

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2022
Week Seventeen – Dead Man Walking

"Who won?" – handwritten note from Buffalo safety Damar Hamlin after regaining consciousness from cardiac arrest. Hamlin was still on a ventilator and could not yet speak.

PROLOGUE

The Look Man attended the Thursday Nighter featuring the Marine Mammals at Bengals earlier this season. What he saw on the field turned his stomach, making him want to get up and leave the game.

Tua Tagovailoa, playing a mere four days after suffering a concussion, got his brains scrambled at midfield. The contest was held up for about thirty minutes to attend to the QB, but the game was over. Perhaps worse, the NFL had allowed one of its workers to be injured in what amounted to a preventable accident. At last review, workplace accidents are covered under OSHA laws; the NFL may have a class action lawsuit on its hands as regards the Concussion Protocol.

The Damar Hamlin cardiac arrest was much worse. Not only did he suffer a heart attack from a blunt force hit directly to his chest, he collapsed backwards and slammed his helmet on the turf afterwards. Only incredible life-saving efforts by the collective training staffs saved his life.

The collected Bengals Fans were incredibly respectful, remaining in place for over an hour. The scene was surreal, both on the field and off. Tailpipes all over the country reached out to the Look Man, including Long Suffering Bengals Fan Sundance:

I'm not getting a good feeling about Hamlin's situation. I hope I'm wrong.

Very freaky accident. Why do these things always seem to happen in Cincinnati?

- *1977 Beverly Hills Supper Club fire – 165 dead*
- *1979 The Who Concert – 11 dead in a stampede*
- *1996 Reds Opening Day – MLB Umpire John McSherry dies behind home plate, first inning*

Perhaps the city is built on an ancient Indian burial ground, but whatever it is ain't good.

The outpouring of positivity and the trainers and doctors at UC Medical saved the day. The storyline is evolving, and it looks as if Hamlin will make a full recovery. Better yet, his foundation has garnered \$8 million to date, helping the children of his hometown in Blitzburgh.



Hamlin in happier times...

Without further ado, the Week that was.

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LAGNIAPPE

RG3 Has Jokes

Robert Griffin III, a former NFL quarterback, has been tearing it up as an analyst on the Four-Letter Network. His fresh takes and tongue-in-cheek jokes are laugh-out-loud funny. RG3 has dropped such witticisms as describing Washington State QB Michael Penix Jr. as having “Big Penix Energy.”

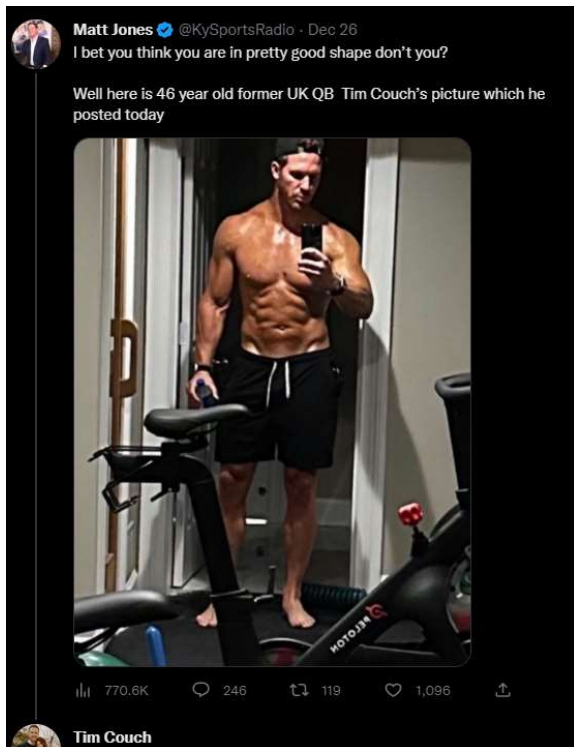
During Seahawks-Cadillacs a few weeks back, he cracked on troubled NFL WR Antonio Brown after a video emerged of Brown allegedly exposing himself to a woman at a hotel pool in Dubai.

Griffin then stated, “AB showed more D than the Seahawks and Lions today, “referencing the 48-45 score. Most listeners likely missed it, but RG3 is engaging in some dangerous line stepping. One false move and he will find himself doing Sun Belt games.

