

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2021

Week Nineteen – Super Fantastic WC Week!

“I don’t have any concerns.” — Pokes coach Mike McCarthy, when asked about his coaching future with Dallas after the home wild-card loss to the Niners. McCarthy is 18-16 as HC in Dallas, 0-1 in the postseason.

PROLOGUE

Mike McCarthy may not have any concerns, but the Look Man has seen better coaches than he tossed unceremoniously to the curb in Big D. While everyone was focused on the officiating in the wild card loss, McCarthy made more than one coaching error leading up to that ending.

The upcoming divisional round should be outstanding, with more than one exciting contest. That means it will be in stark contrast to the Super Wild Card Round, which despite the hype, featured only two competitive games in Niners-Pokes and Raiders-Bengals. And those two were only competitive because of cover-your-eyes ugly officiating and poor QB play.

Jimmy (G) Garoppolo missed wide-open plays and threw a pick at crunch time that kept Big D in business. Take those plays off the board and this is a blowout and no one is focused on the last fourteen seconds. Especially not Pokes owner Jerry (Jerrah) Jones, who at 79 can’t wait much longer for a return to glory.

Without further ado, the Look Man Report 2021 for Week Nineteen.

LAGNIAPPE

Jimmy Goof

The final seconds of the Niners-Pokes WC fiasco were only possible because of a Jimmy G mistake in which he did not allow LT Trent Williams to reset after going in motion on an unbalanced line formation.

By rule, if more than one player is in motion, they must both reset before the snap. The illegal motion penalty on Williams negated a game-clinching quarterback sneak. While Williams was called for the penalty, Garoppolo was really at fault. If the first down had been successful, the game is over, because Dallas had no timeouts remaining.

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Here’s a short list of errors in a night full of them:

- (1) Dallas successfully executing the fake punt for a first down, and then leaving the punt team on the field in order to avoid using a second half time out. Result: delay of game call.
- (2) The Garoppolo pick, which sailed over a wide-open receiver and into the waiting arms of CB Anthony Brown. Dak scored on a long TD run a play later, when the Niners had every receiver wallpapered.
- (3) the reverse by Deebo Samuel for about 12.9 yards on a 3rd and 13 was an excellent call at the exact right time. Micah Parsons was badly fooled, tackling the running back on the misdirection. TE George Kittle led the charge in what should have been a convoy. Officials signaled first down, only to have to stop the clock for a review and overturn. If Deebo gets that first down, it is game over. If the officials don’t signal first down, the clock runs, and Dallas has even less time to score.

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- (4) the Jimmy Goof, where Garoppolo created a false start on the ensuing 4th and 1, a clear coaching attempt to get Dallas to jump and/or be confused. It worked.
- (5) The QB draw play at the end. You can say whatever you want, but that was gahbitch. Even if you run that paly, you have to slide early, and GIVE THE BALL TO THE UMPIRE at the end. The dumbest low percentage play call for a guy who makes \$40 million annually. The Pokes are paying Dak, Zeke and Coop a lot of money to call that horseshit in crunch time.

Add them all up, and you have a classic baseball, “You take it, I got it.” Niners HC Kyle Shanahan eschewed analytics, taking FGs all game because he doesn’t really trust Garoppolo, and felt that Dallas could not run the ball on his defense.

Or perhaps, it was the corollary: Dak wasn’t going to beat the Niner defense throwing dimes. At any rate, Shannie was right, and he trusted McCarthy to eff up the clock management and blow the win. McCarthy obliged, and the most talented team in the NFC is now going fishing.

Bills Mafia

The gametime windchill in Crapchester was below zero, and the Bisons raised the temperature by dropping 47 points on the Chowds. Bisons QB Josh (Irwin) Allen went straight sci-fi, with more TD passes (5) than incompletions (4). Allen’s dominance of the Chowds’ top five defense was spectacular, and if he stays this hot, no one in the NFL can stand in his way.

But the Look Man liked another story coming out of upstate New York: former Bisons QB Ryan FitzMagic showed up and took selfies with all comers, including a shirtless pic with the Bills Mafia. Apparently, they have a new Don in town, and if FitzMagic is for you, who can be against you?



Dude, what’s with the sweater?

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Correction

GB Shaw notes that Pokes AT&T is in Arlington, not Frisco, TX, as indicated in the Week Eighteen LMR. That venue is just the practice facility featured in HBO *Hard Knocks*' spectacular drone footage. The Look Man (wrongly) assumed the practice facility abutted AT&T, and he apologizes for the confusion. Every now and again, the Look Man gets one wrong, and good catch by GB.



The Jerrah Dome is in Arlington, not Frisco, TX

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

Niners at Pokes: Alex Kemp

Much has been made of the umpire knocking into Dak Prescott to set the ball before the eventual clock expiration, but the Look Man ain't buying it. The Pokes had numerous opportunities to come back and win this game, and Alex Kemp and crew helped them more than hurt. At any rate, it was unclear whether the Dallas Fan *Bottlegate* reaction was aimed at Kemp or the Pokes players.

