

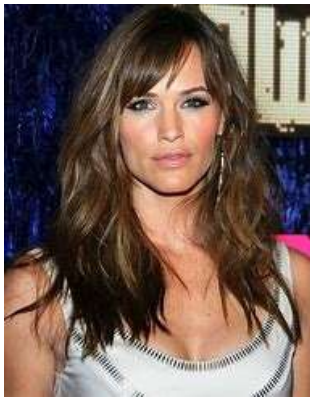
## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2018 Week Minus One – Life is for the Living

*"I kept thinking it was some kind of joke from someone who watched Draft Day one too many times" – sportswriter Bill Simmons on Baker Mayfield being selected Number One overall in the 2018 NFL Draft*

### PROLOGUE

In case you haven't seen the *Draft Day*, it's a film about how the Cleveland Browns go from doormat to powerhouse under the guidance of GM Kevin Costner. The unbelievable story line features Costner trading two number one draft picks to acquire a QB to rescue the Browns, then reacquires the picks using compromising photos of the Seattle GM. This story could never happen unless you were Bears GM Ryan Pace, the youngest general manager in the NFL.

There is a backstory in which the seventy year old Costner is hitting way above his average, dating noted hottie and Capital One spokesmodel Jennifer Garner. Garner catches him cheating after finding a condom in his wallet. The NFL forces Costner to take a drug test and Garner drives him to rehab. Wait a minute, that was Batman.



*What's in your wallet?*

Through all of the pain of a bad 2017 season, a shining star emerged in the form of Super Bowl LII, which featured the most total yards in a single game in NFL history. Not just Super Bowl history. Not just postseason history. The most total yards in any game in the history of the NFL, a record that has stood for nearly seventy years. Talk about a fantasy; you couldn't even write this stuff without laughing.

The promise of a rebirth of the NFL is very tantalizing, and Commissioner Roger (Rabbit) Goodell is back, baby, with a new rule book, new zebras and the same haircut. What could go wrong?

Without further ado, the Look Man Report 2018 for Week Minus One.

### LAGNIAPPE

#### Home Box Office?

The 2017 Cleveland Browns tied an ignominious record for futility by going 0-16, setting a new nadir with a 1-31 record under Head Coach and former porn star Hue (Huge Action) Jackson. Action starred in a number of adult features including *Hot Buttered Head* and *Can of Corn*. He gave up his thespian ambitions to coach football, ending up in Cleveland due to the talent of one his former co-stars. Apparently, she really impressed Browns owner and CEO Jimmy Haslam with her skills. And some compromising photographs.

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The Browns are now the darlings of the HBO Hard Knocks franchise, which rewards futility by making stars of players who end up selling insurance. And if you haven't watched this year's version, you are missing a real treat. The Browns coaching staff alone is hilarious and several interesting players round out the cast. If you have HBO on Demand, do yourself a favor and catch it. The language is coarse, but Episode Two is perhaps the funniest inside look at professional football evah.

#### Spider Two Y Banana

Oakland pulled a real fast one in the offseason, firing Jack Del Rio and hiring Jon (Chucky) Gruden. Al Davis is turning over in his grave after the Grayders signed Chucky to a fully guaranteed ten year one hundred-million-dollar agreement. In his first major move, Chucky traded Pro Bowl pass rusher Khalil Mack to Chicago in exchange for two ones, a three and a six. The Monsters of the Furniture Mart also received a two, but are essentially mortgaging their future.

Chicago now has zero picks in the first two rounds in 2019, and none in first and third rounds of 2020. Perhaps more importantly, their win total with Mack is sure to rise, cheapening the value of the two ones sent to Oakland. In the Look Man's opinion Gruden is as sharp as a marble, and this isn't going to end well.

Chucky then cut both of his backup quarterbacks and dealt for former Bengals QB AJ McCarron and his lovely wife Katherine, which prompted the 79-year-old Brent Musberger to come out of retirement.

*"Welcome A.J. McCarron to the Raider family. Can't wait for the 'beautiful' Mrs. McCarron to join us in Oakland," Musberger tweeted Sunday. Musberger went further, tweeting, "She could make a blind man talk about seeing again, I tell you. You know, the kind of woman who makes you want to fellate her father. Wow, she's a beautiful woman."*

This trade is reminiscent of when the Bears traded for QB Jay Cutler, and everyone in The Second City figured the Super Bowl was right around the corner. Cutler went on to once throw six picks in a single game for the Bears before riding off into the reality TV sunset on *Very Cavallari*.

