

The Look Man Report 2010 **Week Seven: Lightning Strikes the Poorhouse**

"That's hard for me to say about a guy I threw four picks to but if we had to play them tomorrow, I'd go at him every time, if we could," – Bears QB Jay Cutler about Washington CB DeAngelo Hall

Week Seven featured a bunch of head scratchers where wins came out of the blue. The Bengos went toothless early in Atlanta, the Vikes lost a heartbreaker to the Packers, and Buffalo coughed up its first win of the season at Baltimore.

The cherry on top of the sundae was a scintillating Browns win over New Orleans. Cleveland used two pick sixes, a kick return lateral and a fake punt to dominate the Saints in their own crib. Mangina is looking to save his job, and the Browns defeated the defending world champs for the third consecutive season.

But the proverbial lightning struck the poorhouse in Dallas, where the Pokes lost Tony Romo with a broken collarbone. The Pokes go to 1-5, having no bye to look forward to, and an impossible row to hoe to make the postseason.

So as we near the halfway mark, no team has really stepped up, and some perennial favorites are nearly out. The Look Man predicted a 2010 season to remember, but no one could have predicted this.

LAGNIAPPE

Throw to score, run to win

Week Seven featured some pretty desultory QB stat lines on Sunday: Colt McCoy (74 yards), Matt Cassel (193 yards), Donovan McNabb (200 yards), Josh Freeman (212 yards). But the bigger story might have been that the top passers -- Carson Palmer (412 yards), Ryan Fitzpatrick (374 yards) and Drew Brees (356 yards) -- all lost.

The NFL wants to increase scoring by limiting H2H contact, but this ain't fantasy football. Teams that grind it out are going to win ballgames, so the Browns, KC and Washington are good bets to rise after the half. Are you listening Minnesota, Dallas, Chicago and San Diego???

Lee vs. Wranglers

If you missed the SNL takeoff on Brett Favre's jeans, you need to go to You Tube. Jason Sudekis did a spot on Favre, playing touch football in a pair of denims with the crotch pixilated.

"I've tried all kinds of jeans – button fly, zipper fly, you name it. But nothing works better than the all-new, open-fly jeans from Wrangler," says the Faux Pope.

The ad went on to say that the new Wranglers are the first of their kind to feature no fly whatsoever, "an ultra-relaxed fit, right where you need it most. And that's a marriage I can respect."

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

We're back to the mean season, as the Zebras took over several games in Week Seven. One has to wonder what we'd do without the Men in Black(and White). Perhaps enjoy the games more. Here's the rundown:

(Mean) Gene Steratore - Stillers at Marine Mammals

Mean Gene failed to see what everyone else did; Big Ben coughed up the rock before crossing the plane, and Miami came up with the ball. Despite the fact that replay cannot award fumble possession, the zebras did NOT get this one right. They should've seen the ball pop out and called the touchback. Instead of Miami ball to run out the clock, the zebras awarded Blitzburgh the ball for a game winning FG. It wasn't lost on the Look Man that a TD would've allowed the Stillers to cover the two point spread.

Walt (Disney) Anderson - Washington at Chicago

Zebras failed to award Jay Cutler a TD when his QB sneak broke the plane. Washington then smacked the ball out of Cutler's hands and recovered. Bears coach Lovie Smith failed to challenge the call, as he had just lost a challenge on the prior play. The zebras award the fumble to the Genocide Victims, who won the game by three.

Pete Morelli (Mushroom) - Buffalo at Baltimore:

Baltimore's game winning FG was set up when Ray Lewis stripped the ball from Buffalo TE Shawn (Major) Nelson. Nelson was held up in the air for several seconds after his forward progress had stopped, allowing Ray Ray to strip it. Buffalo's 34-24 lead evaporated like *I Dream of Jeanie*, largely due to blatant holding by the Ravens O-line. This ending wiped out a fantastic game by Ryan (Veritas) FitzPatrick, who is the number two passer in the NFL.

