

The Look Man Report 2007

Week Eight: Dia de los Muertos

"I couldn't find London on a map if they didn't have the names of the countries. I swear to God. I don't know what nothing is. I know Italy looks like a boot. I learned that." - Marine Mammals LB Channing Crowder prior to the first NFL regular season game played outside of the US.

PROLOGUE

Halloween Week has always been one of the Look Man's favorites. NFL fans go all out for the occasion, as Halloween is one of the greatest combination holidays of the year. It's a sexy holiday for adults as men dress as women and women dress scantily. It's fabulous for kids, who get the pre-adolescent version of narcotics (candy). Adults toss in alcohol, and when combined with outfits that highlight physical attributes, the outcome is compelling. Whenever you take suggestively attired women and add alcohol, it's a potent mix.

The NFL week always includes face painting, bag wearing, and general cleverness. Fans are fueled up for the event, and the games are often wildly entertaining. The Green Bay-Denver Monday Nighter was pretty typical of a Halloween Special. The drama is magnified by the fact that most teams are either coming out of or going into bye weeks.

The real story of 2007 is the sheer number of teams within one game of .500. Baltimore, Carolina, Cleveland, KC, San Diego, and Washington have all climbed to 4-3. Buffalo, Denver, New Orleans, and Philly are all one game under at 3-4, and Tampa Bay stands even.

While everyone talks about the Chowds, Colts and Pokes gaudy records, it is more likely that they will lose to a lower rated team in the near future. The second tier teams are not simply lucky, they are winning with solid defense and/or great offense. Look for these guys to make some noise as parity rises again in the NFL.

Without further forays into liminality, the Week in Review:



Jedi Mind Trick confuses Trooper

WEEK IN REVIEW

The Look Man got crushed in the Look Ahead segment last week. Not only did the Chowds destroy the Genocide Victims, the Bolts took out their fire frustrations on Houston. Detroit's Mike (Megalomaniac) Martz went conservative, using the run to beat the Bears. The Halloween week is always full of outliers, but that last item defies the rules of horror movies. It's like Michael Myers talking or Freddie Krueger buying a Shih-Tzu.

The Bungals held true to form in Week Seven, losing to a Blitzburgh team that threw only twice on first down. The Stillers dominated this game by running the football despite averaging about 2.2 yards on first down. The hapless Bengals D couldn't mount a stop, going as far as to allow Big Ben to throw a bullet to Santonio Holmes while in the grasp.

Ocho Cinco celebrated the death of the Bungals playoff hopes after the Blitzburgh game by ghosting the media in the locker room. It was truly la Dia de los Muertos for Chad.

Browns at Lambs (+3):

Stephen (Action) Jackson did, in fact, re-enact his Nike commercial against the Browns, but only for two quarters. Action left the game with a bad back, and the Browns roared back with a boatload of points. Once the run was removed from the St. Louise offense, the Barking Dawg D was able to shut down Torry Holt and Marc (The Scarecrow) Bulger.

The game came down to a third and three with 1:23 left to play. Derek (Neo) Anderson threw a sweet first down pass to Braylon Edwards, who promptly dropped the game clincher. Fortunately, CB Leigh Bodden picked off the Scarecrow to set up the Look Man's favorite play: the kneel down.

The Browns won 27-20 to post their second consecutive W. Browns version 2.0 now head for uncharted territory at three in a row.

Breen Gay at Denver (-3):

The Pope continued his roll, with two 75-yard bombs over the Donkeys. Mike (The Rat) Shanahan has never been called a defensive genius, and actually allowed the Pack to run and pass all over the place. QB Jay Cutler(y) was unable to cut the Cheese, largely due to flag-happy officials who ruined Enver's offensive continuity.

LAGNIAPPE:

I Say There, Old Chap

The Miami-Jynts game in London was a disaster. Not only did the 13-10 final disappoint, but Phish LB (Carol) Channing Crowder didn't even realize that people spoke English in London. Dude, the name of the country is ENGLAND!

The Wembley Stadium pitch was soggy after a prolonged rain, and the fans engaged in the wave several times. One can hardly blame them since the events on the field were pretty pedestrian. The Look Man renews his call to ban these games before we have another international embarrassment. One Iraq is enough.



Tally ho, Dolly!

Mail Bag

Hey, Look Man.

While it is true that you previously predicted that Dallas would get a bounce from getting out from under Parcells' boot heel and into the lighter environs implemented by Phillips, surely you can't seriously argue that that's the proximate cause of the 'Boys being ranked #3 in the League in both the MCFW and ESPN's power rankings.

The controlled variable in this equation is clearly Romo, the top-rated passer in the NFC. He's canny, hard to sack, and throws on the run in ways reminiscent of a younger Favre. Both ESPN and the multi-colored did long pieces on him this week, with nary a negative in the mix.

Yeah, New England beat us pretty bad, and the scores against Buffalo and Minnesota were closer than they should have, but Anthony Henry and Newman have not played in the same game at all this season. Ennyhoo, get a sense of proportion!

