

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2022

Week Seven – Knockout

“The game is not softer. The game is safer.” - NFL executive VP Troy Vincent, refuting claims that roughing-the-passer calls are damaging the game.

“In a pigs eye.” – Chief Medical Officer Leonard (Bones) McCoy, after hearing Vincent’s claim.

PROLOGUE

In the state of Nevada, a fighter must sit for 30 days after suffering a knockout. By contrast, QB Tua Tagovailoa played four days after suffering a concussion. The result was a sickening display in Cincinnati after Tua’s brains were splattered on the Bengals helmet logo at midfield.

The Look Man hasn’t written a column since that night, and considered hanging it up for good. The game was stopped for about 12 minutes, and conjecture ran rampant in the stands. One fan suggested he had broken all of the fingers on both hands. We now know it was a “fencing reflex” from traumatic brain injury (TBI). Oh, just a TBI, you know like war veterans receive from IEDs in the Middle East.

The game has gone too far, and the NFL and NFLPA responded in typical knee-jerk fashion, firing the independent neurologist who certified Tua to play, and making up a new concussion protocol. Any way you slice it, it stinks to high heaven, and the fish rots from the head down.



The scene of the crime...

Without further ado, the Week that was.

LAGNIAPPE

Taste buds

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A 2015 Cornell University study found that food tasted better to people when the team they supported was winning a game. Robin Dando, an associate professor, found that people liked the flavors more on days when the team won. “When we looked at how they responded to these different flavors, in the games where they won, the flavors tasted sweeter and less sour, versus the opposite when they lost,” Dando said.

Other research shows that the home town team success enhances cognitive skills, social skills and general outlook on life. While this seems anecdotal, when you’re happy, serotonin, a “neurotransmitter linked very strongly with mood and affect” increase in your system, influencing taste, mood and general well-being.

The Look Man is experiencing that in the City of Knoxville this year. The Volunteers are having a historical season, and people are generally in a better mood because of it. By extension, the mood in Cleveland has been adversely affected by the Deshaun Watson suspension and Kevin Stefanski coaching fiascos.

The Look Man has been in a snit for several weeks, and he attributed it to workload. Perhaps there is another reason? Clearly winning is more fun than losing.



Delicious in Knoxville...awful in Cleveland?

Free Deshaun Watson II

Yet another accuser came forward in the Deshaun Watson massage scandal. This contestant had a separate attorney, who may be disbarred for ambulance chasing. The new addition will have no impact on Watson’s NFL suspension, but she just “wants some money.”

This sad affair ends in Week Eleven, but it may have already cost Cleveland a legitimate shot at the postseason. They can still get in, but will have to beat some good teams to do it.

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

The NFL has been ridiculous of late with laundry all over the field. One prime example was the ejection of Bears DT Mike Pennel for a blindside block on Browns C Mike Andrews. Pennel was summarily ejected after the block, which occurred following a pick.

In contrast, Bears QB Justin (Marshall) Fields was sandwiched on a TD pass by Browns DE Matthew Judon, who clearly saw the ball released. Fields got destroyed, and that play may have provided the fire for Chicago to drill New England. Instead, they chose to kneel on a 33-16 lead instead of posting a forty

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burger, much to Peyton Manning's dismay. "When you get a chance to drop forty on Belichick in New England, you do it," said the Sheriff.

Here are the entries for ***Zebra of the Week***:

Cleveland at Baltimore – Shawn Smith

The Browns lined up for a game-tying FG down 23-20. Baltimore encroached, and a five-minute discussion ensued. False start Browns, setting up a 61-yard FG that was blocked. Game over.

Green Bay at Washington – (Feet of) Clay Martin

DC QB Taylor (Six Pack) Heinicke fumbles the ball on the left sideline, resulting in a scoop six by the Green Bay defense. Hold on – flag on the right sideline for defensive holding while the Beer Vendor was still in the pocket. No score, final 23-17 Washington.

Frisco at KC Alex (Michael J Fox) Kemp

Numerous KC scores called back in the first half when the game could've become a blowout due to phantom holding and OPI calls. These calls were particularly egregious, occurring during WR screens which are bang-bang timing. Contact is allowed within three yards of the line of scrimmage, and rarely called. KC blew the game wide open, but only in the second half, after 20 pieces of laundry had already been thrown.

And the winner of ***Zebra of the Week***? None, there are only losers when the zebras get air time.

THE LOOKAHEAD

The Look Man misses this segment, and is including a boatload of picks just for fun. It would appear to him that there are a number of upsets for the picking, and that is fine by the Look Man.

