

The Look Man Report 2006 **Week XIX: Mail Call**

“We did not lose today. We got beat. We're obviously disappointed. This was a difficult game, and the [insert team name] did everything they needed to in order to win.” - Marty Schottenheimer, after every ignominious loss in his career

OPENING

The Look Man will dispense with the usual weekly game recap and instead go to the mailbag for Divisional Playoff Week. The Tailpipe Nation had strong opinions as the season comes to closure, and several of you made insightful comments on your favorite teams that needed to be shared. While the Tailpipe Nation is far from a democracy, it does have its share of politicians.

What the Look Man found interesting was all of the discussion on Martyball and its impact upon the New England – San Diego outcome. Even the look Man fell into the trap of calling for Smartyball. The truth is, the playoffs are a different tactical approach. The best win is the shortest, and that usually means running the football. This season the weather has not yet been a major factor impeding the passing game. Global warming may be an inconvenient truth, but it is a pressing reality that has minimized home field advantage in the National...Football...League. Physical Midwestern outdoor teams can no longer ignore the passing game against dome or warm climate finesse squads.

While most pundits state that the teams must be able to run the football and stop the run, the truth is somewhere in between. Coaches need to carefully pick the spots in which they toss out conservative calls and go for the jugular. It showed up last week when Brady and Grossman went deep at crunch time. Both plays occurred when the defense was on its heels, anticipating the old grind the clock running game. As a result, the pressure went back to their offenses, which folded under the duress.

The easy answer is that speed kills, but pressure mutilates. Belichick has turned this into an art form, and other coaches would do well to emulate it. Dr. Evil simply waited for Marty to grip, then pounced upon the errors caused by the choke. It's classic.

Without further pontification, the Tailpipe Mailbag:

MAIL BAG

Dear Look Man,

On Sunday morning while reading all the naysayer writers in the local and national media giving the Colts' no chance against the Ravens, I suddenly grew more relaxed and had a strong feeling the Colts' would win in B-more. I can remember the Colts going on the road and beating a number of good teams (i.e., Denver, Cincy, J'ville, NE, B-more, the Giants, Jets, and others). The stage was set for so-called upset because I think even the Ravens underestimated them too, especially with all the crap Ray-Ray and crew spewed during the week. In fact, before kickoff I fired up the grill and started cooking dinner like it was any other Sunday.

Now it's only fitting the Colts must go through the Pats to reach the Super Bowl. The Colt's should win on Sunday but the Pats won't make it easy. The Colts must deliver because the window of opportunity is closing fast on Dungy and Manny. If they don't do it this year they may never do it because of the resurgent Tennessee Titans with V. Young, the much improved Texans, and the under achieving Jags who are pissed at themselves.

The recent years of Colts' domination of the AFC South division is O-V-E-R, for those teams have built their teams to beat with the Colts.

*Calvin the Cookie Man, **Naptown, IN***

Cookie Man:

LM: You could lip read Dungy saying, "Money. Money. Money!" just after Vinatieri's kick to make it 15-6. It was sweet.

I hope you heard me laughing the Big Laugh when I read the line, "...I fired up the grill and started cooking dinner like it was any other Sunday..." It's good to know that while the Look Man is ackin' a fool on Game Day there are other folks out there performing their own rituals as well.

Dear Look Man:

Looks like you had a few points right on – odd that it was Tomlinson that caused a ruckus though. It's ok to dance over a sacked QB, but not at midfield after a game??? I was hoping LT would move on – like to see him win it all b4 he starts downhill in his career. Looking forward to your take on the Divisionals this week. Oh yeah, and if you didn't notice 3 of my 4 picks went teats up. All 4 if you include bears just eking out victory. I am the ANTI-guru.

And yes, I watched the [Matt] Light/Shawn Merriman tussle all day and even [my wife] said, "There – it happened again – holding". She knows a good bit about the game, and when the Chicas notice the rules or lack thereof, the sport could be seen as a bit of a sham and money scam.

I still want to believe there is some goodness and honesty in the world though – even as it pertains to sports. Otherwise, my conscience will have me watching Dancing with the Stars and American Idol. Oh wait, those are both rigged as well. Crap.

*Chuckles the Clang, **The Nasti Nati, OH***

Dear Clang:

You mean Emmitt Smith didn't really win Dancing with the Stars? Now, the Look Man is really angry!

Marty got robbed in that game. Merroidman was wearing OT Matt Light like a necktie most of the second half. The Look Man began worrying when Marty put the headset back on in the 3rd quarter. You knew it was over when he challenged that pick/fumble. If San Diego has one more timeout, they send the game to OT, and likely win it.

