

## **The Look Man Report 2010**

### **Week Two: Ve're Here**

*"There's nothing going on in Cleveland. There's no real estate. There's no social life, no social networking. So Cleveland has nothing, and I came in there with a New York-type of essence. They didn't like the flash." - Braylon Edwards comments after being traded to the Jets in 2009*

The Look Man is extremely fond of the new DirecTV spots for NFL Sunday Ticket, which typically shows expatriate fans following their teams in rivalry cities. His favorite is the one with the ethnic New York cabbie who dumps Pokes Fan in the ghetto after pinning them to the glass divider and announcing, "Ve're here."

Pokes Fan must feel the pain of that couple, as they expected to be dropped off at the high rent district of the NFL teams only to arrive at 0-2. The Pokes have averaged 400 yards of offense, but untimely mistakes have hurt their efforts. Now they face elimination as they head to rival Houston for a Week Three tilt. Troy Barkman is not happy.

But the real story is the number of surprise teams that have posted two wins in tough situations. Kansas City, Tampa, Blitzburgh, Chicago, Houston, and Miami join perennial favorites New Orleans in this rarefied realm.

The NFL is all about contenders versus pretenders, so this development is a welcome one. It forces teams to step up and rectify the problems inherent in the first quarter of the season.

The NFL season is a marathon, not a sprint, so plenty of time remains. Still, Week Three is setting up some outstanding battles as a result. Fans would be wise to put their seat belts on.

### **LAGNIAPPE**

#### **The Smoker You Drink, the Player You Get**

The Hard Knocks Crew received another knock this week when WR Braylon (Zig Zag) Edwards appeared on the Celebrity Drunk Bus. Zig Zag blew double the legal limit after his tricked out rig was pulled over at 5 AM in the City That Never Sleeps.

Edwards had LT D'Brickshaw Ferguson, his girlfriend, Tommy Chong and Chris Simms in the vehicle with him. Edwards attempted to talk his way out of the citation, but NYPD Blue is apparently a Jynts Fan. It's amazing Edwards wasn't popped with a bag of chronic as well.

The J-E-T-S are ticked off at the selfish move, but the Look Man wonders whether excessive window tint actually constitutes reasonable cause for a traffic stop at 5 AM. It's a pretty good bet that anyone out within an hour after bars close is a candidate for DUI driving school, and despite Edward's stupidity, one has to wonder about the legitimacy of the arrest.

The Jets face the Marine Mammals in a big AFC Beast matchup, so the timing isn't optimal. It could hardly be worse, as Santonio Holmes is already out, but it appears unlikely that Edwards will face discipline prior to his day in court. By then Santonio will

be back on the turf. Any way you smoke it, Edwards will likely face a 3-4 game suspension in 2010 or beyond.



*Edwards Signs Deal with Rolling Papers Firm?*

### Put a Skirt on 'Em?

The Look Man has witnessed the disturbing trend of inconsistency with regard to roughing the passer calls. While Tom (Zoolander) Brady and (Johnny) Carson Palmer enjoy a very liberal policy from NFL officials, Vince Young, Donovan McNabb and others tend to get less love.

The Look Man doesn't know the motivation for this discrepancy, but it needs to stop. Like the possession rule, no one can see a play and make a determination as to what constitutes QB roughing. Madden's three guys in a bar rule doesn't work here, and it is disturbing.

The simple act of grazing a QB's helmet should NOT automatically constitute roughing. It's very easy and natural to make some helmet contact while pass rushers are attempting to block a pass.

Further, simply tackling a QB is not illegal while pile-driving is a no-no. The NFL needs to take some of the onus off the zebras, especially in division games where a little more physical play is warranted. Otherwise, we may as well have transvestite attire on the signal callers.



*Yup, that's a foul all right.*

## ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

### Shanahanigans?

Mike Shanahan faced his own music when former protégé Gary Kubiak called a timeout just prior to a game winning FG last week in Houston vs. Philly. The FG went through, but the retry missed and Houston went on to win the OT contest.

