

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2023

### Week Thirteen: Whose house?

*"I don't have a good answer for you, just walk normally and slowly, carefully. Try to keep people away from my legs, try to keep my dogs from jumping all over me at the house and stuff like that. It's a great question, I don't know." – J-Ville QB Trevor (Sarah) Lawrence on how he avoids reinjury to his ankle before gameday. By the way, the Dawgs hope to jump all over him at Cleveland Browns Stadium on Sunday.*

#### PROLOGUE

The Look Man had a blast in the City of Angels last weekend, meeting up with the Maui branch of Browns Backers Anonymous. Los Angeles has an odd feel in football and otherwise, and the weather was unseasonably cool, but a roadie is always a welcomed event. The sheer number of Browns Fan in attendance was nothing short of amazing, and SoFi is a stadium worth seeing.

The national anthem was done by a saxophonist, and the pre-game hype by the announcer was like a warm up at a comedy club. The announcer bellowed, "Whose house??" with the fans responding, "OUR HOUSE??!!" it seemed ironic since the Rams and Bolts share the stadium, so it is an open question.

The rest of the NFL week was interesting, with KC getting jobbed at Flambeau, the Iggles getting blasted at home by the Niners, and Cincinnati surprising J-Ville on Monday Night. The calendar flip to December means the NFL season is winding down, and our glee is tempered with sadness if our teams are out of the running. Which is very few of us due to the mediocrity that is the...National...Football...League.

Without further ado, the week that was.

#### LAGNIAPPE

*We live in our dreams...*

The Look Man is very interested in the developments in Blitzburgh. They have now lost two games and are likely out of the postseason. QB Mitch Trubisky was just nominated for an Emmy in *How To Blow the Playoffs in Five Days*, after losing to Arizona and New England Patriots in the same week. The Stillers set an NFL record by losing consecutive games to two teams which were eight games under .500.

It is an odd place for HC Mike (Omar Epps) Tomlin, who has been dealt a bad hand. Tomlin is forced to turn a blind eye to misfit players like Diontae Johnson, for celebrating when down by fourteen points, Johnson again leads the team in dropped passes, including a TD two weeks ago in a win over Cincy.

WR George Pickens is loafing and pouting because he cannot get the football, and RT Chuks Okorafor is benched for the year after criticizing the offense on the sidelines. Kicker Chris Boswell addressed former OC Matt (O) Canada after a game, yelling, "We sure didn't win this because of anything you did!"

The drumbeat of Stillers Fan Tomlin criticism is constant, with many decrying the fact that Tomlin has never had a losing season. They claim (rightly) that they haven't had postseason success either. It's been 2016 since the Stillers were playoff worthy, and they got blasted as recently as 2020 by Cleveland in the Wild Card round.

The Look Man believes any Steelers Fan who doesn't want Tomlin is nuts. He has more wins than any active HC not named Belichick or Reid. Big Ben isn't walking through that door anytime soon, and he still continues to win with guys who are not household names in their own homes. Pickett, Mason Rudolph (the Red Nosed QB), malcontent WRs? All he does is win.

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Speaking of which, that win at Cincy was a thing of beauty. *This Week in the NFL* played a clip of Tomlin and Cam Heyward walking slowly off the field to a waiting Stillers contingent in the end zone. Tomlin opined, "This is what you do after a quality win. Walk off the field slow."

Stillers Fan: if you don't want Mike T, just fire him. He will show up for another AFC team and beat you every year.

#### One in the oven...

(Cake) Baker Mayfield and wife Emily apparently have a kid on the way. They celebrated the moment with sonogram photos on the beach with Emily's sister at their feet. No word yet on the sex of the new arrival, but a gender reveal is betting on a turnover in the oven.



*So in love...*

## THE LOOKAHEAD

The Look Man got too excited with the pick segment, and still should have cut a few. Anyhoo, the race tightens and who doesn't like a good parlay?

