

## THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2011

### Week One –Play Ball!

*"Moon lit sky, free I lay. These words kiss thoughts and walk miles for you. We own the night."  
-- tweet from Houston RB Arian Foster, a poet on the field and off.*

The fans waited a long offseason, suffering through a lot of discussions on lockouts, CBAs, and free agency. They weren't disappointed by Week One of the 2011 NFL season. A record five games featured both quarterbacks throwing for three bills against out of shape defensive players.

More importantly, special teams were on Front Street, with kickoff returns for touchdowns. The NFL stupidly tinkered with the kickoff format, but Randall (Corn) Cobb and Ted Ginn (and Tonic) exploded for long kick returns in spite of the new rules.

The Look Man believes the NFL owners were trying to save money on kick specialists, many of whom are getting QB money on the most exciting play in the NFL. Josh Cribbs, Devin Hester and Leon Washington are breaking the banks with their respective teams and owners were voting with their pocketbooks.

The rule change needed a two-thirds majority, and nearly failed with six teams voting no. It was no surprise that Cleveland, Chicago and Seattle were among the nay votes.

The new CBA is a horrible deal for the players, and a great deal for the owners. Not only is the ten year duration too long, but the owners can pocket tens of millions against the cap this season. Rosters were not expanded, and the M\*A\*S\*H list of injuries is only just begun in Week One.

Luckily, football starved fans got some treats in the openers, and it looks like anyone can win it in 2011. Aaron Rodgers, Tom Brady, Drew Brees and a host of other signal callers all looked spectacular. If the first week is any indicator, we're in for a real treat this year.

### **LAGNIAPPE**

*Just good enough to get you beat?*

The Look Man believes the worst QB is the one who's just good enough to get you beat. He has flashes of brilliance, but moments of sheer ineptitude. The league is legion with these guys, but Matt Schaub, Kyle Orton, and Carson Palmer are just a few examples. These guys not only deny your team rings, they postpone the drafting of franchise QBs.

The Look Man feels bad for Tony (The Place for Ribs) Romo, but after his performance in the Meadowlands, he may have entered the Hall of JGETGYB. Romo needs to let the game come to him a little bit, instead of thinking he needs to win it. He has superior offensive talent, giving him stellar numbers. Now he simply needs to let them make plays and not put his young defense in tough spots.

This just in from GB Shaw, a noted Pokes Fan and longtime Tailpipe:

*Hey, Look Man,*

*Yeah, I was moping around Monday, until I gained a certain sense of perspective:*

- *The Starheads had that game in hand, and blew it;*
- *Against a team that a bunch of analysts say is going to the SB;*

- *And I had picked Dallas to lose this in my pre-season predictions, anyway.*

*In the mean time, my kind, considerate, and gracious co-workers have hung a little poster of the "Most Interesting Man in the World," with Romo's face superimposed, subtitled "I don't always fumble or throw INTs, but, when I do, I make sure it's at the end of the game."*

*I love working with professionals...*

The Look Man shared that glum sensation and the renewed perspective after watching the Bengals beat his Browns in the Battle of Ohio Part I.



*"Hey, Rocky! Want to see me pull a rabbit out of a hat?" "Not again!"*

### Speaking of QBs...

Colt (My Little Pony) McCoy has gotten a lot of ink as a guy who might have a breakout season, but the Look Man wonders. MLP is a short QB who can't see over the O-line, and he often takes hits after the play. These hidden hits ultimately result in injuries, lost playing time and bad decisions.

McCoy may yet change the Look Man's mind, but don't bet on it. He holds the highest winning percentage in college ball, but don't let that fool you. The NFL is a big boy league, and Tim Tebow is perhaps the best example of a great college QB who stinks in the NFL.

QB's lit up the scoreboards in Week One, but there is flip side: there were a record 89 sacks to go with the passing records. As a result, there are a lot of QBs who might be scratched in week two, including Sam Bradford.

The impact hasn't fully manifested, but based upon the record number of teams keeping only two QBs, we may yet be headed for a Brady Quinn vs. Tyler Palko Super Bowl. Mike Vick took 21 hits *in a win*, a sure-fire way to turn the alleged Dream Team Iggles into a nightmare.

Don't be surprised to see (Johnny) Carson Palmer to return later in the year with another team. He's been staying in shape, working out with former Jet QB Ken O'Brien. Mr. Tonight Show is not yet ready to call it a career and plenty of teams are going to need replacement QBs when the starters get knocked out.

It gets late early...

The Look Man shrugged off the Browns 1-12 home opener stat, but since 1978, nearly half of the 474 teams that won openers, went to the playoffs. Only a hundred of 500 that lost openers sniffed the postseason. This stat includes 2010, when Baltimore, Chicago, Green Bay, Kansas City, New England, New Orleans, Pittsburgh and Seattle all played in January. Seattle even went on to beat the Saints after winning the NFC Worst at 7-9.

## **ZEBRA OF THE WEEK**

The Browns still haven't gotten a home call since Bottlegate, and week one was no different.

Grayders at Donkeys – Jerome (the) Boger(man)

threw a flag on every other play prompting analyst Trent Dilfer (Pickle) to wear out the "...surprise, there's another flag..." reference. Boger is as bad as any zebra to wear the stripes.