The Look Man has long been a proponent of modifying the FG timeout rule to exclude the last five seconds of the play clock. Instead of fans at the game not knowing what is going on, a FG kicker couldn't be iced inside of five seconds and the kick would either be a game winner or not. As it currently stands, half the stadium has no clue whether they can head for the exits or sit tight for the officials.

Now that Shanahan himself, perhaps his owner will support the Look Man's approach.

The candidates for the Zebra of the Week award are as follows:

### (Mean) Gene Steratore – Baltimore at Cincy

Mean Gene decided that tackling a QB was an illegal act, but only if the QB had tiger stripes on his helmet. The tripping and roughing the passer calls on B-More resulted in six additional points for the Nati, essentially giving them the game in a physical, ugly contest.

### Scott Green – Chicago at Dallas

Green and Company missed a couple of facemask calls and generally allowed this game to get out of hand. Receivers whose forward progress had been stopped got the strip treatment, and several balls ended up on the ground. It was a physical affair and Green allowed them to play, not necessarily a bad thing.

### John Parry – Blitzburgh at Tennessee

Parry's crew decided that Blitzburgh LB James Harrison and two of his D-linemen could go all Riff Raff, shaking Vince Young upside down until his money rattled out of his pockets. Who knew Parry was a huge fan of the cartoon classic Underdog?

There was no roughing the passer foul called during the game despite the fact that VY did an involuntary reverse summersault. Young was removed from the game shortly thereafter, complaining that his eggs had been scrambled.

The NFL fined Harrison five large after the fact. The Look Man tried to reach Underdog for comment but he was out hooking up with Sweet Polly Purebred.



*Harrison in postgame attire*

Alberto Riveron – New Orleans at Frisco

Riveron nearly ruined a fantastic finish by ruling the tying 2 point conversion attempt was caught outside the endzone. The booth overturned the call, and Cool Brees executed a flawless FG drive to win it as time expired.

Clete Blakeman - Philly at Detroit

Blakeman's crew called a completion for the Iggles on a play that was eerily similar to the non-catch Calvin Johnson TD call the week prior. Lions coach Jim Schwartz went ballistic, to no avail.

The winner of the award is a slam dunk: Mean Gene Steratore changed the outcome of a divisional game with two calls that turned the QB into a Christmas ornament. The two calls were the worst the Look Man has seen since the 80's when Houston receiver Mike Renfro got both feet down and still didn't get the points. That episode ushered in the era of instant replay. Mean Gene, you are the Look Man's **Zebra of the Week!**

**THE LOOK AHEAD**

Detroit at Minnesota (-11)

The Look Man found out that Brett Favre had secret mid-week surgery to have the fork removed from his back. Favre had the same surgery successfully prior to the 2009 season, but the growth returned late in the year. He now has to return to a special jersey with a hole in the back for the fork handle.

Detroit is quietly putting a lot of points on the board despite losing its starting QB. Their defense is giving up big plays, but playing well overall. The infusion of a pass rush has helped, and the Lions are poised to pounce.

Minnesota struggles against the running attack of the Lions, who cover. Lions will need to beat the Vikes and the zebras to pull the Pepto Bismol Upset of the Week.

Atlanta at New Orleans (-4)

The Dirty Birds struggle against New Orleans, whose timely turnovers help a bend-but-don't break defense. RB Jason Snelling is putting up some impressive numbers, and TE Tony Gonzalez is always dangerous.

The Religious Icons are coming off a very physical game in Frisco last week. They won on a FG as time expired, and return home to the Big Easy without Reggie Bush. Bush provided some much needed spark for this offense, and New Orleans will struggle to replace him. TE Jeremy Shockey needs to take up the slack for a running game that is missing a legitimate factor back.

Matty (Ice) Ryan puts up enough points to cover against a New Orleans team with a short week. Atlanta.

