

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2023

### Week Fifteen – Kardiac Kids 2.0

*“We never think we’re out of it. As long as you have time on the clock, we’re going to grind out every single yard, every single inch to win the game.” – Browns superstar DE Myles Garrett on the Kardiac Kids 2.0. The Browns have won five games on game-winning drives in the final two minutes of regulation in 2023.*

#### PROLOGUE

The 2023 season has been a wild ride folks. By midseason, an estimated \$300 million in QB salary was on the bench due to injury. On Sunday, the Stillers Mason Rudolph (the Red Nosed QB) will become the 58th starting quarterback in the NFL this season.

And yet, we still have zebras calling intentional grounding when QBs deal the ball and no receiver is in the area. The Look Man witnessed one such call on Football Night in America in Cincinnati, when WR Gabe Davis. Davis broke off his route on a blitz read, and Josh (Irwin) Allen read the defense differently. Allen threw the nine route and got called for IG when he wasn’t even under duress.

Here’s the point: either the NFL accepts the fact that QBs need to deal the ball to avoid getting concussed, or you make phantom calls for grounding. The NFL is a QB driven league, and no one wants to see Jacoby (Brisket) Brissett against Zach Wilson in the Super Bowl. That may be a remote case, but you get the Look Man’s drift.

In other news, Week Fifteen featured some excellent matchups of .500 teams battling for the postseason. The Stillers went down like free beer to the Ponies, but Tampa beat the Cheeseheads on an unlikely perfect QB rating game by (Cake) Baker Mayfield.

The Pokes, the supposed cream of the NFC, got destroyed by a plucky Bisons squad, while the Iggles were beaten by backup QB Drew Lock. If not for the Niners and Baltimore kicking ass and chewing bubble gum, the week would have been a total surprise.

The playoff hunt is heating up big time with the Rams, Bengals, Bisons and Houston all getting hot at the right time. And backup quarterbacks are a huge part of that story. Jake Browning (Automatic Rifle) played a game for the ages on Saturday against the Hornheads 27-24 in OT. Old-timer Case (Quarter) Keenum beat the Flaming Thumbtacks, who had the audacity to wear Oilers Luv ya Blue throwbacks in Nashville.

It was a wild week, and our first real taste of Saturday football in 2023. If the rest of the season looks like Week Fifteen, we are all in for some barnburners.

Without further ado, the week that was...

#### LAGNIAPPE

*Things that make you say, “Hmmm...”*

When Baltimore and Frisco meet this weekend, it will mark only the third time since the 1970 merger that teams with the best outright record in their respective conferences will meet in December or later. T The Niners clinched the NFC West last weekend, and Baltimore can get close to clinching home field in the AFC with a win.

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In each of the previous meetings, the NFC won the game and the conference. You have to go all the way back to 2005 when Indy (13-1) and Seattle (12-2) met in Week Sixteen. The only time prior to that was the 1977 season, when the Donkeys (12-1) and Pokes (11-2) met in Week Fourteen. All of the NFC teams went on to the Super Bowl following these games.

Niners TE George Kittle couldn't resist poking fun. "I want to hand it to the NFL scriptwriters. Like, great job. Christmas Day, 'Monday Night Football' and you got the two [No. 1] seeds going at it? You couldn't have done that one any better. Wow. It makes you think just a little bit."

The game also features the presumptive MVP, Brock Purdy, with Lamar Jackson. RB Christian (CMC) McCaffrey just hurtled Dak Prescott, and Jalen Hurts in the MVP race with an incredible Week Fifteen performance.

Both teams are fighting for home-field advantage in the playoffs. Baltimore can clinch the AFC Asgard with a win and a Browns loss. The Niners need Philly, Dallas and Detroit losses to lock up the One Seed and a bye.

It seems odd that this is happening so early in the season, but someone has to win.

#### The Flamingo Network is Next

For the first time in history, the NFL is eliminating commercials from the fourth quarter of an upcoming game. The Bisons-Bolts game on Saturday night will be televised solely on Peacock, NBC's streaming arm.

The commercial free quarter will provide viewers an additional twelve minutes of "game-related content, which will be dispersed between Mike Tirico, Cris Collinsworth, and Melissa Stark, with notable expansion of the "Football Night in America" studio crew. FNIA will hit up the balance of Week Sixteen games, which include ten on Sunday (Christmas Eve) and three on Monday (Christmas Day).

Crapchester and LA will show the game on the local NBC affiliate, and a lot of fans are unhappy. The NFL is forcing the streaming game down our throats and at this rate, there will be multiple streaming services to see the entire season. This could backfire, because this game could be over by halftime. The Bolts QB is Easton Stick with Herbert out with a broken pinky, but the Look Man expects a dead-cat bounce for the defense after firing HC Brandon Staley.