Sofa Boy to Gym Couch

Forty-five-year-old former Browns QB Tim Couch posted a selfie this week on Twitter, creating amazement and speculation. The shirtless furniture magnate was ripped, in stark contrast to how he looked following his years in the NFL.

The Look Man once bumped into Sofa Boy in Lexington KY, and dude looked sixty years old. Apparently, post NFL life has been good.



Former Number One NFL pick Gym Couch

THE LOOKAHEAD

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The die is largely cast in the NFC, where teams can do little to change the seeding. The Look Man is blowing off a number of those games in the pick segment, if only because teams could rest players. Even if the players do start the game, scoreboard watching could change that decision.

The focus is instead on the AFC, where seeding is fluid, especially with the cancellation of the Bisons-Bengals contest.

The week ahead:

Vegas Raiders at Kansas City Baby Backs (-8.5) – Saturday Special #1

The Baby Backs may have been the biggest beneficiaries of the cancellation between Crapchester and Cincinnati. They can secure the One Seed with a win, and the road to the Super Bowl goes through KC.

But not so fast, my friend. The NFL owners voted on a proposal that would force the AFC Championship game to be played at a neutral site if it involves any of these three teams. The Look Man is betting on the Mercedes Benz Dome in the ATL, but it could also be Lucas Oil Field in Indy. Both cities have the infrastructure to deal, and neither is in the postseason.

This measure was unnecessary and arbitrary. In season rules changes are knee-jerk reactions, and the tie breaking procedure could easily address the delta in games played. It stinks for all teams involved, and puts the power in the hands of Roger (Rabbit) Goodell, always a bad option.

Raiders QB replacement Jared Stidham dropped nearly four bills passing last week and the Raiders will not go quietly. Free Agent WR Davante Adams hated to see Derek (You Can Drive My) Carr benched, but he and TE Darren Waller put up big numbers last week. Waller, for one is happy to get off the side of the milk carton.

KC is going to need to rise to the occasion if they want the One Seed. Mahomes isn't the presumptive MVP for nothing, and he is only one of three QBs ever to throw for five large in a season. Baby Backs eke out a win to take the AFC One Seed. KC.



"There's a lot to be sorted through once the season is over."

Jacksonville J-Squareds at Tennessee Flaming Thumbtacks (+6.5) – Saturday Special #2

Tennessee has lost six straight, but can still win the AFC Souse Division with a win on Saturday night. The Flaming Thumbtacks have installed Josh Dobbs at QB and hope to have Derrick (King) Henry back from injury.

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In the good old days, the Tacks owned the J-Squareds, who are much improved. Jacksonville throttled Tennessee in their last meeting and QB Trevor Lawrence is balling out.

Tennessee is reeling after firing GM John (Jethro) Robinson, who has a mixed track record on draft day. HC Mike Vrabel can only get so much out of this squad as currently configured and the installation of Josh Dobbs would seem to indicate the tank is on. Going out in Round One of the playoffs isn't going to fill the holes on this team.

The renaissance of TE Evan Engram and RB Travis (ATM) Etienne is a huge factor in J-Ville. This offense is humming under former Iggles HC Doug Pedersen. Surprisingly, the defense has been the real star, forcing turnovers in bunches and playing well. No one wants to see this team in the postseason.

Well, that's just too bad. J-Ville wins this one to set up some epic playoff drama. They will be a low seed, but Pedersen knows how to win in the Tournament. J-Squareds.

Cleveland Browns at Blitzburgh Stillers (-2.5)

The Browns shook up the NFC Wild Card by punishing the Washington Commies at FedEx Field last week. Deshaun Watson looked like the real article and HC (Riverboat) Ron Rivera wasn't even aware that it was an elimination game. WRs Amari (Coop) Cooper and Donovan Peoples-Jones put up scores and Browns cruised over QB Carson Wentz and the Commies.

There was some drama in Cleveland this week as DE Jadaveon Clowney ripped the coaching staff and forced his exit. Clowney will not be making the trip to the Still City this week and he took a dump on the organization on the way out the door. Clowney claims the coaching staff panders to DE Myles Garrett instead of focusing on winning.

Mike (Omar Epps) Tomlin is making a run at .500 after starting at 2-6. QB Kenny (Two Gloves) Pickett is playing well late, and the Still Curtain has rebounded following the return of DE TJ Watt.

