

The Look Man Report 2006 **Week XX: Ponies, and Bengals, and Bears, Oh My!**

"We're not giving away any football players who could hurt us later. I don't mind people thinking I'm stupid, but I don't want to give them any proof." - Bum Phillips, Houston Oilers coach

OPENING

OA (Bum) Phillips is the football equivalent of Yogi Berra, and the above quotation could be just as applicable to Chowds head coach Bill Belichick. Dr. Evil narrowly missed a fourth championship after jettisoning LB Willie McGinest, WR Deion Branch and K Adam (Money) Vinatieri. On Sunday, the chickens came home to roost, as Money contributed to an incredible comeback win by the Indianapolis Ponies.

As the 2006 NFL season makes its final turn, the Look Man is thrilled to have witnessed some incredible action. The Conference Championships were simply the crowning glory to a season that saw New Orleans rise from the ashes of a 3-13 season to nearly represent the NFC in the Bowl.

The Ponies overcame the weight of expectations, becoming this season's version of the Blitzburgh Stillers down the stretch. Chicago has parlayed a ball-hawking defense and streaky QB into a championship run in the weak NFC. New England nearly reclaimed its championship ways despite an injury depleted defense and a receiver challenged offense. It has been a season for the ages and Sunday did not disappoint.

Meanwhile, the rest of the league keeps on turning. Cincinnati had its ninth player arrest of the season. Bill (Tuna) Parcels decided to promote Grecian Formula instead of coaching the melodrama in Allas (no D). And Blitzburgh hired a replacement to Bill (Iron Chin) Cowher in former Hornheads D-Coordinator Mike Tomlin. The Rooney Rule requiring minority interviews has been effective, and we can expect even more minority hires in a copy cat NFL.

As football fans everywhere look forward to a battle between two original NFL teams in Chicago and Indy, there really couldn't be a better matchup. Both teams scored a remarkable 427 points en route to the showdown in Miami. Lovie (Thurston Howell III) Smith and Tony (Hume Cronyn) Dungy become the first and second African American coaches in the Bowl by employing the same Cover Two defense. As dissimilar as the media portrays these teams, both offenses are predicated on a strong running game enhanced by vertical passing. Overall, it should be quite a contest.

For those who say the Colts will win easily, the Look Man has four words: THE Ohio State University. Manning may struggle under the pressure, and the Look Man thinks the game will be a shootout. It won't be high scoring, but Bears DT Tank Johnson will likely pull out his jammy and flat blast at least one Colts player. A Cook Count Judge ruled Tank could go to Miami, as long as he stayed out of trouble. David Caruso of CSI Miami is conducting an investigation to determine whether the judge is a season ticket holder for the Bears. With Tommie Harris out, the Bears would have little chance to win without Tank.



Horatio: Bring Tank....to me.

But seriously, folks, the AFC dominance in seven of the last nine championships is built upon better talent. One of the two NFC winners, St. Louise, barely withstood a late challenge by the Flaming Thumbtacks to garner the Lombardi. A more talented Oakland team was simply outcoached in its blowout loss to the Dungy-less Expensive Corn Kings of Tampa Bay.

Without further crime solving, the Week in Review:

WEEK IN REVIEW

New Orleans (14) At Chicago (39):

The Boy Scouts and da Bears met in an exciting NFC Championship in the Big Windy. Unfortunately, Boy Scouts coach Sean Payton decided to get cute again, and instead of running the frakkin' football, he decided to put the game in the hands of Drew (Cool) Brees and his youthful receiving corps. The result was predictable as freshman sensation Marques (Charles) Colston went Watergate with a key fumble on a first down reception.

After making a nice ball adjustment, Colston's fumble occurred while trying to get YAC. The Bears have the third rated scoring defense in the NFL, and their nose for the football was like a Brutus terribulus locating honey. Despite a New Orleans defense that held them to three FGs in the red zone, they eventually allowed QB (T-)Rex Grossman to go deep a few times with success.

New Orleans came roaring back with a momentum swinging 88-yard TD swing pass to Reggie (Dubya) Bush on a wheel route. Dubya taunted LB Brian Urlacher the last ten yards before executing a "mission accomplished" flip into the Hizzie. Needless to say, karma prevailed, and the ticked off Monsters of the Furniture Mart made Cool Brees pay for the lack of respect.