GB Shaw

Dear GB,

As usual, your points are well taken, but the Look Man believes Romo will struggle after signing the mega-deal. The Pokes, like the Chowds, haven't really played anyone. The soft early schedule got them both on a nice roll, but the Pokes have tough sledding ahead with the Iggles, Jynts, and Genocide Vix. They're still the class of the NFC, but look for them to come back to the pack in the coming weeks.

LM

Dear Look Man,

Ya got the outcome all wrong for Monday Night Fozzball! Favra and the Pack by 10+ coming off of the bye week and finally committing to a featured running back. A round of Cheese Whiz for everybody!!!

CC from Chicahgo

CC,

How does the Rat give up a 70-yard TD on the first play of the game and then again on the first play of OT? The Look Man failed to realize it was National Breast Cancer Month, leading to Deanna Favre appearing on MNF with her bangs covering half of her face. If she doesn't survive breast cancer, the Zebras don't call 25 penalties and give the game to Breen Gay.

BTW, was Deanna Favre the model for the Seinfeld "Man Hands" episode, or did the Look Man simply have too many cocktails? Between Deanna and Brett, their kids may be the stars of the X-Men IV: Hulk Hands.

LM

Look Man,

Another solid Week Five Report, as usual. A couple of nitpicks:

Peanut Tillman isn't a backup CB. He's been starting since at least '03 that I can remember. Desmond Howard at TE??? When did he leave ESPN to join the Bears? Hopefully he hasn't lost as many steps as the Moose has.

Oh, and Griese chucks the ball 50 times a game because this team can't run. The Bears need to take a cue from NBC (I think) and cancel Benson. He's fast approaching Curtis Enis in the colossal Bears RB bust category. Personally I'd like to see more of Garrett (Mr.) Wolfe.

*Peace and Bacon Grease,
Gandino Crime Family*

Gandino,

Great pickups. The Look Man has been confused about the MOTFM since the release of McQuarters. It seems that every year they want to get rid of Tillman, and he keeps his job. As for Desmond (Howard) Clark, sometimes the subconscious mind simply takes over. He and Olsen are among the best TEs in the conference.

Sorry about your Cubbies. Good luck this weekend against the Bye. You're gonna need it.

LM

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

The nominees were pretty sparse this week, but two guys stood out. Walt Coleman (Lantern) looked like he had it locked up until the Monday Nighter brought us Ron (A Lyin' in) Winters.

Here's life of the Serengeti:

Walt Coleman (Lantern) didn't need to help the Stillers, who dominated the Bungals with a solid running game. He used plenty of flags and white gas anyway, as he failed to call an easy grounding call on Big Ben, and missed a possible pass interference in the end zone on TJ Whosyomama. The mantle breaker might have been the fumble call on Kenny (Guitar) Watson. LB James (Henry) Harrison stripped the ball from Guitar, whose knee and butt might have been on the ground.

Ron Winters provided a virtuoso performance on Monday night, throwing over 20 flags and generally dominating the coverage. It was so bad the Look Man expected to see one fly into the booth during ESPN's protracted interview with Vince Vaughn. Not that Vaughn didn't deserve one, if only for dumping Jennifer Aniston.



Vince, what were you thinking??

Ron Winters, you are the Look Man **Zebra of the Week**.

THE LOOK AHEAD:

Bungals at Bisons (+1):

The Bungals go into a must-win situation against the best 2-5 team in the league. The Bisons should've beaten Dallas, and lost to Denver on a last second FG. The game features the return of JP Losman, who is playing only due to the injury to rookie Trent (NPR) Edwards.

Losman is a better deep ball passer than NPR, and rookie RB Marshawn Lynch is solid. Lynch hasn't busted 100 yards this season, but he is facing the worst run defense east of the Mississippi. Look for Lynch to bust up the Ugly & Black en route to a Crapchester win.

One other note: Bungals RB and super-sub Kenny (Guitar) Watson was concussed against the Stillers - - - by his own teammate! Guitar was attempting to recover a stripped ball when OT Levi Jones kneed him in the face. The brutal shot knocks Guitar out, returning an unhappy Rudi Johnson back into the action. The Look Man expects Rudi to tank it, sending the Bungals into an alligator death roll.

Browns at Shehawks (+1.5):

The X-Factor will be in play as former Browns Charlie (Biggie) Frye and Brian Russell (Sprouts) now suit up for the Shehawks. Russell Sprouts is one of the best safeties no one talks about, and he nearly got on the map with his decleating of Chad Johnson in 2007. The hit caused turmoil in C-Town as Braylon Edwards cried foul, but the Look Man cannot understand why the Browns allowed Russell to leave. The Browns defense went from mediocre to poor with the loss of Russell, who was the de facto captain.

Shaun Alexander and Matt (Hair Club for Men) Hasselbeck have struggled behind a dinged up O-line. The Shehawks picked up super TE Marcus Pollard, but he is injured, which hurts Seattle. The Browns lead the league in TDs given up to TEs, largely because of the poor safety play of Brodney Pool and Sean Jones.