Cincy at Cleveland – Bill (Gun Show) Leavy

threw thirteen flags on the home team, and only two against the Bengals. Sure, the game was sloppy, but offensive rhythm is hard to come by in a flag fest. Someone needs to start testing the zebras for HGH, because Leavy is selling tickets to Hulk Hochuli's gun show.

The Look Man would like to give honorable mention to the zebra in the Pokes-Jets. While the DBs were holding on nearly every play, the zebra swallowed the whistle for both teams.

The clear winner or loser this week is Guns Leavy, who allowed the Bengals to rough up My Little Pony, hold like crazy on offense, and quick snap the Browns despite the Wyche Rule. He even failed to call the Browns for twelve men on the field for that quick snap TD. Bill Leavy, you are the Look Man's Zebra of the Week!



*"Personal foul, for throwing full beer bottles onto the field!"*

## **THE LOOK AHEAD**

Chicago at New Orleans (-6.5)

Brian Urlacher's mom passed this week, but he's playing anyway. The bigger stat might be the return of former bears C Olin Kreutz, now playing for the Religious Icons. The Bears OC Mike Martz is not only a coach killer, he sent Kreutz and TE Greg Olsen packing in the offseason. Both players will haunt them as the Saints take out the overrated Bears.

Hard to imagine the TD spread, since the Icons have a number of injuries, including WR Marques Colston. The Icons defense won't get pushed around like they did in Green Bay, and

the Look Man is counting on home dome advantage and numerous hits on Jay (the Knife) Cutler(y).

One other note – the Bears defense always starts the season like a house afire, playing outstanding for the first six weeks. Once injuries and familiarity take hold, they return to earth, playing pedestrian ball and usually missing the playoffs. Look for that trend this year. Saints.

#### Cincinnati at Denver (-3.5)

Kyle Orton is in a battle to keep his job as lead singer of the Foo Fighters. This week Andy (Red Raider BB Gun) Dalton and his Gang invade the Mile High city, hoping to start 2-0. The Broncos D will treat him like a red-headed stepchild, which, in fact, he is.

Look for Dave Grohl to light this secondary up, and keep Tim Tebow on the bench. After all, when you're behind Brady Quinn (Medicine Woman), you can't expect to leap frog the lead singer of a world famous band. Donkeys.

#### Oakland at Crapchester (-3)

The Look Man has gone on record in the past as a big Ryan (Veritas) Fitzgerald supporter. The Ivy League QB will quickly become, as he lights up opposing defenses early. Only time will tell if he's the real deal or simply the flavor of the week, but take him to beat a Grayders team going east for the weekend. Bills, baby Bills.

#### San Diego at New England (-7)

Tom (Zoolander) Brady was unbelievable last Monday night, racking up passing yards like a Madden game gone wild. The Bolts come into town in a possible playoff preview, and the Chowds will be ready.

Here's the thing: defenses are well behind offenses at this point in the season. They are simply not used to being on the field for four quarters, and a ball control offense can wear them down and put up mad yards.

The Look Man likes this matchup on the field, as the Chowds D matches up well with the Bolts running game. On paper, they also look good against the pass, but the Chowds made Chad Henne (Pasta) look like the reincarnation of Dan Marino. Look for Rivers to expose their soft middle with Norv Turner calling a solid game. Bolts to cover.

#### Dallas at Frisco (+3)

Tony Romo (the Place for Ribs) go on the road a second straight week, but this time he's facing a defense he can carve. Well, actually, he carved the Jets last week, but didn't get the elusive "W."

D-Co Rob Ryan has this defense playing great, and the Pokes deserved better than they got in Week One. Unfortunately, they are very thin at DB, and it might be a while before they get healthy.

This matchup is an old school favorite, and should be a good one. The Look Man likes the Pokes by three. Pokes win and the Niners continue to "suck for Luck."

#### Philly at Atlanta (+2.5) Football Night in America

Mike Vick might be the most beloved QB in this game despite playing for Philly. He returns to the ATL for a great game. The problem is that Vick is taking punishment behind a pedestrian O-line.

Look for the Falcons to put tremendous heat on Vick, and press the offense.

Atlanta will counter with a solid run game, but their egos will get in the way of a win. It's a great conundrum; if they grind it out, they can beat an Iggles D that is weak against the run; if they put the game on Matty (Ice) Ryan's shoulders, they lose.

The Look Man thinks the Dream Team is overhyped, but so is Atlanta. The Dirty Birds won a number of gaems in the Dome due to home cooking, including the early win over the Packers. Still, if the Falcons run the football and play ball control, they beat the Iggles in the Dirty South. Falcons.

## **EPILOGUE**

Week One was epic, but the more things change, the more they stay the same. Owners think they can monkey with the rules, but the Law of Unintended Consequences takes over. Kickoffs are one of the most exciting plays in the game, and they always will be.

It's like the Jeff Goldblum soliloquy in Jurassic Park. Chaos Theory can't be denied, and neither can the NFL. Despite trying to mask the fact that it is a gladiator sport and polishing the ugly away, the game remains the same. The autumn wind is still a Raider...

Peace,

The Look Man