

THE LOOK MAN REPORT 2019

Week 15 – Two Chances...

"When you get in this spot, you give yourself a chance to be real disappointed. We are. We all expected to leave here as NFC East champs. We're not. We'll just go to Washington." – Pokes owner Jerrah Jones after losing to the Iggles at the Linc.

PROLOGUE

The Look Man takes no pleasure in being right about the Pokes struggles in the NFC Least. First, he likes the Starheads and believes them to be one of the most talented and compelling teams in the NFL. Second, and more important, this type of soul-crushing loss takes days if not weeks to get over, and longtime Tailpipe GB Shaw is a Dallas Fan. As a Browns Fan, the look Man knows that pain, and would not wish it on his worst enemy, let alone a friend.

The sight of Jerrah Jones walking out of his luxury box at the Linc BEFORE the final gun was troubling. Jerrah is one of the New Guard of NFL owners who parlay passion into reality. He took a billion dollars of his own caish to purchase the Pokes and build a tribute to himself in AT&T Stadium. He gambled that he could grow the franchise in his own image and take home the Lombardi hardware. Watching an old man slink out of the Linc was sad, like watching an hourglass lose its final grains of sand.

The rest of the NFL machine kept turning, with an upset in the Arizona desert, the Stillers dropping a game to the Jets, and the Browns blew a winnable, meaningful game with awful coaching decisions.

The Browns finished 7-8-1 in 2018, losing the final game of the year to these same Ravens in similar fashion. They needed eight things to fall their way, including a win over Baltimore. The other seven happened, and the eighth was pissed away when they allowed the Ravens to score twice before the half within 68 seconds. It's amazing that the Look Man's television survived.

The playoff picture has nearly crystalized, and the usual suspects are involved. Without further prolixity, the Week that Was:

LAGNIAPPE

Slim and None

It's been ten years since the death of Bengals WR Chris (Slim) Henry, a troubled player with a history of great plays and legal troubles. Henry died on December 17, 2009 after being dragged by a moving 4x4 driven by his fiancé, Leini Tonga.

Henry played five seasons with the Orange and Black, only to die after a verbal altercation with the mother of his two boys. The autopsy revealed that Henry was suffering from Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), a brain disease caused by head trauma. Henry represents the only case of an active player to be diagnosed with CTE after having zero diagnosed concussions while in the NFL or college.

Henry played collegiately at West Virginia, a third-round pick who played well above his draft status. He made spectacular catches from (Johnny) Carson Palmer, and died mid-week amidst an AFC Asgard playoff run. The Bengals were preparing to face the Bolts in SoCal when the news was announced in the locker room.

Henry had been sparring with the Bengals over his various legal issues, but he clearly had the ear of owner Mike Brown, who protected him from Head Coach Marvin (Jerry) Lewis.

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The game itself was fantastic. Dhani Jones, Johnathan Joseph and Rey Mauluga (means “cannot cover” in Polynesian) were torched by TE Antonio Gates, RB LaDanian (LT) Tomlinson, Darren Sproles and Phil (Old Man) Rivers. Mr. Tonight Show responded with TD passes to Ochocinco and Lavernaues Coles and Cedric Benson rumbled for 70 yards of combined offense. The Bolts hit a 52-yard FG as time expired in a hotly contested game.

It was a very odd year, as the snakebit Bengals also unexpectedly lost Vikki Zimmer, the wife of D-Coordinator Mike Zimmer. Zimmer’s wife was a team favorite, known for outstanding baked cookies which offset Mike’s tough love attitude. That defense was solid, but the team lost a wild card home game to Matt (Butt Fumble) Sanchez and the Jets. The Jets ended up losing to the eventual AFC Champion Colts, quarterbacked by some dude named Manning.

Henry is survived by his fiancé and two sons, Chris Jr. and DeMarcus. Both boys are avid athletes and scholars, under the tutelage of Adam (Pacman) Jones. They may well grow up to play sports professionally like Pops and Uncle Pac. As the Look Man likes to say, they have two chances, slim and none. And in this case, Slim was pretty good.



How 'bout Dem Pokes?

Prescott missed some throws after suffering a sprained right shoulder in Week Fifteen. He threw for 265 but no TDs in one of his worst performances of the season. The Pokes ran for a season-low 54 yards in the defeat.

Zeke (The Chipmunk) Elliott had only thirteen carries for 47 yards as the Iggles stuffed the run. “I wanted to run more, but they kept throwing the rock to Simon and Theodore. We call (O-Coordinator) Kellen Moore ‘Dave’, so I just said, ‘OK, Dave.’”