Scott (Red) Green - Vikings at Packers

The zebras stole this one from the Hornheads. Check out the following gaffes on the Serengeti:

- Percy Harvin nearly gets two feet in for the game winning TD, but is pushed prior to catching the pass – no call.
- RT Phil Loadholt is called for face mask personal foul on Clay Matthews, but never touched the face mask.
- Matthews later tossed off his own helmet in the middle of his pass rush, but didn't get flagged for unsportsmanlike hair.
- A juggling, non-catch for a TD by the Packers TE was called good, but a legitimate TD catch by Visanthe Shiancoe was overturned by replay.

Even with all of this the Vikes nearly beat the Cheeseheads.

Walt Coleman (Lantern) – Browns at Icons:

Coleman and crew cooked up a ridiculous number of discussions on every penalty, delaying the game and generally losing control. Coleman even once called offsetting hands-to-the-face on the linemen.

The game featured some crotch grabbing and eye gouging in the piles, as well as some egregiously bad calls. It was so bad that the Browns' Eric Mangina actually won two out of three challenges, a first for the hermaphroditic head coach.

And the winner is: Scott (Red) Green. The PBS comedian destroyed the Vikes season and the credibility of the league with that Possum Lodge bomb in Titledown. Vikes coach Brad Childress was fined 35 large after saying, "Worst officiated game I've seen."

Scott Green, you are the Look Man's **Zebra of the Week**.



Red Green (actual photo)

THE LOOK AHEAD

Minnesota at New England (-5)

New England got exposed last week in San Diego, with an offensive flame-out courtesy of loss of Moss. The offense sputtered, revealing a disturbing tendency to fail in short yardage.

Unlike the loss to Indy last year, Belicheat's gamble of 4th and 1 didn't cost them the ball game, but it should have. The difference might be a young but improving defense, with LB Jerrod Mayo racking up double digit tackles.

The Hornheads have a problem with Brett (The Pope) Favre suffering a double fracture of his ankle last week. Now, head coach Brad (Mr. Potato Head) Childress has a tough decision to make: extend the Pope's consecutive game streak or play Tarvaris Jackson.

Roger Goodell has already told Minny owner Zygi Wilf that he wants Favre to play, so really there is no decision. But with the Vikes having lost nearly all of their games close, it seems obvious that even Tarvaris Jackson could have bested this start with their talent.

Remarkably, the Vikes decided to keep throwing the rock despite the Cheeseheads having only two healthy D-linemen. If they had game planned the run instead of throwing wildly, they would've defeated Green Bay and at least two of their other opponents. Instead of looking at playoff elimination, they could be 4-2 and the cream of the weak NFC crop.

The season has been tough on Vikes Fan, including Tailpipe K-Gunn, who opined:

"40 seconds, 40 yard line, two time outs, three point lead, you're moving the ball, what do you do? Let the clock expire of course, there's no way they are going to score three points in the second half, you're home free.

I just hope that the good Lord sees fit to take Childress out with Favre at years end; this ain't no fun."

The season gets better as New England uncharacteristically loses one at the Blade. The Look Man expects the Pope to leave after the half, maintaining his streak, and propelling the Hornheads to a win under T-Jack. Vikes win and begin their inexorable climb into the NFC Playoff picture. Vikes.

Denver at Frisco (-1) [World League of American Football in London]

Mike Singletary plays a home game six thousand miles from home as Denver invades Great Britain. No word yet on whether Iron Mike will wear a befeater hat on the sidelines.

Both teams had a little look ahead in them last week, but the Broncos nearly got a sixty burger dropped on them by Oakland. The Niners replace injured QB Alex Smith with his brother from another mother, Troy Smith. Troy is best remembered as the QB for the Ohio State Buckeyes, where he threw to current teammate Ted Ginn, Jr.

These two hook up big time across the pond, and Denver coach Josh McDaniel again apologizes to his fans and his owner. Frisco.



"I HATE this kinda pahty!"

Miami at Cincinnati (-2)

The Bengos have a pivotal AFC matchup with the Marine Mammals which will effectively decide their season. The Look Man forgot about the Bengos woeful post-bye record under Marvin (Jerry) Lewis and actually picked them to beat Atlanta.

This week, the Ugly and Black take on a ticked off Miami squad that was robbed by the zebras in Week Seven. They came within a Big Ben fumble of winning that game ugly, and face another schizoid team that wants to throw instead of run.