## THE LOOKAHEAD

Week Fifteen was an absolute blast, with incredible plays in Cincy, Cleveland and Crapchester. A few more quarterbacks bit the dust with concussions, setting up an odd stretch run. Cleveland is really banged up, with fourteen guys on IR. They need one or two more wins to lock a playoff spot, but it would be really nice to avoid a tie-breaker that goes down five or six levels.

Without further ado, the Lookahead to Week Sixteen.

#### Cleveland Browns at Houston Slim Shadies (-2.5)

(Cool) Joe Flacco can still ball out. He threw three picks to the Monsters of the Furniture Mart, and then followed with a seventeen-point fourth quarter to win the game. Dude doesn't need the money, so he is playing for the sheer joy of it.

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Enter Case Keenum, who is the likely replacement for Offensive Rookie of the Year CJ Stroud. Stroud was knocked senseless by the Aeronauticals Quinnen Williams two weeks ago. Williams took two and a half steps, and shoved Stroud to the turf. If Stroud was Tom Brady, Quinnen would be looking at twenty to life. As it was, no flag was even thrown.

Keenum knows Cleveland after holding a clipboard behind Cake Baker Mayfield for two seasons. The flip is also true; Stefanski knows Keenum, and what he can and cannot do. The Slim Shadies have two linebackers possibly out, and the Browns team is a M\*A\*S\*H unit that finished the Chicago game with one healthy starter on the O-line.

The Browns defense has struggled on the road in 2023. While they allow the fewest passing yards per game, they have the third-highest interception rate in the NFL. They are holding teams to a league low 28.34% on third down conversions. The Browns have a baker's dozen picks in their last ten games, tied fifth-most in the NFL. To put it simply: this defense is rugged and possibly historical.

Browns, baby, Browns as they step up and put the panties on Houston. Browns.



[Garrett IS the firecracker in Week Sixteen](#)

#### *Dallas Cowpokes at Miami Marine Mammals (-1)*

The Pokes cannot win on the road, and have only one signature win: a blowout over a nicked up Iggles team in Dallas. The Pokes defense will likely get an earful after the 31-10 loss at Crapchester, so they will be angry and mean.

Tua Tagovailoa's Marine Mammals look to have uber WR Tyreek Hill back in Week Sixteen, and this game could be a referendum. Miami also quietly got RB Devon Achane (the Night Train) back in Week Fifteen, and he is the AFC version of Kyren Williams in LA. Dude has speed, hands, and moves, and this Miami team can strike early and often.

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The Pokes have clinched a playoff berth, but the Look Man doesn't see them winning the NFC East. HC Mike McDaniell and the Mammals cover and win. Mammals.

#### Cincinnati Bengals at Blitzburgh Stillers (+2)

Rudolph the Red Nosed QB makes his debut on a dysfunctional Stillers squad that is fighting for its playoff life. The drumbeat of Fire Mike Tomlin has reached a crescendo in the Still City, and perhaps his message has gotten stale. The Look Man doesn't believe it, and the Stillers cover against a Bengals team without WR Ja'Marr Chase, who has a shoulder. Stillers cover.



*Tomlin noticed a little hitch in BAR's throwing motion...*

#### Baltimore at Niners (-4.5) [Monday Night Football]

Baltimore took care of business versus the J-Squareds, concussing Trevor (Vicki) Lawrence and sending JAX into a tailspin. Lamar (Action) Jackson pulled rabbits out of hats, beating the pass rush and secondary in what should have been a close game.

The Niners are the best team in the NFL, and this game could be a Super Bowl preview. The Look Man has seen this movie, and Niners QB Brock Purdy (Good) has his MVP vote. Purdy and the offense are in high gear, and the Niners defense has three guys who can run with Lamar. Niners cover and win.

### EPILOGUE

The 2021 season ended with the Rams stealing a ring after cheating their way to the Number Two TV market, as the NFL rewarded them with a ring.

The Bengals retooled their offensive line, and replaced Joe Burrow with BAR, who is dropping dimes. The worst game Browning had was the OT win last week, and he went over 300 yards passing after starting slowly.

The Bisons fired OC Ken Dorsey, had a team meeting to determine they did not want to fire HC Sean McDermott, and got hot. Josh (Irwin) Allen is going full sci-fi with his numbers, including running over folks carrying the football.

No one wants to see any of these three teams in the postseason; they are getting hot at the right time, and making life miserable for contenders. The Battle of Ohio Part Deux is fixed for Saturday, January 6, 2024, and the winner of that game is going to the postseason. The Browns could still win the AFC Asgard with a little help, and if they run the table.

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Any way you slice it, some team with ten wins is going to have to go fishing instead of the postseason, and if the Rams and Buffalo get in, they could knock off a weak division leader like Detroit or Miami.

The next few weeks will tell the tale, but Week Sixteen will be full of intrigue. What is not in question is that the Road to Super Bowl LVII runs through Frisco. And they could provide the Browns with an early Christmas present by beating Baltimore.

Peace,

The Look Man