

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?

“We needed a play, so they gave it to the playmaker. (Head Coach Matt) Nagy tried it with me earlier in the season and got flack for it but gave it back to me and it worked out great.” – Bears OL Bradley Sowell on his GW TD catch against the Rams on SNF. The play was named Santa’s Sleigh and Sowell’s celebration dance afterwards was hilarious.

PROLOGUE

The Bears punished the Rams in Week 14, and Sowell’s tackle eligible TD was just one of many keys to victory. Head coach Matt Nagy is parlaying a ferocious defense and ball control offense into a nice NFC Norse title.

Given that surprise butt-whooping with losses by the Stillers and New Orleans, Week 14 turned out to be Xanadu Week 2018, when road dogs rise up and beat the spread. Vegas is getting torched ahead of the windfall which is sure to follow the arrival of the Raiders in 2020.

The dance that is the NFL regular season is clearly full of moves and counter moves, and it is getting interesting. Even the Browns have a mathematical playoff chance in Week 15, something that would’ve invited laughter in Week One. The only thing missing is Russell Crowe in gladiator gear asking, “Are you not entertained?”

While the “P” word has no place in the mouth of Browns Fan, the race to the finish line is intriguing if not predictable. The NFL banks on keeping hope alive as long as possible, inviting folks to attend games with the hope of postseason glory. Even if they don’t actually attend, TV revenues make it worth the investment.

Without further revenue rants, the Week that Was.

LAGNIAPPE

Cool Hand Flacco

The Blake Bortles era in Sacksonville is now entering its final act, and the J-Squareds will need a QB in 2019. Enter Joe (Cool) Flacco, who is looking at the handwriting on the wall with the development of Baltimore first round pick Lamar Jackson at QB.

Flacco can’t move like he used to, but he’s less likely to throw worm burners or soul crushing picks. Jacksonville is only one year removed from a fourth quarter lead over the Chowds in the AFC Championship, and could use a man like Cool Joe.

Though Flacco has been mentioned for the Jynts and other teams, this makes too much sense to pass up. Of course, former Jynts head coach Tom Coughlin could pick up Eli Manning for a song, opening up New York for the Jersey born Flacco. Either way, Flacco is done in Baltimore, as his \$100 million contract expires with one Lombardi and hurt feelings.

V-ger?

The Voyager 1 space probe departed Earth on September 5, 1977, with the primary objective to survey the planets Jupiter, Saturn, and the outer ring of planets. The spacecraft featured plutonium power sources, and was expected to crap out sometime around your anus.

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?

Voyager 1 has now left our solar system and will not approach another star for nearly 40,000 years, even though it is traveling at nearly 100,000 mph. Irrespective, the probe will be in orbit around the center of our galaxy for billions of years. The data it collected could serve to feed our space program for decades. Not too shabby for a fifty-year-old vehicle.

NASA said recently, "We didn't even know how long a spacecraft could operate. Now we're studying the very local interstellar medium. We're hoping it will return in the 23rd century looking for its creator, James Roykirk. We're already getting the anti-gravs ready to beam it to deep space if that happens."

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

There are a lot of candidates this week, but the winner was never really in question. Clete Blakeman walked away with the trophy for Philly at Dallas, ignoring the fumble on the opening kickoff. The fumble was at first ruled down by contact, challenged, overturned, but not awarded to Philly because "there was no clear recovery. Never mind that an Iggles player handed you the ball after the pileup.

Doomsday Lite has been playing lights out of late, but some of the helmet to helmet hits have been completely ignored. That's why the call on Zeke Elliott for spearing was bizarre, only the second of the year on an offensive player.

Along the way there was a phantom offensive pass interference call on Philly TE Dallas Goedert, and a key picked up flag on the Pokes game winning drive. The latter occurred when Pokes LG Xavier Su'a-Filo flat-out tackled DT Treyvon Hester. Su'a Filo should be playing on the D-line after that performance.