Raiders at Bengals: Jerome (Captain) Boger(mill) – Captain Bogermill and crew took over the game, with an inadvertent whistle on a TD pass, several phantom holding calls on the Bengals, and a phantom timeout by the Raiders that wiped out a 40-yard reception and first and goal Bengals. This game literally turned into *the Jerome Boger Show, featuring the Raiders and Bengals*.

It was the most unprofessional officiating job ever in the NFL, with the possible exception of Super Bowl LI between the Chowds and Dirty Birds. Boger may not only be out of the postseason, this kind of slip up could cost him his job in 2022.

If you think not, just ask referee Phil Luckett, who lost his job after botching the 1998 Thanksgiving Day coin overtime toss. Stillers RB Jerome Bettis called "hea-tails," but Luckett heard "heads." The Lions were awarded the ball, and they won the game. The NFL changed the coin toss rules the following season, but Luckett received a version of the home game as a result of the incident.

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Boger was bailed out by a red zone pick, but he's done for 2021

Jerome Boger, you are the Look Man **Zebra of the Week!**

THE LOOKAHEAD

This Divisional Playoff round is one of the most exciting in years, featuring some of the best young QBs in the National...Football...League. Josh (Irwin) Allen vs. Patrick Mahomes, Jimmy (G) Garoppolo vs. Aaron (MVP) Rodgers, Matt Stafford vs. Tom (Zoolander) Brady, and Joe (Goat Boy) Burrow vs. - - -, well they cannot all be great matchups.

Still, these matchups pave the way for a bright NFL future. If you saw Mahomes and Allen last week, you witnessed virtuoso performances in big games. Mahomes came off the mat to score five TDs in under eleven minutes of clock time.

Saturday's Games

No. 4 Cincinnati Bengals at No. 1 TN Flaming Thumbtacks (-3)/ Total Points: 47- GAME OF THE WEEK

The Flaming Thumbtacks secured a first-round bye, allowing RB Derrick (King) Henry another week to rehabilitate a surgically repaired foot. HC Mike Vrabel hopes to regain their classic ground and pound offensive philosophy now that Henry is back.

But “not so fast, my friend” as the Bengals swept both the Stillers and Dumpster Ducks, plus beat the Raiders at the Death Star in Vegas. This team has played well on the road in 2021 (5-3), and the Look Man believes they will win a shootout in Nashville’s Nissan Stadium.

Ryan Tannehill’s QB coach at Texas Tech and Miami was none other than Bengals HC Zac (Opie’s Boy) Taylor. Opie’s boy knows Tannie’s faults, and will exploit them if he can. DT Larry Ogunjobi is out, but game wrecking DE Trey Hendrickson is back. The Bengals will go exotic to stop the run, dropping SS Vonn Bell into a monster back role. FS Jesse Bates played like his hair was on fire in Week Nineteen, and will need to do it again this week.

Tannie’s turnovers give the game to Joe (Goat Boy) Burrow, and the Bengals advance to the AFC Conference Championship. And when that happens, he will get a new appellation: *Jackpot Joe*. Bengals.

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No. 6 San Francisco 49ers at No. 1 Green Bay Cheeseheads (-5.5) | Total Points:47.5

Cheeseheads QB Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers is 0-3 against the 49ers in the playoffs, and beat Frisco in Week Three via a last-second field goal. This matchup is not a good one for the Pack, which has been employing a smoke-and-mirrors defense to good effect in 2021.

While the Niners will have DE Nick Bosa (concussion) and Fred Warner (ankle) available, the real issue is QB Jimmy G, who must play through throwing thumb and shoulder injuries, and the cold weather will not help.

The Niners will attempt to attack Green Bay with the run, and the Swiss Cheesehead defense allowed 140 rushing yards in close wins over Baltimore and Cleveland. Green Bay also returns DE Za'Darius Smith and CB Jaire Alexander, and both should help defend a multiple offense with "weapon" Deebo Samuel and TE George Kittle.

But the Pack has a running game of its own, courtesy of Aaron Jones and AJ Dillon. These guys are both tough to handle, and Dillon is a rolling ball of butcher knives at 250 pounds. The swing routes to Jones are long handoffs, and they are killers.

The Look Man has been a Niners fan for a long time, but also doesn't trust Jimmy G. Discount Double Check posts a win, setting up the *Rodgers Rate* NFC Championship at Flambeau next week. Go, Pack, go.

Sunday's Games

No. 3 [Insert City Name Here] Rams at No. 2 Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings (-3) | Total points 48.5

On paper, this looks like QB Tom (Zoolander) Brady vs. Matt Stafford. This game won't be played on paper.