Neither team can produce in the red zone, and Miami's Brandon Marshall has only one TD in 2010. The Bengos are nicked up at the corners, with Leon Hall and Johnathan Joseph ailing, and Pacman Jones on IR.

Miami will never have a better chance to open up the offense, and QB Chad Henne might be playing for his job. Backup QB Chad Pennington is waiting in the wings if he fails.

(Johnny) Carson Palmer put up prodigious passing yards in the Week Seven loss, so his arm will be held together with chewing gum and bailing wire. If the Bengos can't run, the game will be over at halftime.

The Look Man has said the Bengos defense has been doing it with smoke and mirrors. How they finished 5th in the league last season is incredible. They have no pass rush and no LBs, and they surrendered nearly 500 yards of offense to the Falcons in Week Seven.

The Marine Mammals cover and win in the Jungle, sending the Bengals to Blackout City for the balance of the season. Bud and Sandy take the fan boat into Fountain Square playing a non-stop loop of Flipper's cackling laugh. Marine Mammals.



"Tommy John? I thought you said Obi Wan."

Tennessee at San Diego (-3.5)

San Diego has been struggling on the road, and last week extended that at home with a loss the Chowds. The Look Man was still impressed with the Bolts offense, which nearly prevailed with missing parts.

Tennessee is quietly the best team in the AFC, teaming physical defense with big play offense. Vince Young should be back this week, but the real story is the play of WR Kenny Britt. The Flaming Thumbtacks can kill you on the ground with RB Chris (CJ2K) Johnson or the pass.

What hasn't happened yet is someone using the no-huddle to obviate Tennessee's defensive line depth. San Diego will do this on Sunday, but its efficacy could be reduced by injuries to WR Malcolm (In the Middle) Floyd and TE Antonio (Microsoft Hands) Gates. Like Clark Bar in Indy, the Bolts offense flows through its TE, and Microsoft has a bad ankle and toe.

As proven last week, the Bolts don't match up well against a balanced attack. Thumbtacks win, getting the press to proclaim them the best team in the NFL. Tacks.

Green Bay at Jets (-6)

The Jets are coming off a well-timed bye week, and they are getting accolades as the cream of the AFC. The Cheeseheads are coming off their first win over Brett Favre, when they played lights out defense to win.

Unfortunately, the Cheeseheads have major injury issues. Their defensive line is decimated by injuries and they face a run-first Jets team. On offense, the receivers and QB are out of synch, with Aaron (Staff of Moses) Rodgers completing several passes to green grass last week. The receivers were going deep when Rodgers issued his standard back shoulder throws on out patterns.

The Look Man really dislikes Green Bay coach Mike McCarthy, who nearly allowed Favre to steal another win in Titledown. Jets head coach Rex Ryan won't be as lenient as Childress, and the Jets rout the Pack. J-E-T-S.

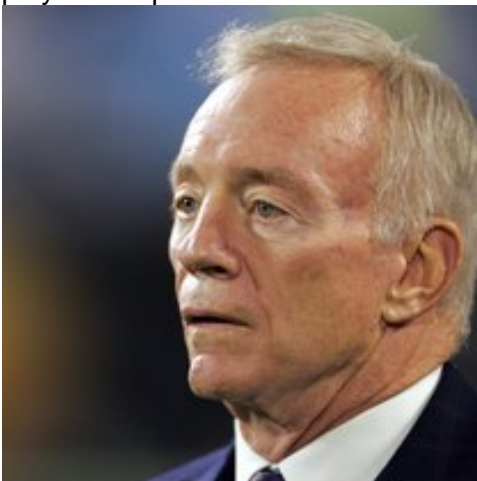
Jacksonville at Dallas (-6.5)

Dallas suffered a major loss last week when Tim McGraw canceled a scheduled concert later in the year. But seriously, folks, Tony Romo (the Place for Ribs) added clavicle to the menu when his fullback failed to pick up a linebacker blitz. Romo is now done for 6-10 weeks, by which time the Pokes season will be over.