It was one of the three worst officiated games in 2018, including the Browns-Raiders and Pokes-Icons robberies. Even longtime Tailpipe and notable Pokes Fan GB Shaw could make a case that the Pokes don't win the NFC Least without even one of these calls.

Blakeman dictated the outcome in a contest decided in overtime with a deflected pass. Clete Blakeman, you are the Look Man **Zebra of the Week!**

THE LOOKAHEAD

It's getting hot in the NFL despite the winter weather, and the *Storm of the Century* continues in Week 15. Roger (Rabbit) Goodell has been walking around his midtown Manhattan office shouting, "Give me the children and I will go away." The Look Man is unsure whether he's doing a Linoge impression or if pedophilia is involved.

At any rate, the Lookahead for Week 15:

Bolts at Baby Backs (-3.5) Thursday Night Football

Bolts defenders Joey Bosa, Melvin Ingram and Isaac Rochell (Rochell) will put heat on an already beat up offensive team in KC. The Baby Backs allowed a number of sacks last week against Baltimore, and this Bolts defense is darn good.

Look for the Bolts to apply heat to a RB-poor Chiefs team that will miss a 100% Tyreek Hill. The pass rush will force them to run shorter routes for TE Travis Kelce instead of his normal seam busters.

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?

Otherworldly QB Patrick Mahomes was sacked three times for 30 yards by B-More, and look for more of the same. The Look Man doesn't believe there will be any no-look passes tonight. He does believe that this could be the Game of the Week.

The Look Man hates to go with a road team in a key Thursday Night special. This game is for home field in the AFC and the Zebras will throw every possible flag to get New England back into the mix. For that reason, as well as the rebirth of Philip Rivers, the Look Man is going with the visitors. Bolts in an instant classic.

Editor's Note: The Look Man wrote this prior to the game, and it was only partially true. The officiating was bad, but a number of calls against KC were overlooked. When it was all said and done, the fault goes to Baby Backs Head Coach Andy (Kool Aid) Reid, who coaches like he eats. KC blew a 14-point fourth quarter lead on the strength of bad clock management and poor defense.

Browns at Donkeys (-2.5) Saturday Night Special [only on NFLN]

The Browns face off with longtime nemesis Denver in a referendum game. The Browns, who passed on DE Bradley Chubb in favor of CB Denzel Ward, will now face the wrath of the Rookie of the Year candidate with 12.5 sacks.

The Look Man was licking his chops at the prospect of having B-Chubb opposite DE Myles Garrett for a version of the Cleveland Sack Exchange. Instead, we got a punk QB at number one and a CB who can't stay on the field. As it currently stands, Garrett and Denver DE Von Miller are neck and neck in the sack race.

The Browns still got a good chub in RB Nick from Georgia, who may be a 2nd round steal. Nick is averaging nearly six yards per carry, but needs to work on his hands. Still, the kid is a baller who could well run over the Donkeys on Saturday night.

Browns CB Denzel Ward will miss the game due to a second week in concussion protocol. He needs to spend some time in the weight room in the offseason in order to match up with physical wide receivers in 2019, and he too, is a defensive ROTY candidate.

This one comes down to two rubber armed QBs facing physical defenses. That means the running games will be pivotal. Whoever runs the ball the most effectively wins this contest and the Look Man is betting it will be Denver. Especially with the calls at Mile High Investigation Field.

Cleveland coaches are still auditioning for other jobs and this attempt to prove your coaching genius usually leads to ruin. Instead of handing the ball to Nick Chubb, they insist on having Cake Baker Mayfield should the load. While it works with pedestrian defenses, good ones often bait Mayfield into picks. Achim's Razor comes to mind: the simplest answer is usually correct. Denver.

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?

