

## **THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2012** **Week Sixteen – Merry Clinch-mas**

*"Let's go Seahawks! You owe us one!!!" – Packers OG Josh Sitton, rooting for the Seahawks to beat the Niners last week*

The Look Man stunk it up in his Week Fifteen picks, missing on the Washington, Cleveland and Bengals games. It takes a big man to admit he's wrong, and the Look Man is a big man. Literally, if not figuratively.

Still, Week Fifteen featured some great games, with the Bengals at Stillers, New Orleans at Dallas and Washington at Philly being solid. While each game included some sloppy play and questionable coaching, they set up an interesting Week Sixteen slate. The Bengals and Colts are locked in at the fifth and sixth Wild Card spots. Dallas at Washington will provide key resolution to the NFC East. And the AFC seeding is still up in the air with Denver, New England and Houston all vying for home field supremacy in the Tournament.

One of the most interesting matchups of the week was Frisco at Seattle, where the Hawks blasted the would-be NFC West kings. If the 2012 season has shown us nothing else, it proved that no team is really dominant. The Niners got their collective heads beat in following a tour de force win at New England. Each week, big wins are followed by crushing defeats, and it makes the talking hairdos look pretty silly.

Perhaps the most interesting storyline is how the Green Bay at Seattle replacement zebras game continues to have lasting impact. Seattle could easily have home field advantage in an NFC playoff game courtesy of Goodell's incompetence. Roger Rabbit's negotiation of the Zebra contract may have a lasting impact on the postseason if the Pack has to travel to the Great Northwest for a rematch. Seattle is the team no one wants to face, and the Twelfth Man is a reality in Coffeetown.

The 2012 NFL season has been the Year of the QB, with rookies dominating the landscape. Kaepernick, Russell Wilson, Robert Griffin III and Andrew Luck have all been spectacular while Mark Sanchez, Cam Newton and Jay Cutler have regressed. Aaron Rodgers is quietly discount double checking his way to a great year, and he is in good company with Tom Brady, Matt Ryan and Tony Romo. It's unclear how the end game will emerge, but we've never seen anything like 2012 before.

### **LAGNIAPPE**

#### Sea-dogs

The Look Man was a frontrunner on the solid Seahawks defense, featuring CB Richard Sherman. Sherman recently won an arbitration for PED suspension, and celebrated prematurely with a fumble return for a TD last Sunday. If you haven't seen this group of dawgs on defense, you're missing out. The Look Man likes them to win the West, and represent well in the postseason. No one, and the Look Man means, no one, wants to go to Coffeetown in the Tournament.

#### Jewbelation IPA

The Look Man had to cackle at this week's beer pick of the week in C-town. The pick hit is Jewbelation Sweet 16 from the fun-loving folks at Schmaltz Brewing ("He'Brew, The Chosen Beer"). Here's the copy from the Cleveland Plain Dealer:

*This kosher ale is made with 16 malts and 16 hops for the brewery's 16th anniversary. Thank goodness it's not 16 percent alcohol, but it almost tastes like it (it's closer to 12).*

*This is a big one, an imperial ale that offers a hint of chocolate with an alcohol-tasting finish. Not for everyone, but imperial fans will like this offering from the Saratoga Springs, N.Y.-based brewer.*

The Look Man is not big on IPAs, but this marketing is hilarious.



*The Chosen Beer, indeed*

### 4600 Miles to Honolulu

The Nati sent DT Geno Atkins, CB Leon Hall, CB; and FS Reggie Nelson to Hawaii this week, indicative of the solid defense played in the Queen City. WR AJ Green rounded out the selections of a team that no one had on its radar. These young players are fast, talented and brash, and they are putting together a solid endorsement of D-Co Mike Zimmer for a head coaching vacancy.

### MVP – Most Valuable Peyton?

The MVP race has been epic, with Peyton Manning and Adrian (All Day) Peterson the frontrunners. The Look Man likes All Day, who has a chance to break Eric Dickerson's season rushing record. While Peyton has turned Denver around, Peterson has done it on a surgical repaired ACL with a team that has very little talent.

Look for Peterson to get close to the record against a Green Bay team without FS Charles Woodson. The Look Man doesn't see him breaking the record, but he should get the MVP nod over Comeback Player of the Year Peyton. Manning has enough hardware already, and another MVP would simply put him in the Brett Favre over-hyped Pantheon.

### **THE LOOK AHEAD**

The Look Man missed on the Bengals, who surprised themselves with a rare road win in Blitzburgh. If you haven't seen these guys in 2012, you're in for a postseason treat. They play a plucky, physical defense and big play offense that is very entertaining.

And now that the Look Man has eaten some Cincy crow, he boldly goes where no prognosticator has gone before with the following Week Seventeen picks:

### Baltimore at Cincinnati (-2.5)

The Bengals-Stillers was one of the most physical games of the season, and Andy (The Red Rifle) Dalton played poorly enough to lose. Fortunately, his D bailed him out, and the Bengals came away with the W.

Here's the thing. Baltimore is still playing for seeding, and after punishing the Jynts, they need some momentum. Hard to imagine why the oddsmakers are giving the Dumpster Ducks points here. The Bengals cannot improve their seeding, and Baltimore can move up courtesy of their

win over the Chowds earlier in the year. If both teams end up 11-5, the potential rematch will be in B-more not Beantown.