#### Pat-A-Cake Pat-A-Cake

The Look Man looked on in disgust as the Browns selected (Cake) Baker Mayfield Numero Uno in the 2018 Draft. Not only is this kid pedestrian, but name a Heisman winning QB who has been successful at the next level in the last 30 years? You can't, but hope springs eternal as Browns Fan chants, "Baker-Mayfield-Woof-Woof-Woof-Woof-Woof!"

#### **Guys who believe in Baker Mayfield:**

- John Dorsey, Browns GM
- Scott McCloughan, former Washington GM who reports to Dorsey
- Hue Jackson, HC who reports to Dorsey
- Tim Tebow, 2<sup>nd</sup> best QB in NCAA history, but an NFL bust
- Stevie Wonder, for obvious reasons.
- Anyone associated with Choke-lahoma football
- Kanye West. Nuff said.

#### **Guys who don't believe in Baker Mayfield (or Santa Claus):**

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- Jarvis Landry, Browns FA receiver
- Ben McAdoo, former Jyntz HC who interviewed for Browns OC job.
- Anyone not associated with Choke-lahoma football
- The Look Man

The AFC Norse is a big-boy division with hard-nosed, pipe-swinging defenses. There is no room for an undersized walk-on who runs a 4.8 forty. The Look Man's prediction: Cake will get his teeth knocked out before Week 12, sending head coach Huge Action back to his original career in porn.

#### NFL 2017 All Retirement Team

The NFL lost a lot of talent in 2017, including the following:

- Jason Witten, Pokes TE and all-around good egg; he should be a candidate for the Hall in five years. Witten is the new face of MNF, and we wish him well.
- (Johnny) Carson Palmer – Mister Tonight Show never won the Big Enchilada, but made more money with less talent than anyone except...
- Norman (Boomer) Esiason, who is stepping away from the Monday Night Football radio broadcast for Westwood One after 18 seasons. Esiason was a four-time Pro Bowler with the Bengals, with more touchdown passes than any left-handed quarterback in league history (247). And one more playoff TD pass than the Look Man.
- DeMarco (Run DMC) Murray – Pokes and Thumbtacks RB, is hanging them up after seven years in the National...Football...League. The former Sooner was a third round, three-time Pro Bowler who won NFL Offensive Player of the Year in 2014. Run DMC touched the rock nearly 400 times that year, as HC Jason Garrett ran him halfway to retirement. He is now pursuing broadcasting and quality time with his wife, pictured below.



*Mrs. Murray wants more quality time...*

- Joe Thomas, future HOF Browns LT
- James Harrison, Stillers LB and part-time dentist
- Kam Chancellor, Shehawks S LOBer
- Richie Incognito, Marine Mammals OG and noted sociopath; he commonly channels Captain Insano at funeral homes.

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The Zebra Crew lost Ed (The Hulk) Hochuli, (Mean) Gene Steratore, Terry (Bottlegate) McAulay, and Jeff (Beanbag) Triplette. The latter two guys are no big loss, but Steratore and Hulk Hochuli are two of the best to wear the stripes.

No word yet on whether Steratore will quit his spring job reffing Big 10 basketball, but he did get a sweet gig as a TV analyst. Both guys will be missed, replaced by Stevie Wonder and Jose Feliciano no doubt.

#### CELEBRITY OBIT OF THE WEEK

The Look Man lost a good friend this week. Cliff (Barney) Hall went to be with the Lord just prior to Labor Day, and he was a prince among men. Raised in a middle-class family, he rose to success on the wings of an excellent parochial school education, rapier-like wit and a gleam in his eye.

Barney was the kind of guy who makes your heart smile. He once arrived at a midtown Manhattan hotel and when asked whether he was “with the party,” he casually agreed. Dude winds up partying with James Gandolfini and the crew from the Sopranos. Barney was a huge Springsteen fan, so hanging out with Little Stevie Van Zandt was just the icing on the cake. The Main Barn was just luckier than a canine with multiple reproductive organs.