Chicago Monsters of the Furniture Mart at Dallas Cowboys (-9.5)

da Bears are now a respectable 3-4 after an upset win at the Blade Monday night. Chicago wanted to ensure Belicheat didn't break George Halas' wins record at their expense, and Belicheat always struggles against talented running QBs.

The Pokes welcomed back QB Dak (Sleep Number) Prescott, who got his first TD pass of 2022 in Week Seven. The Tony Pollard Zeke Elliott RB tandem will be on hiatus due to Zeke having his annual three game injury of the year, but this team runs on defense.

Doomsday has shed the "Lite" label after posting defensive numbers not seen in 50 years in Big D. they are picking up sacks in bunches, and just added run stuff Johnathan Hankins to an already stout front seven. QB Justin (Marshall) Fields takes a lot of sacks, and Dallas leads the NFL with 29 so far. Pokes.

Miami Dolphins at Detroit Cadillacs (+3)

The Marine Mammals welcomed back Tua Tagovailoa on Sunday after a three-week vacation, and waved goodbye to their losing streak. Tua looked sharp early, throwing on time and working the 15-play script to perfection. He didn't look sharp at all after a hard hit on a running play, and they held on to win despite scoring zero points in the second half.

Detroit got destroyed by the Pokes, 24-6, in a game that was not as close as the score. QB Jared (Subway) Goff turned the ball over repeatedly, and they miss WR Amon-Ra (the Sun God) St. Brown.

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Detroit has been injured since nearly leading the NFL in scoring, but they are fading from overly high expectations. Marine Mammals parlay Tyreek Hill and Jaylen Waddle into a blowout win at Ford Field. Mammals.

New England Patriots at New York Jets (+1.5)

New England's MNF collapse against the Bears was an anomaly, while the surprising Jets, glided to an ugly 16-9 victory over Denver to post its fourth consecutive win. New York did lose rookie RB Breece Hall to an ACL in the win, but replaced him with Michael (Clarence) Carter, who's an explosive saxophone player in his own right. The Jets then acquired RB James Robinson on Monday for good measure.

This spread looks fishy to the Look Man, but he is going with the Jets at home. Mac (the Knife) Jones returns after being benched, but something stinks in the Chowds locker room. J-E-T-S.

Pittsburgh Steelers at Philadelphia Eagles (-10.5)

The Steelers dropped a close one, 16-10 at South Beach Sunday night in Week Seven. They now face an undefeated Eagles team coming off a bye.

Steelers QB Kenny (Two Gloves) Pickett threw for 257 yards on Football Night in America, but tossed in three more picks, including the game sealer at the goal line. The Eagles have snagged nine in six games, recording 17 sacks.

Mike Tomlin has never won a Coach of the Year Award, but he will deserve one if he gets this Stiller team to .500. More likely, Eagles HC Nick Sirianni wins the COTY with his balanced offensive attack and fiery leadership style. Eagles win a close one, setting up a nice stretch run in the NFL Beast. Eagles.

Note: the Eagles and Phillies are both playing excellent ball. Sources say cheesesteaks have never tasted better in the City of Brotherly Love.

Frisco 49ers at Los Angeles Rams (+2)

Frisco's D self-destructed after a good early showing in KC last week. The Niners offense was pedestrian despite the recent addition of RB Christian (CMC) McCaffrey. Once CMC gets fully integrated and George Kittle and Deebo Samuel are healthy, they will dominate the NFC West. Which is odd, after losing two straight roadies.

The Rams are a wholly owned subsidiary of the Niners, and Kyle Shanahan is renting space in Sean McVay's head. Niners.

New York Giants at Seattle Seahawks (-3)

The Brian Daboll era is rolling, as the G-Men moved to 6-1 overall and 3-0 on the road by punishing the J-Squareds in Jacksonville. Daboll has these guys winning ugly and believing in themselves. QB Danny (Dimes) Jones is doing whatever it takes, and RB Saquon Barkley looks like the Saquon of Olde.

The Seahawks have been surprising especially with the resurgence of QB Eugene Cyril "Geno" Smith III. Geno handed the Bolts a 37-23 loss at SoFi with significant help from rookie RB Kenneth Walker. These guys are no joke and Pete Carroll is coaching his ass off.

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Unfortunately, the Seahawks are banged up, with WR DK Metcalf out, and several others questionable after a physical win. Plus, the Jynts have a bye in Week Nine, and can set up the second half nicely with a quality win in Coffeetown. Jynts as a road dog.

Green Bay Cheeseheads at Crapchester Bisons (-10.5) – Football Night in America

The Cheeseheads got knocked off by Washington in Week Seven, falling to Taylor Heinicke and the Commies late. The 23-21 final was not indicative of how good this game was, as the Commies pounded Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers and the Pack.