Without further ado, the Lookahead:

#### Jacksonville J-Squareds at Cleveland Browns (-3)

Make no mistake; this game has major playoff implications for both teams. The Browns face a must win situation with AFC wins necessary to make the postseason. They lose tiebreakers to several of the AFC wild card teams which are 'in the hunt.' Perhaps worse, Cleveland could have put themselves in the AFC Asgard Division drivers' seat with wins at Denver and the Rams, but no.

Meanwhile, Jacksonville would like to establish some breathing room with Indy nipping at their heels. The Ponies could climb within a game of the AFC Souse lead with a win at Cincy, and a J-Ville loss. QB Trevor (Vicki) Lawrence has a high ankle sprain, and anything can happen down the stretch. J-Ville is the AFC version of the Iggles, a running team in passing clothing. They want to get up early and pound the rock on the ground if possible.

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QB (Cool) Joe Flacco put the ball up 44 times last week at Sofi, and that is not who this team is. He made some nice throws, including 19 attempts of over ten air yards. That had not been done in five years in Cleveland despite the legendary exploits of (Cake) Baker Mayfield. You really have to go all the way back to 2007 Derek Anderson to see that kind of gunslinging.

Flacco is a real NFL QB, and he pays dividends as the Browns win in a wet, soggy, sloppy Northeast Ohio afternoon. If Browns HC Kevin Stefanski wises up and runs the football 30 times, the Browns win by a TD. Otherwise, the Browns lose, their playoff hopes dashed, and he gets fired.

Browns, baby Browns, as Cleveland rocks.



*(Cool) Joe Flacco – the name on the door says ‘Cleveland’*

#### Indianapolis Ponies at Cincinnati Bengals (-3)

The Bengals looked almost like an NFL football team after knocking Trevor Lawrence and J-Ville out last week. They still cannot stop a nosebleed on defense, but Jake Browning (Automatic Rifle) went 24 or 29 for 354 passing. The BAR still has a hitch in his delivery, but crushed a depleted J-Ville secondary when it mattered.

The Ponies are within striking distance of the AFC South lead and are not to be taken lightly. QB (Chauncey) Gardner-Whitsett is doing more than Being There, and this team is for real. The Look Man likes Indy to win this outright, knocking Cincinnati into a spoiler roll only. Now if only he could convince someone to purchase his tickets to the game at face value! Ponies.

#### Houston Slim Shadies at NY Aeronauticals (+6)

Houston is the best team no one is really embracing. They have a legitimate shot at the division title, and are getting zero respect from the Zebras. Unfortunately, they lost their best WR, Tank Dell, for the season last week.

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The Aeros are going back to Zach Wilson at QB, and it is not going to end well. Houston covers and wins a battle, setting up a wild finish race for the AFC Souse Division. Slim Shadies.

#### Crapchester Bisons at KC Baby Backs (-3)

This may be the biggest of all of the big games this week. The Bisons are down to the wire; if they lose here, they are almost certainly out of the postseason. A Bisons win here nearly guarantees Baltimore as the One Seed in the AFC.

Bisons QB Josh (Irwin) Allen is lighting it up since the Bengals road loss, throwing and running TDs at a prolific rate. KC is struggling without its best LB, Nick Bolton, and now backup Dru Tranquill may be out with a concussion and safety Bryan Cook went down last week with a gruesome ankle injury.

KC RB Isaih (Ferdie) Pacheco is likely out with a knee, but look for Andy (Kool Aid) Reid to find a way offensively. Unfortunately, the zebras also find a way, keeping Crapchester relevant, if only as payback for the awful calls last week at Philly two weeks ago. Hell, the Baby Backs got housed last week also, but dems da berries. Bills cover.

#### Denver Donkeys at Sofi Bolts (-3)

The Bolts are tryna get their head coach fired, but they beat the Donkeys at Sofi. "Whose House? OUR HOUSE!!!" Bolts.

#### Philadelphia Iggles at Dallas Cowpokes (-3) Football Night in America

The Pokes beat Seattle last week, with more than a little help from the zebra crew. Geno Smith drilled their defense, which was looking ahead to Week Fourteen.