Cincinnati at Carolina (+3)

The Nati eked out a win in Week Two courtesy of four picks and some timely officiating. This week they face a brand spanking new rookie QB in Carolina's Jimmy (the Pickle) Clausen.

Carolina has struggled to get the passing game on track, and this looks like a team in disarray. The strength of this Carolina team is the run game, and they need to put up 200 rushing yards to get a "W."

The Look is seeing some bad cracks in the Cincy locker room. QB (Johnny) Carson Palmer is forcing the ball to Terrell (TO) Owens in the red zone, often when TE Jermaine Gresham and SE Jordan Shipley are wide freaking open. Nothing good comes out of that, and the Carolina defensive backs will pick your pocket if you try it.

The Look Man gives a slight edge to the Bengals, largely because Jimmy the Pickle is the Carolina reincarnation of Brady Quinn (Medicine Woman). Bengos cover, setting up the Battle of Ohio in Week Four. Bengos.

#### Cleveland at Baltimore (-11)

Jake (the Man) Delhomme is still on the DL after he got the Brett Favre high-low treatment in Tampa. Seneca (Laxative Arm) Wallace is back at the helm against a ferocious defense.

On the other hand, the Look Man saw something interesting in Week Two. B-more has zero vertical game as none of their receivers have any speed. The Dumpster Ducks play horizontal ball, which is not really a Cam Cameron offense. The resultant lack of deep balls stymies the running game, and despite not allowing an offensive TD, Baltimore is 1-1 going into Week Three.

Cleveland Fan is thinking he can't get another win until Week Eleven and J-Ville. Well, the Look Man thinks otherwise. A win comes either here in B-More or at home versus the Bengos the week following.

B-more and Blitzburgh play each other next week and one of them is going to have the Look Ahead factor. Cleveland covers the eleven by tackling Ray (-Ray) Lewis and the Talking Old Spice Bear. Browns, baby, Browns.

#### San Francisco at Kansas City (-2.5)

The Chiefs put together a solid come-from-behind win in Cleveland last week, courtesy of a revenge factor for D-Coordinator Romeo (Ralph Cramden) Crennel. QB Matt Cassel is still struggling, and they haven't found the offensive spark for the passing game.

The Baby Backs are a solid running team with Jamal Charles and Thomas Jones spearheading the ground game. The young defense is improving thanks to the coaching of the Bus Driver and an infusion of talent.

Mike Singletary and the Niners have a fantastic defense and QB Alex Smith showed some growth in the MNF loss. Smith takes the confidence to the next level with a quality win over the 2-0 Chiefs. Niners.

#### Dallas at Houston (-3)

The Pokes O-line is getting healthy with the return of Kosier and Columbo. While Houston's pass defense has given up nearly 1,000 yards in two games, the secret to winning this game is offensive balance.

The Pokes have eschewed the running game, and even when employed has been overly reliant upon speed back Felix (the Cat) Jones instead of power back Marion (The Predator) Barber. Barber can hit the hole and power through while Jones looks for cutbacks and wide runs instead of taking the inside.

Washington and Chicago routinely twist their defensive linemen and backers, creating blocking assignment confusion. Houston employs the same scheme, so Dallas must correct this problem to avoid heat on Romo and punishing hits on the RBs.

The focus upon the passing game leads to a poor running attack. While the run doesn't necessarily need to set up the pass, O-linemen need to practice run blocking in order to become proficient. The footwork, coordination and physical exertion levels are diametrically opposed.

Houston was brutalized in the epic OT road win at Washington. QB Matt Schaub took some rib shots, and WR Andre (The Giant) Johnson has an ankle. It all adds up to a Dallas revenge win against a cross state rival that has owned them. Pokes go to 1-2.

#### *NY Jets at Miami (-2) Football Nite in America*

The Marine Mammals are surprising with a big play defense, and a plodding offense. The Fish have given up only 20 points in two weeks, and their offense is starting to click now that LT Jake Long is getting healthy.