The Look Man has seen teams play the "we jumped on your logo" card before, and he concurs with The New LT. It is classless, especially when the Zebras have been pimping you all day on the field. New England got away with murder and they know it. Of course, they always do, so they have a sense of entitlement about it, which is even worse. Tony Corrente gets the **Zebra of the Week** award hoofs down for this effort.

As for the Shehawks, Holmgren blew it big time. His defense played out of its minds, and Matt (Hair Club for Men) Hasselbeck ought to be giving them felatio. The Look Man predicts America's New Team will go into The Big Windy and knock the frozen snot out of (T-)Rex and the Monsters of the Furniture Mart. Did you see Urlacher get blasted on that TD run by Alexander? Imagine what Deuce and Company will do on Sunday.

The Look Man also feels Tony (Hume Cronyn) Dungy and the Ponies will show up big on Sunday. Tom Brady's arm is hanging by a scarf after throwing it 51 times and here's the bad news: supermodel Giselle Bundchen was seen hanging outside the Chowds locker room after the San Diego game. Word on the street: she and Zoolander are knocking boots big time. "She was standing outside the locker room, just kind of leaning against the wall," said one observer. "No one noticed her, she was dressed like a high-school kid, just in jeans and a T-shirt. But she is gorgeous."

And you know that Celebrity Girlfriend = Bad Games on the field. Just ask Tony Romo.

Sadly, the NFL will not want two small market teams, so the Zebras will play into the outcomes of both games. They know a Colts-Boy Scouts matchup won't sell as many beers as Chicago-New England.

The Look Man



Brady's new squeeze

Hey Look Man:

I see you went 2 and 2 for the weekend. I thought that the Boy Scouts would move on and Marty losing in dramatic fashion could be expected. He is Charlie Brown and just

keeps lining up for the kick and ending up on his head when Lucy pulls the ball away. I didn't see the nonsense at the end of the game. I think that New Orleans will be served up a dose of Super Bowl fun but the game that has my attention would be Dr. Evil V Hume Cronyn. I would think that Dr. E is so deep in the Colts psyche that they are damaged goods.

BRAIN, Cleveland, OH

LM: Marty choked as usual, but they got jobbed by the Zebras. That's why they were fighting mad on and off the field. It would have been nice if Bernie Kosar actually threw down after The Drive in '89. Of course, the Dawg Pound did pelt John (The Mascot) Elway with D cell batteries before, during and after that game. The Zebras had to allow holding simply to get them out of the Dawg Pounders throwing range.

Hume Cronyn versus Dr. Evil will be epic. The Look Man has a feeling Hume goes Cocoon this time, because Brady put it up 51 times last week. His arm will fall off if they can't run the ball in Indy.

Dear Look Man:

*I agree the Pats celebration went a little too far, but LT shouldn't say they have no class. Maybe LT needs to be reminded of how they acted last year in New England ... Cornerback Drayton Florence : "F**k New England and their team," Wade Phillips also talked smack. LT also needs to be reminded of how many arrests the Chargers had this past year including drug trafficking, getting into shoot-outs with police or being investigated by the FBI for selling knock-off shoes, drunk driving, etc. The Bolts were just lucky the Bungals were around this year.*

New England played to win the game, San Diego played not to loose the game. Marty was in Pats territory 7 times and scored 0 points. Marty can't take the pressure of the playoffs. San Diego deserves to lose again next year for keeping a head coach that chokes in the postseason.

I'm taking the Pats over the Colts. Manning & Dungy are starting to remind me of Marty. Manning has too much trouble with the 3-4 defense. Tom Brady is 10-0 in domes.

I'm also taking the sAints over Bears. NO is HOT right now and I just can't pick the Bears because they are playing average ball, at best. I'm still not impressed with the NO secondary, so if Grossman has time, he could hit Berrian on some big plays. NO offense can and will score some points against the Bears mediocre D. It is amazing how different the D is without Tommie Harris! This game could even be a scorefest.

J-Jack, Chicago, IL

LM: The Look Man partially agrees with your picks, but for different reasons. Once the Boy Scouts knock off the Monsters of the Furniture Mart, the NFL will not want to see the Ponies win in the late game. They simply cannot sell commercial time for two small market teams. No one on the East Coast would watch the NO and IND Super Bowl.

As for the Bolts, the Look Man sides with the New LT, but winning is the ultimate

deodorant. Marty choked (again) and LT would do well to get traded to an up-and-coming team like, say, Cleveland.

BTW, the Look Man would love to be in the Big Windy when yo boy Neumann starts poking fun at SuperFan. That teasing that he gave Fighting Irish Fan at *Joe's on Weed* was epic. The Look Man thought the Domer was going to start crying.

Dear Look Man:

Great stuff, despite all the Pat hatin'. I'm looking very much forward to receipt of this week's LMR. My only request is that you continue to pick against the Pats.

