

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2021

Week Fifteen – Nut Cutting Time

“I think the majority of the calls in this game were complete BS.” —Tennessee SS Kevin Byard, after a 19-13 loss to the Stillers in which the Flaming Thumbtacks got jobbed.

PROLOGUE

Kevin Byard needs to get ready to open his wallet after that comment, but the amusing thing is that Tennessee has been the beneficiary of a lot of bad officiating in 2021. Their wins over KC, Seattle and Indy all featured awful officiating, and the shoe is now on the other foot. The Tacks are in a dogfight for an AFC Souse title after nearly running away with the title early.

What if the Look Man told you the Browns would have a top five defense, a top five offensive line and still miss the postseason? You would likely laugh, and say, “The Browns are still the Browns.” And you would be right, largely because of a signal caller who held the team ransom to his own contract demands. Any way you slice it, Cleveland has been one of the most disappointing teams in the NFL in a year where Covid has limited the quality of play.

NFL 2021 is a pretty ugly situation, and Cleveland is not the only team struggling. Still, the AFC Asgard Division has four teams at or above .500, and no team has looked spectacular. The Pack and Baby Backs are the One Seeds going into Week Sixteen, but no one feels invincible.

Week Sixteen is nut cutting time in the NFL, and wins won’t come cheap. December means teams need to win or hope, and hope is not a strategy.

Without further ado, a truncated Christmas edition of the Look Man Report 2021 for Week Fifteen.

THE LOOKAHEAD

Rams at Hornheads (+3)

The Rams are back on track after a few weeks of looking lost, and the Hornheads may be without RB Dalvin Cook. The Rams counter with a late scratch for LT Andrew Whitworth, as well as his backup.

Former Detroit QB Matt Stafford knows how to play NFC Norse football, and OBJ gets yet another TD en route to vindication. Rams.

Bisons at Chowds (-2.5)

The Look Man is not sure how this spread works, but Buffalo has bounced back after tough officiating-aided losses to New England and Tampa in consecutive weeks. CV19 has taken out vocal anti-vaxxer Cole Beasley as well as WR Gabe Davis. They had better win, because the Bengals and Stillers could knock them out of the AFC Seven Seed, and no one wants to spend another cold winter in Crapchester without the postseason.

The Chowds can punch a playoff ticket with a win, but the NFL has figured out Mac (McCorkle) Jones. Don’t count on 46 runs in this game, and Mac throws two picks to make it easier for the Bisons. Let’s go, Buffalo!

Dumpster Ducks at Bengals (-2.5)

Ducks QB Lamar Jackson’s ankle is still iffy, and backup Tyler Huntley has the Rona. Former Bengals backup Josh Johnson gets the call, but Baltimore is beat up.

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The Bengals won a butt-ugly game at Mile High Investigation Field last week, but now look to seize control of the AFC Norse with a win. Bengals and Joe (Goat Boy) Burrow tighten their control over the division with a win here. Bengals.

Bolts at Slim Shadies (+10)

The Bolts should win handily, and TE Jeremy Parham is returning after a scary concussion. The temperature inside the Houston Dome will not be chilly, so he won't be shivering like he did after the knockout. Also, Joe Buck will not be doing the game. Bolts.

Expensive Corn Kings at Black Cats (+10)

This game features Tom Brady and Cam Newton, the last two Patriots starters before McCorkle (Mac the Knife) Jones took over. Tampa's offense was decimated by injury last week, losing Godwin, Fournette and Mike Evans during the game. Godwin is out for the season, and Evans and Fournette will likely sit with hammies.

Look for Carolina to take advantage, even with the return of WR Antonio (AB) Brown. Black Cat cover.

Steelers at Chiefs (-7.5)

The Baby Backs have gotten hot, winning seven straight after the defense turned things around. The KC D has allowed single digits in five of those games, and is now hitting its stride as the postseason looms.

The Stillers have struggled in the first half all year, and if they do so again, they will be boat-raced. KC may not have Tyreek Hill and Travis Kelce due to the Rona. KC still smokes 'em, as Big Ben is a stationary target in the backfield. KC.

Washington at Cowboys (-11) Football Night in America

The Pokes blew a big lead last time these two played, but this week might feature a QB other than Taylor (Bud Light) Heinicke, who is down with Covid. Still, eleven seems like too many points in an NFC Least matchup.

Plus, the Pokes are looking ahead to the Deadbirds in Week Seventeen, and it may have seeding implications. WFT says WTF, and covers against a Pokes team that has sits behind the Cheeseheads in seeding. WTF to cover.



If this bum is going to the playoffs, he will have to buy a ticket...

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EPILOGUE

COVID continues to wreak havoc, and the NFL could be in trouble. The Look Man believes they scuttled plans to set up a Tampa Bay-New England matchup for fear it would blow up in their faces. Also, the Antonio Brown counterfeit caper includes baggage the league would rather not deal with.

The NFL owned the holiday season, with games on eight of ten days. Today's games will thin out the pretenders, and set up a wonderful slate of New Year's games including Chiefs-Bengals, Rams-Ravens-Hornheads-Cheeseheads and Browns-Stillers. Well, that last game may lose some cache after Week Sixteen, but you get the drift.

The NFL is still the eight-hundred-pound gorilla, but who knows for how long? As football fans, we will take it one week at a time, and hope 2022 brings serendipity.

Peace,

The Look Man

Happy new year in 2022.

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Sunday's games

Lions at Falcons (-5.5), 1 p.m.

Jim's Pick: I mentioned in the game above that the Cardinals have been much better on the road than at home. The difference is even greater for the Falcons who are 1-5 at home (!) and 5-3 on the road. Meanwhile, it sure is fun watching the Lions continue to play hard despite their awful start – and easy to be sucked in to picking them. I'm going to fight off that feeling here. **Falcons**

Monday's game

Dolphins at Saints (-3), 8:15 p.m.