Brees was called for grounding while in the end zone, and the two point safety gave the Bears a lead they would not relinquish. Ironically, Brees then went Easy Bake Oven with turnovers that kept putting the ball back into the short arms of T-Rex, who devoured up a tired Boy Scouts defense like the guy in the Jurassic Park toilet.

Payton may be off the hook because it seemed that RB Deuce McAllister was injured on a first quarter carry. Dubya also seemed to be showing the ill effects of the decleater the previous week courtesy of Iggles CB Sheldon Brown. He avoided contact on punt returns, choosing to go out of bounds instead. The Bears' vulnerability to the run and big wideouts was never really exploited as a result. The ultimate ignominy is that T-Rex threw for only 140 yards in the contest, largely because the New Orleans defense spent more time on the field than the Zebras.

Payton deserved the Coach of the Year award in 2006, but he needs to learn to dance with the girl he brung instead of going for the 'genius' label. The Look Man is now awarding Payton with the *Sam Wicky Wacky Wyche Award* for hubris. Instead of going to Miami, Payton and the Fleur de Lis will now be going fishing in the bayou.

The good news: Payton is now doing a new series of TV commercials. The Look Man was able to obtain the script from a Tailpipe on Madison Avenue, and it goes as follows:

Sean Payton is a real Geico customer, so we brought in Burt Bacharach to translate his thoughts for this commercial.

Payton: "I was coaching in the conference championship when I got rear ended."

Bacharach (singing): "I was hit --- in the reeeeearr."

Payton: "All I could think about was that funny little lizard – Dusty Baker."

Bacharach (singing): "I hope I never get hit in the reeeeeaaaarr again..."

Announcer: "Geico.com"

There are now plans for Payton to appear with Little Richard and Peter Graves in a series of additional spots. No word on whether Payton will be putting on tangerine lip gloss to meet his owner at the door. He's one lucky woman.

New England (29) at Indianapolis (34):

These two teams have provided many epic matchups and this one didn't disappoint. This game had everything: fumble recovery TDs by O-linemen; a D-lineman catching a TD pass; Zebra Love for both teams; and a number of dropped balls by wide receivers. The script would make Hollywood script writer Joe Esterhaus blush, but Truth is stranger than fiction sometimes.

After taking a 21-6 halftime lead, Tom (Zoolander) Brady and the Chowds looked to be headed to a rematch with the Bears, who they throttled earlier in the season. Instead, Tony (Hume Cronyn) Dungy gave his best *Cocoon* speech at halftime, and the Ponies came out stampeding.

Peyton Manning got hot at the right time, throwing sweet seam routes to Dallas (Dwight) Clark, and sideliners to little used TE Bryan Fletcher. The running game got going when Dungy installed veteran Dominic Rhodes. Rhodes used his downhill running style to tenderize the Chowds, setting up Joseph (Live and Let) Addai's slashers.

The Indy defense played the run much better in the second half, shutting down Laurence (Predator) Maroney and the Corey (the Meat Tenderizer) Dillon with hard shots. But the ultimate game changer had to be the dropped balls by WR Reche (Butterfingers) Caldwell, who dropped two TD's and a first down. Judging by his eyeballs, Caldwell was

the most surprised guy in the RCA Dome. Seriously, Reche, see a doctor baby, because you may need some medication.

The Chowds went three and out on a possession that could have iced it will test them mightily. Manning went to work on them, engineering a long drive that put the Ponies in the red zone with about 1:30 on the clock. The drive included a near fumble by Reggie (Millionaire Playboy Bruce) Wayne that would've sealed the win for New England. Instead Batman recovered his own muff, the Ponies got a questionable roughing call on some rare zebra love, and the ball ended up inside the five. A FG would have put them up one, but the Ponies crossed them up with a sweet draw play to Live and Let Addai.

The call was pure genius, especially since Indy used its last timeout, and was more than two yards away from pay dirt. They almost always throw in this situation, and Dungy's call made Bill (Dr. Evil) Belichick blink. Belichick's clock management down the stretch was questionable, but his defense was so tired that it was actually his only option.