The Iggles lost a blowout to the Niners doing the same thing. While Dak Dallas put up enough points to win, Jalen (Hulu has live sports) Hurts could manage only nineteen.

If the first Pokes-Iggles game was a near classic, this game is referendum. Former Ponies LB Shaq Leonard came in for a free agency visit, and decided to sign with the Iggles instead. Jerrah was not happy, because Doomsday Lite needs bodies. LB Leighton Vander Esch is out with his annual season ending neck injury.

Look for Dak to attempt to tighten the NFC East with a win, while the Iggles simply pound the rock. The Look Man doesn't believe the Pokes Doomsday Lite can stop this running game, but the Iggles are short at TE.

Bottom line: Pokes win, but covering these points in a division game after an emotional loss seems like too much.

#### Breen Gay Cheeseheads at NY Football Jynts (+6.5) Monday Night Football 2

The Cheeseheads received the benefit of numerous calls last week in the KC game at Flambeau. Noted Tailpipe Cyle opined that the Zebras giveth and taketh away:

*The (zebras) reffed a very good Packer-Chefs game up until the end, but most of the focus was on the last two questionable calls. The Packers got screwed first, which led to the Chefs getting close enough to be in that situation.*

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1. *The 15-yard PF for Hitting MaHomes inbounds was a terrible call. MaHomes is a dangerous man (runner) and was not out of bounds, nor giving himself up.*
2. *Then there was the "Ballentine's Evening Mascare" no call for DPI. I don't even know how the refs can explain how they missed that PI or how to justify it by saying "let them play." Yes, the Chefs got screwed on that, but that's makeup call #1 in my book.*
3. *A play or two later, the non-male line judge should have granted forward progress and continued the clock for the KC catch by the near sideline. The defender pushed/pulled the receiver backwards a yard and then the receiver stepped out. Terrible call against the Packers.*
4. *Lastly, there was the two-hand push on Kelcey-Swift. It was pretty blatant, but refs would have to throw a flag pretty much every Hail Mary if they throw it in that case. The no call was not a surprise despite the push. That's makeup call #2 in my book...making the bad calls a push.*

*Packers were winning that game with an 8-point "comfortable" lead before the refs started sucking. Packers deserved to win. It seemed that the broadcast goons were focusing, and rooting for, the MVP miraculous comeback instead of a fair finish.*

Good analysis by Cyle, but interesting final assessment. The Look Man sees it this way: the NFL needs someone else in the NFC Black and Blue to get into the playoff race, and Jordan Love (Doctor) is playing well enough of late. KC got jobbed on the DPI no-call, with the DB treating Marquez Valdez-Scantling (MVS) to a grocery store pony ride.

The Cheeseheads may rise to the occasion, but Christian (Chandelier) Watson is a potato chip. He is injured again, and it won't help Breen Gay down the stretch. Anyway, Jyntz cover on Monday Night with Tommy (The Passing Paisano) DeVito leading the way.

### EPILOGUE

The Look Man is a bit of a conspiracy theorist, but the NFL would like nothing more than to tighten up the NFC and AFC playoff races down the stretch. Philly and Baltimore are running away with the One Seed, and that reduces drama. The league announced a Saturday December 16 lineup and games are being contested on Christmas Eve in 2023. Look for the zebras to be even more involved this week as questionable calls abound.

The Browns, J-Ville, and KC have blown chances to solidify their standing in the AFC, and the Niners and Detroit have stumbled in the NFC. This week's games should help clarify the playoff races in both conferences IF the NFL doesn't get involved.

If the Look Man had to hazard a guess, he thinks it looks like this in the Tournament:

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AFC		NFC
<i>Division Winners</i>		
Marine Mammals		Iggles
Dumpster Ducks		Niners
Baby Backs		Dirty Birds
J-Squareds		Cadillacs
<i>Wild Cards</i>		
Browns		Pokes
Ponies		Cheeseheads
Slim Shadies		Seahags

If the NFL has taught us one thing in the last hundred years, it is this: nobody knows nothing.

Peace,

The Look Man