WR Allen Lazard went down with a shoulder and no one else in green and mustard could catch a cold naked in Alaska. Washington got a few calls, but Breen Gay's receiving corps is now missing Randall Cobb (ankle – IR), Lazard and Christian Watson (hammy).

Crapchester is rested after a bye week, and the Bills Mafia will be in full throat for this evening fiesta. As good as QB Josh (Irwin) Allen and the offense have been, the Bisons D is allowing an NFL-low 281.5 total yards per game. Tack on a two-week preparation time and Irwin Allen's sci-fi like 7-1 TD/INT ratio, and you have a script for Lost in Space.

Many will blow off the double digit spread, but the zebras will attempt to keep it close. Pack covers (barely) but still suffers a beat down in Beefalo. Bisons.

Cincinnati Bengals at Cleveland Browns (+3.5) [Monday Night Football]

The Cincy offense was clicking on all cylinders in a Week Seven ATL beatdown, with QB Joe Burrow posting 480 yards and 3 TDs. The Bengals are now 4-3 after an 0-2 start.

Meanwhile, in STD-more, the Browns got jobbed in another close loss. Cleveland has lost by a combined nine points in four of their five losses. The only blowout was a completely mismanaged New England loss featuring four turnovers.

Burrow is the hottest QB in the AFC right now. He is completing over 70% of his throws, with a 12-1 TD INT ratio. Joe has to be salivating in the film room, reviewing a Browns D that's allowing nearly 11 yards per completion at home. Tack on the fact that the Browns have given up over 200 rushing yards in two of those defeats, and average allowing 133.3 rushing yards per game.

Cleveland interim QB Jacoby (Corned Beef) Brissett has lost some confidence while holding the seat warm for Deshaun Watson. Briskett's has been competent, but falls just short of getting Cleveland over the hump. The coaching staff is beating him up over turnovers, and he only trusts WR Amari Cooper and injured TE David Njoku.

In the NFL, you throw when the receiver goes into his break; you cannot wait until he is wide freaking open. If you do, the defense can recover, and usually turn it into a pick. Even worse, the pocket collapses in three seconds, and if the ball isn't gone, it means you get drilled for a sack.

Browns Fan is calling for backup Josh Dobbs, but that dawg won't hunt either. Briskett needs to regain his confidence if the Browns are to salvage their season. The offense and defense almost never well at the same time, leading to some serious yelling after the Ravens game.

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This is the week Cleveland wakes up. The Browns need to face the fact that they are playing 53 players and seven zebras each week. The coaching staff might as well face up, and coach the team to ignore penalties, because it is going to be this way all year. And that includes the Week Eleven return of Deshaun Watson and beyond. Owners are livid that Cleveland guaranteed Watson's contract, and the Browns get no love from the zebras or the other owners.

RB Nick Chubb runs wild this week, keeping Burrow on the sideline. Chubb is averaging a career-high 5.9 yards per carry and the Nati gives up nearly a buck fifty on the ground each week.

The Bengals offense runs on the deep threat of Jamarr Chase, who's out for 2-5 weeks with a hip. Browns cover the 3.5 spread and win outright as the Manning Cast interviews Drew Carey. Browns, baby, Browns.

EPILOGUE

The 2022 season reaches its halfway point and the story lines are still developing. More than half the league is at or above .500, and Philly is the sole undefeated team. The Pokes, Jets and Jyntz are all surprise stories, while the Bison, Niners and Iggles keep adding to their embarrassment of talent.

The Bengals have elevated themselves to the cream of the AFC once more, but KC and Buffalo are formidable. The Look Man believes the AFC Souse is the weakest link of the conference, and Tennessee is a true pretender. Indy and Jacksonville could go either way, and Houston is better than folks think.

The back half of the schedule is going to prove interesting. Cincinnati hosts Cleveland, KC, Buffalo and Baltimore in what should be a murderer's row finish. Baltimore, on the other hand, faces only one more team above .500 down the stretch. KC and Buffalo play in tougher divisions, and injuries will play a part in one or both teams.

The specter of concussions looms large this season and with good reason. Teams are seeing guys miss two to three weeks following a dance with the devil, and the NFL has no choice but to step up. The new concussion protocol allows the league to bench anyone demonstrating ataxia, a common ailment after drinking five or six whiskeys on a Saturday night.

The outrageous officiating in 2022 is becoming laughable. The Look Man wondered aloud if the Zebras has the under for the FNIA game between Frisco and KC. The zebras called back at least two TD plays, and were forced to give in only after Mahomes dropped some second half dimes. Even NBA zebra Tim Donaghy thinks this is fishy.

The NFL is kind of a sickening business model. They are still making money, but one has to wonder how long they can continue to benefit. The league may no longer exist in 20 years.

Peace,

The Look Man