When Zoolander and the Chowds retook the field with 60 seconds remaining, Peyton wouldn't even look up for fear of seeing the unthinkable. Instead, Zoolander threw a rare pick to replacement CB Marlon Jackson (Five) and the game was over.

When asked by sideline reporter Solomon Wilcotts why they threw the pick, Dr. Evil replied, "Because we have Tom Brady, that's why! Have you seen his frickin' girlfriend???" Even I want to have sex with the guy!" He then shoved Solly to the turf and stomped off in a huff.

So the Ponies go back to the Bowl for the first time since the days of Johnny Unitas. Oddly, the only thing more epic would have been if the Ponies had won on the foot of Adam (Money) Vinatieri. If that had happened, Belichick would've been the anti-Bum Phillips. Look for him to get Brady some receivers as well as patching his linebacking corps in 2007.



No wonder Brady was smiling after losing

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

It was a bad omen when the Look Man saw Terry (Bottlegate) MacAulay. Bottlegate is best known for reviewing a play in Cleveland following another play in between. On Sunday, he nearly did it again on the review of the 4th quarter sack/fumble by Brees.

While it was obviously a fumble recovery by Bears DE Adewale Ogunleye (means “*Bad Mo Fo*” in Swahili), it seemed as if the Saints got the snap off before the whistle blew. The flag alone doesn’t stop the play.

But it didn’t stop there. Bottlegate bounced another Bud Light with the following calls:

- Offensive PI on WR Terrance Copper pick play;
- Fumble on KO return by KR Michael Smith, whose elbow, knee and hip were on the ground;
- Delayed safety call on Brees’ shot-put out of the end zone.

Although he won’t be calling the Super Bowl, Bottlegate will receive an all-expense paid trip courtesy of the Chicago Sun Times. Browns Fan also chipped as many cases of Bud Light as MacAulay can catch with his hat. They don’t pack much of a wallop according to former Browns Prez Carmen Policy.

Terry MacAulay, you are the Look Man **Zebra of the Week**. Thanks for ensuring only one small market team gets to sniff the Lombardi.

The NFL has selected Tony Corrente (means “rush to judgment” in Italian) to officiate the Big One. The NFL equivalent of NBA Zebra Ed Rush made the Week Two Genocide Vix at Pokes Sunday Nighter into a flag fest with 40 hankies for 207 yards.

Maybe the NFL wants even more commercial time available, because this guy is a human rain delay waiting to happen. His crew will also include the Paganelli brothers officiating for the first time together in the Bowl, so its brothers versus brothas when they toss their flags. Carl and Perry Paganelli, the Look Man would like you to meet Hume Cronyn and Lovie Howell III.

LAGNIAPPE

Bear Down/Mount Up

The Chicago Bears fight song is from 1941 and it sounds like it. If you haven’t heard the tune from the guy who brought us, *If I Knew You Were Coming, I’d Have Baked a Cake*, you haven’t been to Chicago this year.

The Old School NFL fight songs has the following lyrics:

*Bear Down, Chicago Bears.
Make every play clear the way to victory!
Bear Down, Chicago Bears.
Put up a fight with a might so fearlessly!*

*We'll never forget the way you thrilled the nation,
With your T formation.*

Bear Down, Chicago Bears.

And let them know why you're wearing the crown.

*You're the pride and joy,
of all Illinois.*

Chicago Bears, Bear Down!

The 'crown' reference in the third stanza was the subject of Arizona Coach Enny (No 'D') Green after his ignominious Monday Night meltdown. Either that or a reference to Tyrannosaurus rex, the QB of the MOTFM. As you may know, 'rex' means 'king' in Latin.

The Ponies are thinking of coming up with their own fight song by John Cougar Mellancamp. The song will include a video and the lyrics, *"this is oouuuurrrrr country."*

Some Like it Hot:

The Look Man took the Official Wife of the Look Man to Miami for a long birthday weekend last week. After spending four days on South Beach, the Look Man can join the chorus of folks who want all future Super Bowls to be held in Miami, New Orleans, or San Diego.

The women of SoBe are so hot that they change the temp whenever they walk down the street. Tack on the combination of strippers and hookers (who were in full force) and you have the hottest women this side of Rio de Janeiro. If you don't believe in love at first sight, the Look Man challenges you to spend a night in Miami. It'll make you a believer.