Pokes at Ponies (-3)

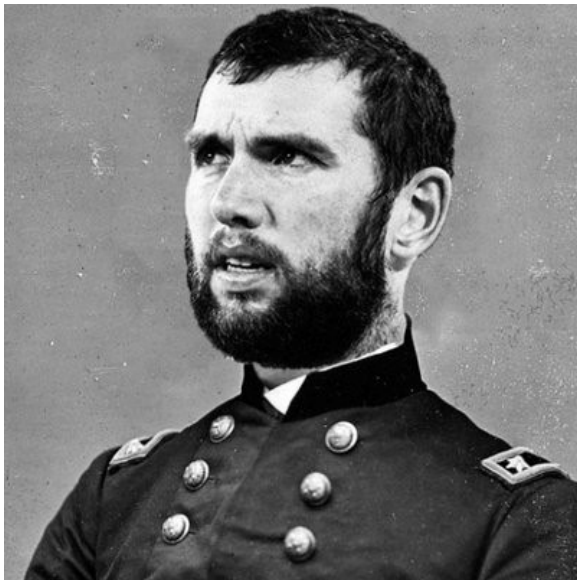
The Look Man could've been knocked over with a feather after two weeks of unlikely Pokes wins. Week 13's OT win over the Iggles was as weird a game as the Look Man has seen in a while. Pokes WR Amari Cooper caught a deflected TD pass for the game winner, and spoiled a perfectly good corporate holiday party. Coop has been a real boon to the Pokes, setting up Zeke Elliott and the running game despite some cover-your-eyes ugly QB play from Dak Prescott.

Here's the oddity: the Pokes can only win low-scoring, defensive slobberknockers. They had no business beating New Orleans and Philly, and both games featured some serious Zebra of the Week calls. Dak Prescott looked awful for seven and a half of the eight quarters, and still they win.

The madness stops on Sunday at the Drum in Indy. The Ponies are the best AFC team no one knows about, and Captain Andrew Luck is leveraging solid O-line play into an MVP challenge. These guys run the ball and play excellent defense, just like the Pokes. The difference: Luck is a real QB not a wooden doll trying to become a real live boy.

One has to wonder if Jerrah (the King of Pop) Jones is finally getting his promised run at a Super Bowl. The addition of Coop sets the Pokes up nicely for a portable running game, a prerequisite for playing in cold weather playoff games. Unfortunately, the road to the Super Bowl goes through LA, and this one-dimensional team cannot turn its unlikely defensive play into a championship. Of course, if LB Sean Lee can return at the right time, and if Dak can get on track, and...well, that's a lot of 'ifs.'

The Ponies get this one, setting up a nice Week 17 game with the Flaming Thumbtacks for playoff seeding. No one wants to face head coach Frank (The Fourth) Reich and the Ponies, especially not the Chowds. Ponies cover and win in a key game



"Dearest Mother, we hope to defeat the Cow Men on Sunday..."

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?

Cheeseheads at Monsters of the Furniture Mart (-6)

Green Bay is in a dogfight after terminating head coach Mike (Melissa) McCarthy and assistant head coach Winston Moss. The turmoil in the front office is a result of bad drafting and a weak O-line which can't keep Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers vertical.

The Chicago bandwagon is in danger of flipping over the City of Broad Shoulders from sheer weight. The Look Man still thinks Trubisky is fool's gold, but that defense is legit. The loss of Bears CB Bryce (Dirty Harry) Callahan to a broken foot is no small issue. Chicago signed journeyman Marcus Williams to shore up the secondary, and Discount Double Check will find him.

Trubisky will attempt to counter with more screens than a Florida sun room, but the Look Man doesn't believe it will be enough. Go, Pack, go. Packers.



Keep those khakis packed!!

Marine Mammals at Hornheads (-7)

The Mammals employed the old Hook and Ladder to great effect in the win over the Chowds last week, defeating both the Zebras and New England in the process. The Hornheads looked pedestrian in a loss to Seattle, firing OC John DeFilippo as a warning shot to the players.

Minnesota's real problem is more basic: QB Kirk (Curt) Cousins is a \$100 million fake. He reminds the Look Man of a reproduction of a 17th century chair with licorice over the varnish to imitate age. He has a rubber band arm, and a heart smaller than the Grinch.

Look for the Hornheads to win but not cover. Vikes.