Seriously, this week's games should be good. I don't think my boys can count on the Tony Dungy screwing up as bad as Marty did on several occasions last week to help them. Schottenheimer has really become a parody of himself. I'm also a little concerned that Peyton is due for a big game.

Of course, my worst case scenario is the Colts winning on a Vinatieri FG. I'd like to see Belichick really test the Colts run D. I think their success thus far is somewhat illusory, having come against a one dimensional offense (KC), and a no dimensions one (BALT).

If the Pats can run the ball and Brady is sharp, the Pats should be in good shape. If they can get a lead, all the better. That's when Peyton usually starts to suffer from tightening sphincter syndrome.

[My wife] got me a 50" plasma for X-mas, so, as you can imagine, it's very difficult to drag me from the basement during this time of year.

Kief, *The Dirty Dirty, GA*

LM: Brady rarely has two bad games in a row, but he hasn't played well in weeks. The Jets dropped four picks, the Bolts dropped at least two, yet Zoolander still won. Somehow, it seems Manning will come out of his slump before Brady, especially in light of his most recent dalliance with supermodel Giselle Bundchen.

Look for the Ponies to pound the rock in order to set up big games for Reggie (Millionaire Playboy Bruce) Wayne and TE Dallas (Dwight) Clark. No TSS for Archie's Boy as Dungy and Manning break the string of bad luck this week.

Afterwards, Belichick goes postal, saying, "Manning is a stiff. He throws like a girl, and frankly we should have beaten their heads in. Now get out of my way before I shove you like a punkass cameraman."

Hey, Look Man,

As the Starhead fans fade into Next-Year status, I must say...

Put Down The Crack Pipe.

The "correct call" on Witten's first down? No mention of the phantom interference from Newman? No mention of the waxed/wet football, where every other sports analyst is on it like a duck on a June bug? Not even the zebras making "make-up" calls in favor of Seattle for their abomination in last year's Super Bowl? As Parcels asked Simms after an end-zone pick, "are we watching the same game?"

Yeah, the Seahags advanced, and yes, Dallas wouldn't have survived Chicago's performance today, but that does NOT let the Look Man off the hook for so quickly dismissing the Wild Card weekend! As another noted Michael said, "Fredo (Look Man), I know it was you! You broke my heart!"

GB Shaw, Albuquerque, NM

Dear GB:

Sorry Baby, but the Zebra Walt (Disney) Anderson got it mainly right in Coffeetown. The Witten call was correct, despite the precedent of no actual video angle to support it. That was a great tackle by Tatupu, and it deserved to be rewarded. Despite the poor job done by Disney throughout the season, he actually got one or two right in this game in the best tradition of Red Cashion.

As for the wet ball, it did look a little shiny. I have never been in favor of the K-Balls for PATs and KOs, and this looked fishy at best. It reminded me of the New England K-Ball that somehow got in front of a heater prior to Vinatieri's 48-yarder in the playoffs a couple of years back.

Seattle got calls, but Parcels blew up with bad coaching. He was no less guilty than Holmgren in the ridiculous loss to da Bears. As soon as the Walrus went for it on that bizarre 4th down late in regulation, I knew it was over for the 'hawks. By any measure, they should have beaten Chicago and been headed for the Big Easy right now.

In point of fact, I believe the Pokes could've knocked off the Bears. Their short yardage running game is much more effective than Seattle's, and they have bigger receivers, the Bears' Achilles. Seattle was something like 1 of 5 on third or fourth down and two yards or less. It's an awful stat, but the Look Man was surprised the commentators failed to mention why Pro Bowl FB Mack Strong missed most of the game. His blocking was the difference maker.

The bright side is that Romo got a deal with Geico insurance. The Gecko's desire to keep his personal life out of the media ended in him being replaced by The Place for Ribs.

And pass that torch. My bowl went out!

The Look Man



Geico's latest hook stars Ribs King

LAGNIAPPE

Stuck on Gilligan's Island?

Bears coach Lovie (Thurston Howell III) Smith has still not finalized a contract extension. While the media revealed that Mrs. Howell had broken off contract talks, Bears reps called that a "bad choice of words."

"We mutually agreed to focus on winning the Super Bowl and resume discussions after the playoffs are over," Bears negotiator Stone Phillips said. "I don't want anything to be misconstrued. There is really not a big story here."

Smith has one year remaining on an agreement that paid him \$1.35 million in 2006. At least two Genocide Vix assistant coaches make twice that amount. Miami Marine Mammals D-Coordinator Dom Capers recently inked a three-year deal worth nearly \$3 million annually. Apparently the NFL likes coaches with toupees more than the Jordan look.

Smith told the Chicago Sun-Times last week "we're not negotiating," when asked about Bobby Petrino's deal with the Dirty Birds would affect him. Petrino has little zero head coaching experience in the NFL, but now has a money printing press in his basement. Smith, on the other hand, has less than eight losses in two seasons which include two NFC Norse crowns.