Recoil:

Chicago's DT Tank Johnson has been one of the most requested interviews on Media Day, appearing in a do-rag, dreds and sunglasses. Johnson, who has been arrested three times in the last year, went on the offensive. "It's easy to clump somebody. When you see me walking down the street, I don't look like you. I don't talk like you and I don't walk like you. I've given you guys the opportunity to stereotype me like that. It's unfortunate. It's just the way I am. I'm young. I'm black. I've got tattoos. I've got dreds. It is what it is."

What it really is, is a knucklehead of epic proportions. Johnson's latest legal entanglement involves police seizure of nearly 600 pounds of ordnance, marijuana, and semi-automatic weapons. Afterwards, his best friend and bodyguard was shot to death at a Chicago night club that Johnson was attending. He will likely parlay his record inot a payday by joining the Bengals after this season.

Tank Johnson is scheduled to appear on The Chappelle Show half-time episode of "When Keeping it Real Goes Wrong." Halftime entertainer Prince will re-enact his Charlie Murphy basketball vignette, repeatedly dunking on Murphy while wearing his trademark heels and ruffled shirt.

Rexy Gator - the Swinging Alligator of the Swamp:

Could 2007 be the Year of the Gator? The University of Florida won an NCAA basketball championship last March, beat Ohio State for a BCS football title in January, and has a Number One rated B-ball team again.

But the real news is that there are four former Gators on the Bears roster: T-Rex Grossman, Alex Brown, Todd Johnson and Ian Scott. Each is hoping to do the “gator bite” on Sunday in their home state. Indy does not have a player from the Gator Nation on their roster.

The Gators are not the only Florida link for Chicago. DE Adewale Ogunleye is one of five former Miami Marine Mammals playing for the Bears. QB Brian (Beer Batter) Griese, OT John St. Clair, TE Desmond Clark and LB Brendon Iwantabanjo all wore the teal and orange before being picked up by Chicago.

“We like to call it *Miami Vice North* in Chicago, said Ogunleye. “We let Griese play Sonny Crockett, and I get to be Tubbs. We used to have Sammy Sosa portraying Edward James Olmos because his skin is so bad. Griese just kills me when he does Don Johnson’s high falsetto. I think it’s natural, though, because he got hit a lot in Miami.”

THE LOOK AHEAD:

Colts at Bears (+7.0)

The matchup of old school NFL squads will be held at a decidedly new school location in South Florida. The Ponies reappear after nearly four decades away from the Big Tent, while the Bears just missed their 20th anniversary. This Bears team is pretty tame compared to the '85 squad, which lost their only game of the season to the Marine Mammals on a Monday Night classic.

Dan Marino carved them up like a Seminole feast with perfect slant patterns underneath their 46 defense. His smallish wideouts were able to navigate past the bruising linebackers, constituting the equivalent of a short running game. No other team even came close, and the '85 Bears punished the Chowds 46-10 in the Super Bowl.

The NFL decided to Tiger Proof the league after that Bears team turned scoring into a Soduku puzzle. The league made contact illegal after five yards, loosened up holding rules, and generally gave offenses carte blanche simply to ensure that public maulings would evaporate from the NFL landscape.

As a result, we now have offenses like the St. Louise Greatest Show on Turf and the recent Indy teams that spread you out, then carve you up with precision passing. Manning broke the 50 TD pass barrier a few years ago, as offenses turn the two minute drill into an art form.

Indy decided it could wait a little longer after being absent for 36 years. Like a heavyweight champ, they forced the Bears to show up early and wait for their entrance until late Monday night. The Ponies figured to do things differently after losing to the Jets in '69 and the Pokes in '71. Dungy explained the delay by saying, “There have been times when there's only been one week between the Super Bowl, and we've also had three really emotional games, so I wanted to give the guys an extra day off. Plus, I needed some more time on my home world to get even younger.”

Despite Hume Cronyn’s strategy, the media blitz began as soon as they touched down in Fort Lauderdale. Two-time MVP Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison addressed the media on Tuesday, deflecting questions about Manning’s bad thumb. “A lot of folks are

asking me about Peyton's thumb. Actually, most of them are TV commercial producers who were worried about him doing product placement," said Harrison. "I don't know why they haven't asked me about my wrist. I think they believe I am really Don Cheadle. His Super Bowl commercials were epic, but I don't get any love."

