him, and that he aims to prove it on Monday Night. Unfortunately, there is a pretty talented RB in Phoenix, and his name is Edgerrin (The Edge) James. Not only can The Edge catch it out of the backfield, and run over defenders, he actually plays in a band with some dude named Bono.

Thomas Jones will want to show up his former team, but the Look Man likes the Phoenix D. DE Bertrand (Franken) Berry, LB Karlos Dansby and S Adrian Wilson are underrated, while DE Chike Okeafor and the rest of the Deadbirds are hoping to showcase the beautiful new Pink Taco Stadium in the desert. After all, who doesn't like pink tacos?

The combination of the Arizona heat and the overrated, over hyped Monsters of the Furniture Mart will lead to Shula and Company drinking champagne early in 2006. The Deadbirds haven't been on MNF for three years, and the Bears are ripe for the picking. Go 'birds!

## **EPILOGUE**

The NFL has been nothing short of dreadful in 2006. There are many bad teams, and the good ones are few and far between. This week will prove that parity has become an epidemic with several upsets. It is difficult to blame the Zebras with the level of sloppy play and quarterbacks that couldn't start for some college teams. Fans can only hope that something is done, and soon.