"We talked about parameters and decided to resume those discussions after the playoffs," Phillips said. "I have made it clear in no uncertain terms of our desire to have Lovie as the long-term head coach of the Bears. As long as he is willing to make less than many assistant coaches, we can sign him long term. We don't want a Ginger vs. Mary Ann situation here. After all, we don't want to be marooned during a three hour game, a three hour game."

Ron Mexico's Laughing Tobacco

ATL's QB Michael Vick was stopped by Miami International Airport security Wednesday. He was forced to surrender a water bottle that included a secret compartment containing a residue "closely associated with marijuana," police said. Vick was detained from his flight to the Dirty Dirty and his reluctance aroused suspicion by airport security screeners.

Police have not filed charges, but Dirty Bird management is not happy. "He's the face of our franchise, and apparently that face has very red eyes," said owner Arthur Blank(man). "We understand he and Ricky Williams were kicking it on South Beach, and we believe that may have some bearing. At least he wasn't carrying The Whizzinator, though."

Vick was confused by the attention, saying, "Iss juss a li'l pot! We have this tobacco in my country all the time. You all know how I like to get down."

Marty Tree

Despite getting no love from the media, Marty Schottenheimer has been a very successful NFL coach for over two decades. Marty's protégés got their first jobs with him, and many are now running their own teams. Check out the list of Martyball Disciples:

- Bill (Iron Chin) Cowher, Blitzburgh Stillers
- Gunther Cunningham, Kansas City Baby Backs
- Tony (Hume Cronyn) Dungy, Indianapolis Ponies
- Lindy Infante, Green Bay Cheeseheads (1988-1991)
- Herman Edwards, Kansas City Baby Backs
- Brian Schottenheimer, New York Jets O-coordinator

Marty Ball emphasizes a running attack that typically calls for a run on first and second down, with a pass on third and long, and a punt on fourth down. Cleveland and Baby Back Fan refer to this scheme as "Run, Run, Pass, Punt." Schottenheimer's game plan and politics are just to the right of Attila the Hun, with a focus on defense.

Despite all of this history, last Sunday's performance may require an addendum to include a gag reflex when facing superior coaches like Belichick and Shanahan.

THE LOOK AHEAD:

New Orleans At Chicago (-2.5):

The Boy Scouts head north to the Big Windy for an NFC Championship with da Bears. While QB (T-)Rex Grossman avoided extinction last week with a few good throws, he will be facing the third ranked pass defense in the league on Sunday. More importantly, the Monsters of the Furniture Mart must defend the hottest remaining offense in the NFC. Something's gotta give, and it looks to be the MOTFM.

Several Boy Scouts have extensive playoff experience, including DT Hollis Thomas, LB Mark Simoneau, QB Drew (Cool) Brees, and CB Mike (Spuds) McKenzie. They take on a young Bears squad that will be at the mercy of a Jurassic QB and a coach whose clock management is less than spectacular.

Look for Sean Payton to learn from his near miss last week with Philly and pound the football. The Bears have struggled without DT Tommie Harris, and barring a special teams explosion, New Orleans should mirror the NFC Championship win by Carolina two years ago.

New England at Indianapolis (-3):

The epic matchups between these two teams continues, with All World QBs Peyton Manning and Tom (Zoolander) Brady going 'bow to 'bow yet again. Indy is the hotter team at this juncture, though they would love to be the underdog. Their defense is playing the run much better of late, and Laurence (Predator) Maroney and the Corey (the Meat Tenderizer) Dillon will test them mightily. Good thing, too, because Brady may need Tommy John surgery in the off-season after putting the ball up a gazillion times this season.

The Look Man is worried about the Zebra Love for the Chowds, especially in light of the potential for two small market teams to go to the Bowl. But the Ponies rise up and conquer the Chowds on Sunday, making their first trip to the championship since the days of Johnny U. Ponies win on the foot of Adam (Money) Vinatieri.

EPILOGUE

The Divisional Playoffs were excellent last weekend, but two home teams haven't won since 1996 when the Cheeseheads and Chowds matched up in the Bowl. Parcels refused to ride the team plane home after that one, and retired until Jerry Jones rescued him from the scrap heap.

As much as the NFL would like to avoid two small market teams, it would be fitting. After all, the diminutive Prince will be providing the halftime entertainment. Apparently Perry Como was unavailable.

Peace,

The Look Man

**NFL Point Spreads AFC & NFC Conference Championship
Playoff Games - NFL Football Spread Conference
Championships - NFL Playoff Games 1/21, 2007**

Date & Time	Favorite	Spread	Underdog
1/21 3:00 ET	At Chicago	-2.5	New Orleans
1/21 6:30 ET	At Indianapolis	-3	New England