The Bears are playing the "no respect card", especially team leader Brian Urlacher. "We are the worst 13-3 team in history, apparently," said the head MOTFM. "I am not even sure we can stay on the same field as Indy."

This game will come down to matchups, pitting the speedy Bears against the similar Ponies. Both teams have been erected using lighter, faster defensive players, but the Bears have the speed advantage on offense. WRs Bernard Berrian (Swallow), Rashid Davies and Mark Clayton all have speed to burn, and TE Desmond (Sanford & Sons) Clark is no slouch. The Bears would like to pound the lighter Ponies with the run, then burn them deep with vertical passing. The game plan is very similar to the one both teams employed in the conference championships.

Look for Bears to throw when RB Thomas (It's Not Unusual) Jones is in backfield and run when Cedric (The Butler) Benson appears. The Butler struggles with pass protection, leaving T-Rex vulnerable to extinction. The Bears crossed up New Orleans with this tendency by throwing in the red zone, but look for Tony Dungy to deny TE Desmond (Sanford & Son) Clark in this situation.

Other matchups:

PR Devin Hester (Prynn) vs. special teamer Marlin Jackson (Five) – Marlin is a special teams maven, but looked lackluster when he was forced into a starting role based upon the injury to CB Nick Harper. Hunter (the Punter) Smith will really need to kick away from Hester Prynn and avoid out-kicking his coverage, or he will be the one wearing the Scarlet Letter.

A lot has been made of the Brian Urlacher vs. Dallas (Dwight) Clark matchup on the seam routes. Urlacher, a former safety, has been effective at getting deep in the seam against NFC opponents, taking away key throwing lanes. His hands are soft enough to gobble up passes over the middle, and he will be playing the Woody Harrelson role from *White Men Can't Jump*.

The Bears miss safety Mike Brown's speed and hitting ability and backup Todd Johnson is too slow to help. Colts WR Reggie Wayne should have room to beat CB Nathan Vasher over the middle. The other side features WR Marvin (Mr. Peanut Head) Harrison vs. CB Charles (Peanut) Tillman. The advertising opportunities could be too hard for Planter's to pass up here. (Announcer Guy: *Things can go nuts in a world where both guys are legumes. It's Peanut vs. Peanut, and this time its for real!!*).

On offense, the Bears would like to negate Indy's pass rush with a strong running game. Thomas Jones has been crooning his way to a big off-season payday with strong running. The Bears want The Butler to be the Man in 2007, so the Super Bowl is a great opportunity for Jones to audition for his own show in an NFL town near you.

Robert Mathis and Dwight Freeney will make minced meat of the Bears OTs John Tait and Fred Miller unless TE Desmond Clark stays in to help. If he does, T-Rex will have fewer receiving options, and he could go Easy Bake Oven with turnovers. Look for

Jurassic QB to go deep in order to set up the run and tire out the Ponies. If he has early success, the Bears will make it a game. If he stinks like petroleum, it will be a long day for the Bears in Miami.

Just for the record, T-Rex is the most bizarre QB ever. He can go 2 for 11 one quarter, then fire two or three thirty yard frozen ropes. He has three games with single digit QB ratings and won one of them. Never before has there been such an X-factor at the helm of a team. Unless, of course you count Baltimore's Trent Dilfer, a guy who once went eleven consecutive quarters without a TD pass and still won a ring.

But this game is all about the trenches, and both teams have excellent linemen. The Look Man particularly likes Indy C Jeff Saturday, a walk on free agent and two time Pro Bowler. Everyone knows that O-linemen are the smartest guys on the gridiron, but this guy is able to translate Manning's gesticulations into line calls and still knock 300 pound DT Vince Wilfork into oblivion like he did on Addai's draw play TD run. He's great.

On the other side of the field, Bears C Olin Kreutz has collected a few Pro Bowl invites of his own, as well as giving two broken jaws during his career. The most recent occurred when he punched out T Fred Miller at an FBI shooting range last season. Miller had just broken a beer bottle on Olin's dome. The Look Man is guessing the Bears don't know that alcohol and gunpowder don't mix.