Chowds at Stillers (+2.5)

Get ready for the flags to fly as an undermanned Stillers team fights for its playoff life. Too little, too late as the Chowds roll in the Still City, applying even more pressure on Stillers HC Mike (Omar Epps) Tomlin. Chowds.

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?



“We live in our hopes, not our fears. And we hope to make the playoffs.”

Iggles at Rams (-11.5) Football Night in America

The Iggles somehow missed the fact that Carson Wentz’s back pain was the result of a broken back. A second opinion from Wentz’s personal medical team revealed a fractured vertebra suffered in Week 6. Philly terminated its team doctor and trainer this season when they noticed the preponderance of soft tissue injuries on the team. Two-week hamstring injuries have lasted the entire season, making folks wonder whether the team doctor is really Stevie Wonder.

The Rams returned home smarting from a can of whoopass opened by the Monsters of the Furniture Mart last week. Chicago shut down the Rams running game and proceeded directly to get in Jared (Subway) Goff’s ass. The resulting beat-down is a formula for beating the Rams; unfortunately, you need a great front seven to do it. And, by the way, those don’t yet grow on trees.

Enter the Iggles, with a solid front seven and Nick Foles replacing Wentz. The problem here: the Iggles resemble a M*A*S*H unit, adding two more bodies to the IR to total eleven on the year. The latest victims include RB Corey Clement, a guy they badly need for the ground and pound keep-away game.

The Iggles season went down the tubes with that deflected pass last week in Dallas. Rams.

Religious Icons at Black Cats (+6) Monday Night Football

New Orleans swept Carolina in three games last season, and Icons DE Cameron Jordan sent a broom to Cam Newton afterwards. “I ain’t take the pack off, so I’m going to return to the sender if everything gets taken care of the way we know we can do it. And that’s all in good fun,” said Newton before this week’s Monday Night tilt.

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2018

Week 14 – Look Ma, No Hands!

Are You Not Entertained?

The Black Cats are in free fall after losing five straight and New Orleans has hit a rough offensive patch after beating the Rams in the Big Easy. The real problem for the Icons is a beat-up Michael Thomas and too many young wideouts who cannot achieve separation.

Division games are a weird thing; you know your opponent so well that practice is a formality. It comes down to execution and luck. You don't send brooms to your opponents, especially when the NFL wants to ensure Rams-Chowds in Super Bowl LII. Black Cats get help from the Zebras and win.

EPILOGUE

The 2018 NFL season is shaping up like a bad movie in which the outcome is known ten minutes into the show. The NFL wants a New England-Rams final so badly that they will do anything to secure it.

The Stillers, once proudly rolling towards an AFC Asgard title, face a murderer's row in the next few weeks, with New England, at New Orleans and a quietly improving Cincinnati. The Chowds have the Stillers and Bisons before a Week 17 game with Houston that may have little value for the latter. If Houston cannot improve their seeding, they could rest starters and hand the AFC home field to New England.

Over in the NFC, the Rams can jog to the finish line with Philly, Arizona and Frisco. If New Orleans stumbles, they will gobble up home field advantage, forcing teams like Chicago, Dallas and Minnesota to come to their place.

The Look Man watched the wonderful Showtime documentary *Shut Up and Dribble*, which chronicled the rise of the NBA, noting that the Lakers-Boston rivalry actually saved the league from bankruptcy. There was a racial component to Bird-Magic, but the coastal rivalry put butts in seats and took the NBA Championship game from delayed telecast to must-see-TV. Those TV revenues are the backbone for any sports league, and the dollars are measured in multiple commas and quantities starting with the letter 'b.'

The Look Man has been accused of being a conspiracy theorist, but if this happens, it will be one of the biggest frauds ever perpetrated on the American public. Game outcomes have been manufactured going all the way back to Week 6 when the Chowds beat KC by three. The Stillers, Bolts and KC have all suffered officiating related losses in that span, setting up New England for home field advantage.

The Look Man hates this WWE approach to the NFL, and hopes that underdog teams can beat New England/Rams AND the Zebras down the stretch. It won't happen, but a Look Man can hope, can't he?

Peace,

The Look Man