

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2023

Week Twenty-Two: Dynasty

“Andy was my right tackle his senior year at BYU. 1980.” – former Bears QB Jim (Punky QB) McMahon.

“His classic line was, ‘I know it’s time to retire when one of my linemen’s coaching me.’” – KC HC Andy Reid on McMahon’s retirement in 1996, following Super Bowl XXXI by the Cheeseheads over the Chowds.

PROLOGUE

The Look Man borrowed the lead quote from Peter King’s *Football Morning in America*. King wrote of the dynastic nature of the Kansas City win over the Niners, and it was pretty heady stuff. Perhaps more importantly, King drew parallels after bumping into the Punky QB during Media Week. McMahon was at the game, and recounted his relationship with Reid, the man most responsible for the KC renaissance.

The Punky QB spent his last season in Green Bay gear, following an unceremonious departure from Cleveland when his bonus check bounced at the bank. After his seven years with the Monsters of the Furniture Mart, McMahon played for the San Diego, Philly, Minnesota, Arizona, Cleveland, and Green Bay, with most of his later seasons in a backup role.

McMahon was no stranger to controversy, and wore a Bears jersey to the White House visit following his second Lombardi. The Cheeseheads win occurred eleven years to the day of the Bears’ Super Bowl victory over the Patriots in the same venue. Since he couldn’t attend the Bears White House ceremony, he decided to honor them and President Barrack Obama, a Bears fan, for the Green Bay visit. Cheesehead Fan was ticked off, but F them if they can’t take a joke.

So Andy Reid, the man who Philly said couldn’t win the Big One, now has three Lombardis, joining Bill Walsh and Joe Gibbs. While he is still behind Belicheat, he has taken the Baby Backs to six consecutive AFC Championship Games, four Super Bowl appearances, and three Super Bowl titles (LIV, LVII, and LVIII). Not bad for an OT from BYU.

This was the apex of Super Bowls, held in Loss Vegas, according to the San Jose Mercury-Tribune. The venue was incredible even if the weather was cool. When you’re in Vegas, there are no windows anyway, so it was fitting.

Without further ado, the week that was...

THE GAME

Doctor Jones, I presume?

The Look Man always takes the better QB, and Patrick Mahomes finished seventh in MVP voting. Of course, regular season awards mean nothing in the playoffs, and Mahomes put his stamp on this one. KC finished with the same number of wins as Cleveland, but got hot at the right time following a ridiculous loss at Allegiant to the Raiders. That loss got Antonio Pierce the head coaching gig for 2024, and a ring for Mahomes and the Baby Backs.

A few folks thought the game itself was boring in the first half, but not the Look Man. Football, at its heart, is chess with human beings. Winning plays focus on creating a one-man mismatch at the point of attack, which becomes the difference between a four-yard gain and a tackle for loss. If everyone performs their assignments, it might also result in a touchdown.

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The defenses played lights out in the first half, which ended with the Niners taking a 10-3 lead into the locker room. The Baby Backs tacked on another twenty-two after Usher's halftime moves, walking away with the ring. Frisco could counter with only twelve additional points, settling for FGs instead of TDs.

That stat could have been much different without Chris Jones, who deserved the MVP. Jones got in the face of Niners QB Brock (Steady) Purdy on three occasions, forcing him to throw incompletions instead of touchdowns in the redzone. The margin of victory was provided by one chess piece, but Jones is a knight, whose versatility outshone his teammates.

The Look Man trumpeted the strength of the KC defense prior to the game, and it proved to be the difference. They shut down the Niners run game with devastating hits on Run CMC. On one play, McCaffrey was twisted and grimacing, but to the Look Man's surprise, he was able to continue.

This game featured some fierce hitting, and fumbles by Run CMC and Isiah (Ferdie) Pacheco were evidence. The game actually turned on a special teams play in which the ball clipped a Niners blocker and was recovered by the Baby Backs. Close games are won and lost on turnover margin, and KC won that battle.

Winning!

The winners of the Bowl received \$164K, a seven large bump over the 2022 season. That number includes KC wideout Kadarius Toney, who despite a DNP, receives a ring and a check. Toney won't be back in 2024.

The losers receive \$89K and a version of the home game. Defensive Coordinator Steve Wilks was released after the game, apparently for holding KC to 25 points. The job he did was outstanding, but someone had to take the hit for coaching malfeasance by Kyle Shanahan.

Players receive a full bonus if they've played three previous games and/or if they are injured veterans. They get half a bonus if they played fewer games or if they are a first-year player. It's still a nice payday for four hours of work either way.

However, one has to wonder about the value of being hobbled for life, or dying a horrible, early death from TBI? The average NFL career – three years. Vesting for a pension – four years. Chances of getting CTE – high. Chances of walking like Jim McMahon at 60 – higher. Before fans cry about how much money these players make, they should understand the danger. One could be maimed or killed on any given play – just ask Damar Hamlin.

Agent State Farm

The Look Man liked the commercials this year, and his favorite was Ahnold as Agent State Farm. HE also liked the Christopher Walken BMW commercial in which several actors got to do their Walken impressions. By the way, if you haven't seen Things to Do in Denver When You're Dead, do it now.

The Look Man also enjoyed the postgame, and especially Mahomes Mom, Randi Martin, holding her grandson. The picture below does not do her justice; if she was a President, she would be Babe-raham Lincoln. Her resemblance to Patrick's wife Brittany may just be a figment of the Look Man's imagination, but she is a handsome woman.