The defensive lines are both solid, though Chicago has the advantage here. A big part of that advantage is on the bench in DT Tommie (Pinball Wizard) Harris. The PW is missing the game behind a torn hammy, and the stats for Urlacher have shown it. Urlacher is not even the best LB on the team, as that honor goes to Lance Briggs, who the Bears are expected to franchise in the off-season. Urlacher's stats have been padded by playing behind a Pro Bowl DT for his entire career (Ted Washington, Pat Williams, Harris, etc). The guy doesn't even have one sack in the 2006 season.

The front offices of the teams are also star studded. Indy GM Bill Polian arrived after losing four Bowls in Buffalo, elevating the Ponies' talent with shrewd picks. Though they have lost excellent players like LBs Mike Peterson and Marcus Washington, and RB Edgerrin (Jesse) James to free agency, they continue to reload and prosper.

The Indy coaching staff includes brilliant OC Tom (Roger) Moore, who was Dungy's coach at the University of Minnesota as a young QB. Moore spent thirteen glorious years in Blitzburgh, serving as OC for SB wins in XIII (Dallas) and XIV (Rams), He also served as OC in Detroit during the playoff years with Barry Sanders, and his son Herm Moore, where they led the NFL in total offense. And who can forget his starring role as 007 back in the day?

Moore and Dungy have a great bond. Both are former QBs, and they worked together for the 70's Super Stillers. Dungy's dismissal from the Expensive Corn Kings is still one of the most heinous firings in NFL history, by an owner who couldn't spell NFL if you spotted him the 'N' and the 'F.'

The staff is rounded out by former Bears DB Leslie Frazier, former Bengals coach Ron Meeks, former Buffalo TE Pete Metzelaars, and Howard Mudd and John Teerlinck, the best line coaches in the business. All told, that's quite a staff.

Chicago can't really compare, despite having Dungy protégé Lovie Smith. They can boast former '85 Bear Ron Rivera and former Hornhead QB Wade Wilson. Both are best known for failing to break into starting lineups due to elevated talent around them.

So, the battle of coaches really favors Indy. The Look Man has a sentimental favorite in Dungy, whose Lombardi is sitting in Jon (Chucky) Gruden's office. Word on the street is that it won't be for long.

After long consideration, the Look Man is going with the Ponies to win a ring. They have superior coaching, a better QB, and national sentiment. More importantly, they can win either a shootout or a close game, whereas the Bears' best chance is a special teams and defensive struggle. Ponies win and dedicate the game to their late mascot Barbaro.

EPILOGUE

A lot of folks in the media have made this game about Peyton Manning's attempt to prove he can 'win the big one.' That chorus includes former Bengals QB Boomer Esiason, who makes the point by calling out Dan Marino's failure to win a Bowl every chance he gets. Esiason is in short, a hypocrite who has only one more playoff TD pass than the Look Man. Vegas has Bowl odds on whether Marino will go Jim Everett and punch out Esiason on Sunday.

This game is about doing what is necessary when all of the chips are on the table. When you have four kings in poker, you could get beat by four aces, but you can't fold. You simply play the hand out to its conclusion. The Super Bowl is the same; it doesn't matter which team is more talented, which staff is more accomplished. All that matters is that you get your team ready for the biggest stage at the right time.

Win, lose or draw in the Big Game, Peyton Manning has become the new Karl (Booty Nose) Malden because he won't need an American Express Card to leave home. Even if he loses, they won't be saying, 'boo' they'll be saying 'mooo-vers.'

The Look Man wouldn't mind seeing the Bears steal one, keeping denizens from retreating en masse to one of the Second City's many blues bars. Kingston Mines can avoid sellouts if former Pony Edgerrin James wears out the Ponies by partying before the game. Otherwise, the NFC Champs will be going back to Sweet Home Chicago with only an NFC Championship ring and solid playoff experience.

Here's hoping for the best Super Bowl ever in memory of the late Lamar Hunt, who named the game. As for the winner's trophy, but for the losses to Green Bay in the Freezer Bowl and beyond, it might have been named after Tom Landry instead of Vince Lombardi.

Peace,

The Look Man