There are myriad Barney stories just like that one. Wherever he went, people gravitated to his casual but erudite manner. He was at once well-mannered and outrageous; generous and thrifty; kind and snarky. He craved knowledge like a sponge craves water and he was just as likely to watch Sean Hannity as Rachel Maddow. While he was unlikely to ever achieve sainthood, the Main Barn lived a principled life, and in today’s world, that is uncommon.

It goes without saying that he will be missed. What does need saying is that we should all follow his example and start carpe-ing some diem every chance we get, because no man knoweth the hour. The next time you host a libation, do the Look Man a favor and pour a little of the libation on the ground for the brothers who didn’t make it. RIP Barney.

#### THE LOOKAHEAD

##### Atlanta at Philadelphia (-2.5): NFL Kickoff Special on Thursday Night

The defending world champion Iggles start the season with a tough matchup in the Atlanta Dirty Birds. Matty Ice will have his hands full with a cagey defense, but the Iggles have struggled mightily in the preseason. Dirty Birds cover in a nasty early season tilt. Dirty Birds.

##### Blitzburgh at Cleveland (+4) / 46

The Browns have the fifth toughest schedule of the year, with opponents posting a .523 winning percentage in 2017. Big Ben Rapelessberger is 22-2 versus the Good Guys, so you have a recipe for disaster.

The setup is twofold: (1) Le’Veon Bell is still a no-show, and could miss the first ten games of the season; (2) the return of Josh (Flash) Gordon, who is a man among boys. The Stillers D has not replaced Shazier, and could be vulnerable to the run.

Enter Browns RB Carlos (Jekyll and) Hyde, who is a rolling ball of butcher knives, and you could see some intrigue. Good thing, too, because Cleveland has failed to replace Joe Thomas at left tackle. New

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Browns QB Tyrod Taylor is second only to Drew Brees for completion percentage from a clean pocket. He won't see many of those in this game, but take improved Browns defense and the under.

#### Dallas at Carolina (-3)

The Pokes' O-line is a mess, with Pro Bowl center Travis Frederick out indefinitely after being diagnosed with an autoimmune disease. LT Tyron Smith has a knee, DE David Irving is suspended, and the rest of Doomsday Lite is in shambles. They lost a lot of good players, including Witten and Dez Bryant, replacing them with a speedy wideout aptly named Michael Gallup. Receivers rarely do well in year one, which is not good in a pivotal year for HC Jason Garrett.

Carolina isn't in much better shape, with LB Thomas Davis out for steroid suspension, and WR Curtis Samuel out for Game One. The Black Cats did pick up free agent WR Jarius Wright from Minnesota, and factor back Christian McCaffery looks solid. All in all, too much Carolina. Black Cats cover and win.

#### Chicago at Green Bay (-7.5): Football Night in America

Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers is back healthy, and the defense has seen a makeover under new DC Mike Pettine. They have two young corners who are about to light up the NFC Norse.

The Cheeseheads will miss WR Gordy Nelson, but not enough to lose this game. Go, Pack, go. Packers cover and win.

### EPILOGUE

NFL viewership crashed in 2016 and 2017, with the pundits claiming it was due to election year politics, patriotism and El Nino. The truth is that the NFL game may actually be responsible for ruining the brains of its participants. It is a violent, collision sport, and no amount of rule changes is going to change that. In actuality, the rules put into play for kickoffs, headshots and other injury creating plays may have the opposite effect: they may result in the Law of Unintended Consequences.

Case in point: the new helmet rule. No one wants to see a repeat of the Ryan Shazier tragedy, but how many of these neck injuries have there been since Darryl Stingley? For you young Tailpipers, Stingley was a wide receiver for the Chowds who got his neck broken by Grayders raw dawg safety Jack (the Assassin) Tatum in the seventies. Tatum and George Atkinson were the 70's version of the Legion of Boom, decleating would-be receivers with the quickness.

Penalties have increased sharply in the last two seasons, and the current helmet rule will result in a flurry of early season whistles. The Zebras will swallow the whistles until the Chowds get into trouble in the postseason, only to be rescued by their teammates with the vertically striped uniforms.

The Look Man doesn't expect a rematch of Philly and New England in February, but stranger things have happened, and usually do when the playoffs run through Boston. Get yer popcorn ready, cuz it's gonna be a show.

Peace,

The Look Man