Braylon keeps his head on a swivel and the Browns carve out a nice win against the Shehawks coming off their bye week.

Chowds at Ponies (+5):

Incredibly, the game of the year is not on Sunday or Monday Night Football. Instead, the game is at 4:15pm, and Cleveland, Houston, and Oakland will be blacked out due to NFL rules governing the showing of games opposite home games.

This one is being touted by the media, and it may even live up to its billing. Indy can win by controlling the clock and stopping the run. Their DBs are much more physical this year, and should be able to stay with the Three Amigos (Moss, Welker, and Stallworth). But the key on both sides of the ball is stopping the TE.

If NE can keep Dallas Clark from dominating the game, it will have success. While Manning and Addai get most of the love, Clark Bar is actually the guy who makes this offense click. First round pick Anthony (Speedy) Gonzales can't even get on the field due to the play of Clark Bar, and look for backup TE Ben Utrecht to keep 'em honest.

The Look Man likes the Ponies in this one for three reasons: (1) they can win a shootout or a grind-out game, (2) they've played superior competition while the Chowds have played only Dallas, and (3) the Look Man is a New England hater. J-Ville, Houston, and Tennessee all have better defenses than anyone the Chowds have played to date. Washington's defense was hurt by playing 40 minutes last week, largely because Jason Campbell (Soup) kept using the wrong

spoon to handle the rock. Of course, there's no excuse for going for 4th and one up 45-0, only to throw a TD pass to Wes (Lawrence) Welker.

The Indy defense knows that this game is for home field advantage in the AFC. The Look Man isn't suggesting that no other team will beat New England, but this one is being closely monitored by the Football Gods. Indy wins, punching the bully in the nose and surprising the bandwagon fans of *The Best Team Money Can Buy*.

SNF - Pokes at Iggles (3.5):

This game is much bigger than it's being credited, as Tony Romo (The Place for Ribs) takes his Pokes and his new contract into the City of Brotherly Love. More importantly, McNabb looked healthy for the first time last week in Minneapolis, and Brian Dawkins returns at safety after missing five weeks with a neck stinger.

McNabb has an ax to grind as he is relatively underpaid despite superior numbers. His win/loss record is behind only Peyton Manning and Tom Brady, but Romo gets \$31 million guaranteed. While the Look Man doesn't support some of McNabb's comments this season, he hasn't been surrounded with a wealth of talent at receiver. The one season he had Terrell Owens, he took the team to the Super Bowl. Imagine what he could do with Moss, Stallworth, and Welker.

The backdrop here is the Philadelphia Story. Andy (The Walrus II) Reid's son was sentenced to two years in the Big House for violating his drug abuse rehab. Reid the Younger was found with 48 barbiturate pills he smuggled into the hoosegow in his rectum. The media is calling for the Walrus II to step down in light of the legal troubles of his two drug addled sons, and the Look Man tends to agree. It's a sad story that is remarkable if only because it's not more common among NFL coaches.

Look for Trent (King) Cole and the Iggles to put the pressure on Big D, coming out with a win that propels them to a nice run for the NFC Least.

MNF - Baltimore at Blitzburgh (-9.5):

The Stillers are very tough at Ketchup Field, and the Dumpster Ducks stink on ice. Look for the Stillers to resume their passing attack despite the return of Trevor Pryce (is Right). Pryce has been the missing piece of the Ducks' D, but he is not yet in football shape.

Todd (Uriah) Heap may be back for this one, and he is needed. Steve (Air) McNair could have a career ending injury, but even if he doesn't, he will need to borrow Brett Favre's old jersey. The fork in his back is growing to epic proportions.

Blitzburgh wins at home, exposing Baltimore as one of the worst 5-2 teams in history.

EPILOGUE

The Bengals have always had a bunch of goofy costumes including The Storm Trooper and the Who Dey mascot. This week Stillers Fan invaded with his own set of gear. The Look Man's favorite was a buxom young woman wearing a T-Shirt with the words "*Got Super Bowl Trophies?*" over the Stiller logo. The obvious reference to the *Got Milk* slogan was not lost on the Look Man.

Week Nine will be an interesting period in 2007. Not only are teams facing QB travails, former front runners like San Diego and New Orleans are bouncing back. While it appeared that the AFC South was the best division in football, injuries are taking their toll on Houston and Tennessee. J-Ville loses QB David (The Fugitive) Garrard for a month just as the season is getting interesting.

The 6-1 Packers and Pokes are being called the class of the NFC without having breakout wins. Detroit is mounting a challenge for the NFC Norris by running the football. Kelly (Tires) Holcomb suffered his annual season threatening injury and the Monsters of the Furniture Mart have no running game. As high pressure pushes cold air over the Midwest, the need for a running game increases inversely with the temperature falling.

The Jynts cruised into the bye week, and look to reload before the second half of the season, when they face the Pokes and the rest of the NFC Least. If you look at the second half schedule, it's clear that a definitive picture of the contenders will emerge.



Messin' with Sasquatch at PBS

Peace,

The Look Man