More curious was the lack of WR Amari Cooper and Zeke on key third and fourth down plays, leading to speculation by the announcers. One year ago this week, the Look Man wrote that Dak didn’t pass the eye test. On Sunday night, he didn’t even pass the smell test, and neither did the coaching staff.

That confusion paled to the postgame press conference at the Linc, in which an inebriated Pokes Fan posing as a journalist attempted to question Iggles HC Doug Pederson. When Pederson challenged his credentials, Pokes Fan retorted, “Can you just answer my question?” Pokes Fan was promptly removed by Security, making Pederson remark, “Well, that’ll be on SportsCenter.”

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Later Sunday night, the Pokes charter was deemed 'not viable' forcing them to stay in Philly overnight. While the Starheads don't play until Sunday, things were bound to get testy in the hotel bar with Jerrah Jones and HC Jason Garrett. If the bar runs out of Johnny Walker Blue, it could get downright ugly.

The Iggles now control their own destiny in the NFC Least. If they beat the Jynts on the road next week, they are in and the Pokes are going fishing. Dallas would then be a shoo-in for the *Most Talented Team to Suck in 2019* award. Of course, the Browns would provide the stiffest competition.



Zeke has been a little off this season...

Jameis Winston (The Rifleman)

Could become the first player in NFL history to throw 30 TDs and 30 picks in the same season. He now has 31 TD passes to go along with 28 picks, and faces Atlanta on Sunday. The Dirty Birds have only ten picks on the year, but Winchester Winston can do it.

Winchester threw four picks in Week Sixteen, including a pick-six on his first pass from scrimmage. He leads the NFL in that category with six. Brett Favre owns the current record of 29 picks in a season, a record named for Bears QB Jay Cutler.

The Look Man will be rooting for Jameis in Week Seventeen, just like he did for Jay Cutler back in the day. Jay needed five picks to hit the magic number, and got them in a late season game. The nickname 30/30 Winchester for Jameis would be unique. And, of course, the Rifleman is already copyrighted by the Chuck Connors Estate.

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

Baltimore at Cleveland – Alex Kemp:

The Browns received four first downs courtesy of Referee Alex Kemp. Most of the penalties were close calls, and all of them had the potential to help the Chowds win the first seed in the AFC. The Ravens were able to overcome the setbacks courtesy of idiotic coaching decisions by Kitchens. New England and everyone else in the AFC will now have to travel to the Charm City if they want to go to Miami as there are no non-stop flights to the Lombardi.

New Orleans at Tennessee: Jerome (Captain) Boger(mill)

Captain Bogermill blew the whistle poorly and often but missed the biggest call of the game - - - a decapitation hit in the penultimate drive for the Tacks. WR Kalif (Khalife) Raymond made a 23-yard reception for a key first down before being destroyed by Icons safety CJ (Chauncey the) Gardner-

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Johnson. “I like to watch TV. On TV, the violence is not real. It comes in the Fall, and is followed by Winter. The neck will be strong in Winter,” said Chauncey Gardner-Johnson.

This call likely affected the outcome of the game since the Tacks needed only a FG to send the game to OT. The drive ended with a turnover, and the Icons ran out the clock for the W. New Orleans has gotten a raw deal on a float-full of calls in the last two years, but this one was gift wrapped in Mardi Gras beads.

John (You Little) Hussey gets a dishonorable mention for Bisons at Chowds for missing a blatant facemask on Crapchester QB Josh Allen. Allen nearly went all Exorcist after Chowds LB Jamie Collins got ahold of his facemask, but he still got the first down. What he didn't get was an extra fifteen that would've put them in the Red Zone. Hussey also allowed some chicksh!t DPI and holding calls that put the Chowds in position for scores, forcing the Bisons' defenders to guard without touching the receivers. In the NFL, if you cannot touch the opposition, you cannot defend. Period.

THE LOOKAHEAD

The NFL has again moved a bunch of early games to the 4PM slot in order to avoiding seed manipulations. Tennessee, Blitzburgh, Dallas, and New England are now in the late slots to maximize the drama and minimize the possible advantages gained by resting players or picking seeds.

Saints at Panthers (-13)

New Orleans can still improve its seed, but depends upon help in the NFC West Division. Carolina is starting rookie QB Will Grier to determine if he is in the mix for 2020. The answer to that question is no, just like no one has proven capable of guarding WR Michael Thomas. #cantguardmike #whodat? #Saints.