Backup QB Jon (Pickna) Kitna takes over for the Starheads at QB. Believe it or not, this shakeup could be just the tonic needed for the Pokes. It looked as if Dallas was actually going to revert to the power running game in Week Seven. The loss of Romo caused them to get down early and they had to toss the running game out of the window. Pickna's propensity for turnovers might swing them back to what brought them to prominence: the power running game.

Jacksonville returns starting QB David (The Fugitive) Garrard, but their real claim is also a strong running game supported by Maurice (Mo-Jo) Jones-Drew. The real question may be whether the J-Squareds want to get their coach fired less than the Pokes.

The Look Man is taking the chalk here, as J-Ville's secondary is tailor-made for Pickna. Dallas rights the ship here with a balanced attack to begin the long climb back to alleged playoff competition. Pokes.



"First, Tim cancels, now the Rangers are 0-2???"

Blitzburgh at New Orleans (-2) [Football Nite in America]

Blitzburgh begins the tough part of its schedule this week, with New England and Cincinnati lurking. While everyone has touted the Stillers record without Ben, this game represents its first real test.

New Orleans was looking beyond Cleveland last week, but the bigger story is their two home losses. The Look Man doesn't believe it's a Super Bowl hangover as much as the loss of the players that provide the mortar for the bricks of a championship. Brees has gone all Zach Galifianakis, taking a lot of big hits and throwing the ball to the other team.

Look for the Religious Icons to go back to the future, using the passing game to set up the run. The Stillers defense took a big hit with the loss of DE Aaron Smith last week, so the Icons should be able to crease the edge. Safety run support by Polamalu will then help New Orleans run their patented seam routes.

The Look Man would like to see the Icons take this one, but there is too much offense in Blitzburgh. Stillers win, setting up a nice Monday Nighter with the Bengos. Stillers.



New Orleans' home field advantage?

Houston at Indy (-5.5) Game of the Week – [Monday Night Football]

Indy TE Dallas Clark (Bar) was put on IR this week, ending his season and any real hope for a Lombardi for the Colts. Clark Bar is the guy through which the Indy offense flows, and when added to injuries to Austin (Lassie) Collie, and Joseph Addai, it spells real trouble.

That trouble is amplified by the fact that Indy's season rides on this game. The Colts are already 0-2 in the AFC Souse, courtesy of losses to Houston and J-Ville. Another division loss would take them out of the tiebreaker position in the superior AFC. The Jets, New England and Stillers are already 5-1, and Tennessee, Houston and KC are right on their heels.

Peyton (The Sheriff) Manning works his magic in big games, but he'll have to parlay Reggie (Millionaire Playboy Bruce) Wayne, Pierre Garcon and Blair White (Project) into a winning trifecta. The Look Man ain't buying it. Houston.

EPILOGUE

The league made a big deal about the fact that there were no helmet to helmet hits in Week Seven. Less well known was the fact that there were eleven pick sixes, and the scoring broke a record held since 1983.

Take a minute to digest that. No weekly scoring of this magnitude in *twenty seven years*. Either the offenses improved dramatically, or the defenses were playing possum. Any way you slice it, the middle of the field was not utilized, and the late out pattern throws were getting gobbled up at a prolific rate.

Nearly every team put up at least 30 points in Week Seven, and the Grayders dropped 59 on Denver. The NFL finally got rid of the Breast Cancer ball, meaning folks could actually throw and catch a rock that wasn't slicked up with a pink ribbon logo, but this defies logic.

The NFL would like to think the problem is that easily remedied, but they are sorely mistaken. The H2H controversy will rise again, as surely as the sun. And if it doesn't, we'll simply see the greatest scoring season in the history of the league.

One other tidbit: the NFL stocked its lockout war chest by releasing veteran backups. The resulting special teams plays are startling. Special teams are giving it up like a cheerleader on barbiturates in 2010, and it falls directly at the feet of the NFL management.

Offense sells tickets, but defense wins championships. We may be seeing exciting plays, but the delicate balance of the league is in its ability to produce drama filled contests. This season, most of the drama has been of the tabloid variety, and no team has been dominant.

The league works best when you have two or three dominant teams that folks love or hate. In 2010, we just have a bunch of folks scrambling while the Colts, Vikes and Pokes struggle.

Peace,

The Look Man