The Jets thrive on controversy, and Braylongate may be just the ticket. Unfortunately, they will have to rely on Braylon to stretch the Marine Mammals defense and actually catch the ball. Miami D-Coordinator Mike Nolan will challenge New York's offense, putting heat on Mark Sanchez to set up turnovers.

The Look Man likes Miami in this one. The Fish cover, setting up a season long battle in the AFC Beast. Miami.

#### *Philly at Jacksonville (+3)*

Lost in the emerging QB controversy in Philly is the fact that the Iggles O-line stinks. Mike (Ron Mexico) Vick was sacked six times last week, and escaped certain death four other times to post big offensive numbers.

Andy (The Walrus II) Reid likely considered this fact in his decision to bench Kevin (Korn) Kolb (Pipe). The Walrus II wants badly to win when McNabb shows up in Philly in two weeks. A loss to McNabb would signal open season on walrus hunting in the City of Brotherly Hate.

Hidden stat: FS Sean Considine played for the Iggles for three years and knows their defensive calls. Considine also scrimmaged against Vick, so he knows a little something about his speed. Look for Jack Del Rio to game plan for Vick with a spy, while keeping him off the field with a solid running attack.

RB Maurice (Mo-Jo) Jones-Drew gets plenty of fantasy points by inserting himself against a weak Philly run defense. J-Ville covers as the Iggles look ahead to the epic matchup with Washington in Week Four. J-Squares.

*Blitzburgh at Tampa Bay (+2.5)*

Mike Tomlin has two more weeks of Big Ben's suspension and looks to go 3-0 based upon his stultifying defense. QB Dennis Dixon has a knee, so look for Charlie Batch (File) to upload some nice game management again this week.

Tampa is one of the more surprising 2-0 teams, and they're doing it with defense as well. Young QB Josh Freeman is figuring out the league and using his young wide receivers to matriculate down the field. The running game is keeping them just balanced enough to win with timely throws.

The Look Man likes the Stillers to cover the spread en route to a big division matchup next week with Baltimore. Stillers.

*Indy at Denver (+5.5)*

This game is a real test for an Indy team that is gelling nicely. Denver has injury problems with RB Knowshon Moreno out, and CB Champ Bailey questionable. The death of a teammate this week doesn't help matters.

The Look Man is betting on The Sheriff, because the Broncos are a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Colts, and they have been for years. Indy.

*Green Bay at Chicago (+3) Monday Night Football*

Jay (the Knife) Cutler(y) was extremely sharp last week at Dallas. Mike Martz introduced The Knife to his TE, Greg Olson, and the two racked up big plays against the Pokes. Cutler had already been introduced to Kristin (K-Cal) Callaveri, pictured below. As the Tailpipe Nation knows, Celebrity Girlfriend equals trouble for NFL quarterbacks.

Up north in Cheeseland, the Pack is rolling like a cheese wheel, but has lost RB Ryan Grant from their offensive attack. Aaron Rodgers is throwing it as well as ever, but their O-line is a little nicked up.

These two teams have a legitimate rivalry that goes way back. Look for the Cheeseheads defense to step up with impact players Clay Matthews III and Charles Woodson. When good offense meets tough, physical defense, you get what the Look Man likes to call a 'slobberknocker.'

Woodson picks off Cutler en route to a win and a possible second consecutive Defensive MVP award. If you haven't seen this Packer D, you are in for a treat. Go, Pack, go!



*Cutler squeeze K-Cal*

## **EPILOGUE**

A lot of 0-2 teams are ready to pick the panic button, and with good reason. The Look Man believes their fans should come back in from the ledge, as the season is still young. It's not how you start, it's how you finish, and recent history has seen teams that got hot late actually win the Lombardi.

The football universe is in a great place, with meaningful games on Saturday and Sunday. Both the Pokes and Hornheads are 0-2, and only one of these two will make the postseason. Tampa, KC and Miami are 2-0 and only one of these teams will make the postseason. You can throw history out of the window in the 2010 season, which still looks to be an epic year.

Peace,

The Look Man