Browns at Bengals (+4.5)

This game is meaningless. The Bengals have secured the number one seed in the draft and Cleveland is guaranteed to finish below .500 for the eleventh straight time. Andy (The Beige Water Pistol) Dalton goes for one last glorious game in stripes and succeeds because it is not a big game. TBWP will be playing elsewhere in 2020, perhaps doing his impression of Ryan Tannehill. Bengals.

Washington at Cowboys (-11)

The Pokes need to win and have the Iggles lose. The Genocide Victims are starting backup QB Case Keenum, and they look pretty solid. Or at least solid enough that the points are tempting. The NFL is going to want to maintain the suspense so that scoreboard watching occurs in Philly.

Keenum is better than folks think, and interim head coach Bill Callahan has playoff experience. What he doesn't have is a defense. Washington covers in a shootout.

New England at Miami (-11)

Chowds has a two seed and can clinch a bye week with a win, tie or KC loss. FitzMagic and former Chowds D-Coordinator Brian Flores have other plans. So what as the Chowds win, but Miami covers.

Blitzburgh at Baltimore (-2)

The Ravens are resting everyone, but it won't matter. The Stillers need help, and are pretty nicked up. Ravens cover.

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Eagles at Jynts (+4.5)

An Iggles win secures the NFC Least crown and knocks the Pokes out of the Tournament. Hard to believe this Iggles team with minimal offensive weapons and coming off an emotional win over Dallas. Jynts QB Danny (Dimes) Jones tossed five TDs last week, and Saquon Barkley looks healthy again. This game has upset written all over it. The NFL needs to see the Iggles return if only for ratings. Fly, Iggles, fly.

Titans at Texans (+5)

Houston is getting five at home in a game to decide the AFC Souse and seeding? The near loss to the Expensive Corn Kings was bad, but not this bad. Deshaun Watson has a back issue, but it's back to the future 2018 as Tennessee wins to force Blitzburgh out of the postseason. Flaming Thumbtacks.

Niners at Seahawks (+3) – Football Night in America

The Look Man mistakenly noted that Week 16 was the finale for SNF, but the NFL is featuring this battle for the NFC West. Seattle was devastated by injury in the Week Sixteen loss to Zona, losing running backs Chris (Kit) Carson and Procise for the year. They also lost LT Duane Brown to knee surgery, but he is expected to return for the postseason.

Enter the Dragon, or in this case, Marshawn (Beastmode) Lynch. The Hawks signed Beastmode and former Seattle RB Robert Turbin to shore up the M*A*S*H unit that is their offense. A bigger question might be the defense, which got exposed in the loss last week.

When NFL100 wide receiver Fitzgerald trucked LB KJ Wright, a Look Man favorite, the game was over. The Deadbirds used speed and power to dominate the Seahawks and (Dange)Russ Wilson could not win the thing by himself.

The Look Man is very fond of three-point home dawgs, and this one is too good to pass. Hawks get a win, forcing the Niners seeding to fall, setting up a rematch at the Superdome. Hawks win, clinch the West and get the bye week.

The Best of the Rest:

The Raiders and Stillers all have a path to the Tournament, but it would require incredible geometry. Likewise, the Pack could get the one seed in the NFC, but similarly, it would require purple fire to rain from the sky. These teams have blown solid opportunities to get in, and the Look Man doesn't see it happening.

EPILOGUE

Every year in the NFL, there are four to six new teams in the postseason. We talk all of the time about New England going every season, but this year Buffalo, Green Bay, Minnesota and San Francisco return to the Tourney. Blitzburgh, Tennessee and Oakland are still alive for the final AFC Wild Card.

The Saturday tripleheader on NFL Network was missed by a lot of America, but it was fantastic entertainment. Houston and Tampa Bay combined for four turnovers in the first half, including two pick

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sixes thrown by 30-30 Winchester Winston. The middle game, Buffalo at New England came down to the wire, and the late game Rams at Niners, was won on a late FG.

But here's the problem: the NFL is a sport which is competing with NBC, CBS and Fox using its on product. What good is a great game if the fans cannot watch it and you alienate your broadcasting partners? This kind of thinking could lead to the Super Bowl on NFLN where no one could watch it.

No matter how you slice it, the NFL is the 800-pound gorilla. No other professional sports league gets it right more or more often. Now if they could only fix the officiating...

Peace,

The Look Man