B-More in a rout, setting up a Bengals at Chowds playoff game next week.

### Chicago at Detroit (+3)

The Monsters of the Furniture Mart are smack talking early this week, saying that Lions QB Matt Stafford folds under duress. It's not like the Bears own the Lions after winning a close, poorly officiated game at Spaceship Field 13-7 earlier this season. Ndamakong Suh nearly tore Cutler's arm off in that one, and could cheap shot the Bears right out of the playoff picture by injuring Jay the Knife.

Calving (Megaton) Johnson needs about a buck twenty in yards to become the first NFL receiver to go over two large for the season. The Look Man says he does it against a Bears D that is banged up and slow. Lions cover and win, knocking the MOTFM out of the postseason and giving Lovie (Thurston Howell III) Smith a version of the home game. Detroit.

### Cleveland at Blitzburgh (NL)

Both Brandon Weeden and Colt (My Little Pony) McCoy got knocked into 2013 in a brutal loss to Denver last week. The Browns are going to start Thad Lewis, a journeyman QB from St. Louis, in the Turnpike Bowl Part Deux.

The Browns are in for a tough, physical battle following a shocking Stillers loss to the Bengals. That loss knocked the Stillers out of the postseason, and they are looking at their first losing season in a while should they lose to Cleveland.

Not only would it represent a season sweep by Cleveland, the Squealers are looking at their first sub-.500 season in a while should they lose.

Mike (Omar Epps) Tomlin has been getting abused by Stillers Fan following a re-organization in 2012. Not only did the Stillers allow Coach of the Year candidate Bruce (BA) Arians to depart for Indy, they replaced him with the mentally unbalanced Todd Haley. Now Big Ben is ticked, and the team is in disarray.

Don't expect Omar to go down quietly in this one. The "*first do no harm*" mentality espoused on *House* goes out the window, as Tomlin will have his boyz ready to bust some heads. No wonder B-Weed and My Little Pony have boo-boos on their throwing shoulders; no QB in their right minds want to face this pack of wet yellow jackets.

The Look Man said the Browns should not be counted out last week. This week, it's a standing eight as the Browns have already gone fishin'. Squealers go to 8-8.



*Tough day. Tough year.*

### Dallas at DC (-3)

The Pokes have a history of choking in Week Seventeen, where Tony Romo (The Place for Ribs) is 1-5 career in win or go home games. Head coach Jason Garrett's career is on the line, and the pressure is mounting.

Meanwhile, the Genocide Victims have two chances for the postseason: a win means an NFC East title, while a loss combined with other Minnesota and Chicago losses keeps hope alive for old DC.

While Mike (The Rat) Shanahan gets all of the credit, the real savior of Washington is D-Co Jim Haslett. Haslett turned Drew Brees over five times and made Brandon Weeden and other rookie QBs look silly. Haslett's NFL career with Buffalo, head coaching credentials in New Orleans and the UFL make him an ideal head coaching candidate. This matchup between Haslett and Pokes D-Co Rob Ryan should be epic.

The Look Man predicted that the Pokes would not see the postseason, and he still believes it. Despite the bad wheel of Robert (Bob) Griffin III, Washington has a legitimate running game with RB Alfred (The New Butler) Morris. The Pokes have lost two starting nose tackles and inside linebackers. DE DeMarcus Ware is held together with chewing gum and bailing wire and the defensive backfield is banged up.

Romo has been getting killed, but he has turned his Mister November moniker around. Romo has won consistently in December, and the Saints loss last week belonged to his defense. The Look Man has actually been impressed with Romo, who has won despite his head coach and the circus created by Jerrah Jones.

Washington runs the rock to shorten the game and get the W. Romo plays gallantly, but the defense gives up big plays as the Pokes get knocked out. DC.



*"I will NOT lose to Jason Garrett!"*

### New England at Miami (+10)

The Look Man doesn't know how it happens; he just knows that despite consecutive ten win seasons, the Chowds always get the easiest schedule in the league. This week, they face the Marine Mammals in the late game, allowing them to know their playoff seeding fate prior to the game. If Denver has already locked up the one o'clock game, they will rest their starters. Otherwise, they will turn it up a notch and pound the Fish.

The Look Man believes the former will happen, so he's taking the Mammals to cover. Miami.

## **EPILOGUE**

It's been a long time since Week Seventeen meant so much to so many. The playoff scenarios are unbelievable and the revised scheduling is the reason. The NFL engaged in some intellectual dishonesty in previous years, avoiding division matchups in the final weeks.

This new approach gives fans their monies' worth, and sets up an interesting postseason scramble. The last thing anyone needs is an expanded playoff or eighteen game regular season. Less is more, especially where Roger Rabbit is concerned.

Dallas, Seattle, Frisco, Baltimore and Cincinnati will all have their destiny decided in 2012. Like the 2001 season where New England stole a playoff win in the Tuck Rule Game, this season could decide the long term futures of multiple teams.

The Chowds went on to multiple rings following that game, and the Grayders have never recovered. This year, the Pokes are in danger of being blown up, while Cincinnati has an opportunity to turn the corner and become a real live boy.

Only the Football Gods know what's in store, and the rest of us get to open delayed Christmas presents following Sunday. What more could anyone ask?

Happy New Year,

The Look Man