This game is a referendum. Will the Browns cast an eye toward a deep run in 2023 or will Tomlin finally get Coach of the Year consideration for making the postseason in a rebuilding year?

Well, neither could be true, but the Look Man is expecting the former. Cleveland plays spoiler to eliminate the slim Stillers playoff hopes and send Tomlin to his first losing record at 8-9. Browns, baby, Browns.



"The Standard is the Standard..."

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Baltimore Dumpster Ducks at Cincinnati Orange Cats (-9.5)

The Bengals are 2-3 in the AFC Asgard Division but can clinch with a win at home against Baltimore. The cancellation last week really hurts them the most, and a coin toss would decide the home field if Baltimore wins and secures a Wild Card.

All of this is the result of Joe (Goat Boy) Burrow's early struggles courtesy of an emergency appendectomy in the summer. The Bengals are white hot, and might consider wearing those dope white helmets this week.

Baltimore backup QB Tyler Huntley is a little nicked up, but Lamar (Action) Jackson is still out with a knee. The Look Man believes Action has played his last down in Baltimore, and he will go on an offseason tour to determine which team gets the rights to pay him \$50 million per annum.

This game became meaningless the moment the NFL cancelled the Buffalo contest. Cincinnati is in the Tournament and is one of few teams that can win at home or on the road. They are a real threat to repeat as AFC Champs irrespective of this outcome.

Speaking of outcomes, it would appear that Ron Torbert (the Eighth Man) is officiating. Hopefully he won't take over the game. Cincinnati Fan showed a lot of class last week and the Look Man would hate to see Bottlegate II at Pall Bearer Stadium. Bengals.



If you see this man doing your game...run

Buffalo Bisons at New England Chowderheads (+7)

The Chowds clinch a seven seed with a win, but it is tough to predict how Buffalo will react after last week. No, it isn't. Bisons knock New England out of the postseason with an emotional win for Hamlin. Bisons.

Green Bay Cheeseheads at Detroit Cadillacs (+4.5) Football Night in America (Flexed)

The NFL flexed this contest, and it should draw a big number. Unfortunately, Detroit may be eliminated if Seattle wins an early game, but they have been a feel-good story. Jared (Subway) Goff has is smoking hot and the Cadillacs would love to wipe the smirk off of Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers' face.

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Detroit would need a win at home and a Seattle loss to (Cake) Baker Mayfield and the Rams. They also need a defense to help them avoid high scoring shootouts.

The Pack is on a four-game heater, winning by an average of double digits. They win the seventh seed if they defeat Detroit. Perhaps more importantly, DDC can beat any team remaining in the Tournament, with the possible exception of Frisco. The Niners own the Pack.

The Look Man believes if you have more than one “if” you usually don’t make it, and Detroit has two. Cheeseheads cover and win, allowing us to watch a top five all-time QB in the NFC Playoffs. Go, Pack, Go.

EPILOGUE

The Look Man wondered aloud if we have seen the beginning of the end of the NFL following last week’s histrionics on Monday Night. It was a bad look for the league to see a second-year player nearly killed in the first quarter of a big game. Even the Official Spousal Unit of the Look Man watched, and she rarely tunes into the Four-Letter Network.

Nearly thirty million Americans took in the drama, which started out as a competitive slobberknocker. Bisons WR Stefon Diggs drilled Eli Apple on a sideline pattern, and Ja’Marr Chase was having his way with CB Tre’Davious White early. Still, no one wanted to witness that scene, and it was upsetting.

The NFL claims that it never considered resuming the game after a five-minute warm up, but the Look Man is dubious. Someone gave Joe Buck that information, and the NFL is known for poor public relations relative to decision making. It took over an hour to even suspend the game, and that was only due to the players and coaches forcing the issue.

The coin toss rule change is the NFL owners’ way of punishing Cincy and Buffalo for making them look bad. These two organizations had the audacity to challenge the NFL moneymaking machine. Zac Taylor and Sean McDermott showed a lot of class and grit in the face of tremendous adversity, and we cannot have these guys showing up owners engaged in sexual harassment lawsuits.

The Look Man hopes this doesn’t cast a pall on the postseason, but it may yet have impact upon Week Eighteen. You saw grown men crying on the field, and the emotional and psychological impacts often occur much later.

The Look Man has seen gruesome scenes twice this season, and the business model of the NFL is flawed. One must wonder if the league can survive many more of this.

Peace,

The Look Man