The Tampa Two Defense is playing well despite having only third and fourth string defenders in the secondary. They are employing speedy LBs to cover the field, and they can work vertically and horizontally. DC Todd Bowles and his exotic blitz packages are confusing, and Stafford has a boatload of picks (17) in 2021.

Stafford is another QB that the Look Man doesn't trust in a big spot. While Brady's record in big games is aided by the zebras, his numbers are inescapable. Stafford is playing well in spots, and he has kindled rhythm with Odell Beckham Jr. and is on fire with WR Cooper Kupp. The addition of RB Cam Akers will help the running game, but no one runs on Tampa.

Perhaps the biggest mismatch comes up front, with injuries to the Tampa O-line. OT Tristan Wirfs and C Ryan Jensen are banged up, so the Rams quick and stout front seven will create mismatches in the middle. And Tom Brady hates middle pressure.

Here's how it goes down: Brady reverts to quick hitting pass plays to nullify the Rams pass rush. Rams HC Sean McVay counters with seam routes to beat the zone, giving TE Tyler Higbee a big day. This game will be about matchups, and the Corn Kings are about out of them due to injury.

Rams win a tough, physical battle in Tampa. Rams.

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No. 4 Buffalo Bisons at No. 2 Kansas City Baby Backs (-2.5) | total points: 55

The Bisons are the team no one wants to see after a near perfect offensive game against the Chowds last week. Crapchester caught fire after being disrespected following a loss in which New England threw the rock only three times.

Afterwards, the Bills Mafia finished the regular season with the number one defense, fewest yards allowed and points scored, creating at least one turnover in four of its last five games.

But the Baby Backs are not exactly chopped liver, either. KC rebounded with a saucy win streak down the stretch, dispatching the Raiders, Bolts and Stillers after a zebra aided loss to the Bengals. The offense has become more patient, and instead of the *Greatest Show on Grass*, they pick and choose their spots, taking what the defense gives. OC Eric (Sleeping with) Bienemy deserves a lot of the credit, but so does the defense.

Look for DC Steve (Spags) Spagnuolo to apply pressure to Josh Allen in the pocket, attempting to make him do something stupid. Allen can get overly creative at times, and when he does, bone headed plays ensue.

The Look Man's key is the lack of Pro Bowl CB Tre'Davius White for the Bisons. They have gone to a lot more zone defense since White was placed on the IR, and it has paid off mostly. Not this week, as Patrick Mahomes carves them with the seam routes, taking advantage of slow LB pass coverage. The Buffalo pass rush is nothing special, relying instead of zone blitz packages.

The difference may be the defense, as indicated by the chart below. The number one scoring defense in the NFL resides in Kansas City. DE Melvin Ingram's strip last week set up a scoop six for rookie LB Nick Bolton. Ingram allowed the Baby Backs to move Chris Jones back to his native DT position and the result has been a pincer effect on the pass pocket that propelled KC to a top five scoring defense.

Defense	FR	Safet	INT F	Total	Rank
KC Baby Backs	2	0	2	4	4
TN Flaming Thumbtacks	1	0	2	3	8
Nati Bengals	1	0	1	2	9
Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings	0	0	2	2	11
Green Bay Cheeseheads	0	0	2	2	16
Crapchester Bisons	0	0	1	1	20
SF Niners	0	0	2	2	30
[Insert City Name Here] Rams	0	0	0	0	31
		- road team			
		- home team			

Baby Backs get the win, setting up a home field AFC revenge match with the Bengals. KC.

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EPILOGUE

The good news is that the conference championships will be great games no matter who wins this week. The Look Man would love to see Tampa knocked out of this thing, but the NFL is ticked at Rams owner Stan Kroenke, who threw the league under the bus in his relocation lawsuit. After saying he would cover the penalties associated with tripling his team's value by moving to LA, Stan the Man is now asking the NFL to lend him a hand.

Ownership won't like this development, but sometimes you just follow the money. The Rams playing a home game at SoFi in the Super Bowl LVI might create the type of windfall that ameliorates any ill will. Now that Brady-Belichick is off the table, who knows how the NFL might respond?

One more note: interesting development in the Jerome (Captain) Boger(mill) officiating snafu in Cincy last week. Bogermill's team, fabricated from all-star zebras at every position, blew an inadvertent whistle on a Bengals TD last week. As a result, he and his crew are out relative to the postseason. Too bad it wasn't Ron Torbert (the Eighth Man), but at least one awful Zebra is out of the Tourney.

The last thing the NFL needs is more controversy down the stretch. It is pretty clear that their affiliations with professional gambling are affecting outcomes, and few will fall for the okie-doke if it happens in the next four weeks.

Of course, New England came back from a 22-point deficit in Super Bowl LI, so anything is possible with bad officiating... That miraculous comeback ("the Big Lie") was made possible only through awful officiating and fans who suspended disbelief enough to see Brady with a red and blue cape.

Peace,

The Look Man