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Mom 'n M

Mahomes has a half-sister, Mia, who is sixteen years his junior. Apparently, Randi met a very wealthy man following a breakup with Patrick Senior, who clearly has substance issues. Pat Senior was recently arrested for his seventh DUI in Texas, and is awaiting trial. He faces ten months in the constabulary if convicted, but it is a family matter.

Kelce Meltdown

The game also featured a meltdown by TE Travis Kelce, who was pulled for a blow just prior to Pacheco's first half fumble. The play occurred after Mahomes found wide receiver Mecole Hardman for 52 to get into the red zone. Pacheco fumbled on the next play, which featured backup TE Noah Brown blocking. Brown clearly whiffed on the block, allowing the backside tackler to strip Ferdie.

Kelce ran over to Reid and gave Reid an earful and a vicious chest bump about not being in the game (video here - <https://twitter.com/i/status/1756838434591621134>). You can blast Kelce's outburst, but he played a vital role in the comeback, following an abysmal first half. Kelce ended up with nearly a hundy on nine catches to go along with his third ring. Still, there is no place for the shot he put on Reid, and he needs to seek counseling before he gets in trouble.



"Don't you evah talk about me!"

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Brock Around the Clock

Haters can blame QB Brock (Steady) Purdy, and he did miss some throws with defenders in his face. Still, neither he nor Kyle Shanahan lost this football game. The Baby Backs simply wanted it more, and they played to the final whistle.

Purdy finished with nearly two hundred sixty passing yards and a QBR of 89.3. Typically, that is good enough to win, but not when Mahomes puts up triple three and a QBR ten points higher. Niners WR Jauan Jennings tacked on a receiving and passing TD, and was in line for the MVP if not for Kermit the Frog. Perhaps Shanny didn't put Purdy in position to win it, but the loss does not fall to Purdy or DC Steve Wilks, who was canned.

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

In Invisibilis veritas

Bill (the Winemaker) Vinovich and his team acquitted themselves in Vegas last week. Sure, the TD pass from Juwan Jennings to Run CMC should've been disallowed for ineligible receiver downfield, and the grounding call on Mahomes was chicken bleep. On balance, the Winemaker was nearly invisible and that is the way the Look Man likes his zebras.

The Look Man was once again amazed at Vegas, which set the under at 47. The final in OT was 2522, which included a block PAT. How these guys do it is beyond the Look Man, but the Vegas Strip was bought and paid for by suckers. In the words of Niners HC Kyle Shanahan, "That's why I can't believe people gamble on this stuff. I do this for a living and I have no clue. No clue. I'm not just saying that. What's so cool about football is it can go anyway. But to gamble on it? Crazy."

The Look Man predicted an excellent game, and a close finish, and he got his wish. Of course, it took a Niners team that thought a coin flip for the second OT was imminent. Mahomes and the Baby Backs ran nearly the same play that beat Philly in Super Bowl LVII. Reid and the Baby Backs called the play *Corn Dog* then, and *Tom and Jerry* this time, but the result was identical.



"Won't you be my – NEIGHBAH!!"

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EPILOGUE

There is sadly no Lookahead this week, as the 2023 season is over. A few orders of business remain, however, before the new league year opens on March 5. Teams must tender players between February 20 and that date or forever hold their peace. The Combine takes place in Indy February 27 through March 4, and we get to see if guys look good in their underwear as opposed to the playing field.

This season features a novelty in the UFL, following a merger of the XFL and USFL leagues. Play begins on March 30, 2024 for eight teams culled from the two leagues. Houston's two teams merged, as the Gamblers and Roughnecks merged. Somewhere, Jim Kelly is complaining about the loss of the team he played with prior to his run with Marv Levy and the Bisons.

But all of that is secondary to the dynasty talk regarding the Baby Backs. TE Travis Kelce's brash prediction of a Threeppeat came on the podium in Allegiant. He couldn't even hold his water long enough to make it to the KC Parade.

The chances of KC even repeating as AFC Champs is remote. There are too many excellent QBs in the AFC, with Mahomes, Allen, Jackson, Herbert, Tagovailoa, and Burrow coming back next season. KC is going to struggle to three-peat, as it's not even money they can even win the AFC again. Perhaps more importantly, DT/DE Chris Jones and CB L'Jarius Sneed want new deals, and the cap hit is going to be massive. Kelce is not getting any younger at 34 years old, and they need to restock at RB and WR for 2024.

This was never going to be the year for anyone in the NFC. The AFC dominated the NFC, with Baltimore and Cincy going 5-0, and Buffalo and Miami 4-1. The NFC had few significant wins vs. the AFC, with Detroit beating KC in the opener (without Chris Jones). The conference had Frisco and Detroit at the top, a second tier with Dallas and Philly, and not much else.

Compare that with the AFC, where 11-6 Cleveland was a five seed, and KC needed road wins at Crapchester and Baltimore to get to Super Bowl LVIII. The AFC Asgard finished with four teams above .500, the first time that has happened since 1935. The final standings were: 1. Baltimore: 13-4, 2. Cleveland: 11-6, 3. Blitzburgh: 10-7, 4. Nati: 9-8.

The 2024 season is right around the corner, with Week One featuring Team Dunsel at KC Thursday Night, and Philly in Sao Paolo on a Friday. The Iggles will probably see the Browns, with both teams getting nine days until their next opponent.

The KC victory parade shootings were heart breaking and emblematic of the world's troubles. Simultaneous conflicts of Israel vs. Palestine and Russia vs. Ukraine are a real threat to global harmony, and one spark could set off a conflagration. The NFL is a surrogate for war, but the real thing is a messy business. A very, very, messy business.

Give peace a chance,

The Look Man