

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2025

### WEEK FIVE: BAD BEATS

*"It's the same team, we just got that juice that we needed. And by 'juice' I mean those chicken-sh!t calls against KC." J-Squareds QB Trevor Lawrence after beating KC late in Week Five.*

#### PROLOGUE

Scott van Pelt of the Four-Letter Network popularized a segment called *Bad Beats* featuring teams that miss the cover in sports betting. He and co-host Stanford Steve show the videos while recounting the spread or over miss, typically with ignominious outcomes.

The Look Man is noticing a disturbing NFL trend in 2025: the improbable come from behind win. Six teams came back from double digit deficits in Week Six alone. The last time that happened was 2013, and Jeffrey Epstein was still alive then.

Denver, Tennessee, New Orleans, Carolina, and Washington DC were the other teams to come back after being down at least 10 points last week. None of these teams were on the Look Man's bingo card and the Denver and Jacksonville comebacks were clearly aided by the zebras.

The Look Man loves a good upset as much as the next man, but these Alcoa Fantastic Finishes are being manufactured. The zebras keep it close, making unnecessary and cheap calls to disrupt offensive continuity and keep blowouts from happening early. Once a team knows it is getting calls, it generates hope; and hope allows late wins.

In other news, seven teams are tied with four wins. Detroit Lions, Philly, Frisco, and Jacksonville are leading the pack, and Buffalo, KC, and Baltimore are scuffling. Tampa Bay has won the last four late, and these improbable wins are becoming commonplace.

The second stanza of the 2025 season is underway, and in the words of Yogi Berra, "It gets late early around here."

Without further ado, the Week That Was.

#### LAGNIAPPE

*In the butt, Bob. In the butt...*

Former Jets QB Mark (Butt Fumble) Sanchez was stabbed last week while in town to broadcast the Ponies game. Sanchez was apparently intoxicated and running wind sprints in an alley behind a bar, when a 69-year-old truck driver refused to move his truck. Sanchez hopped into the cab of the panel truck and demanded the driver move his vehicle. The driver, who did not have his hearing aids, refused and was assaulted by Sanchez.

In response, the driver sprayed Sanchez with mace, infuriating the 38-year-old ex-QB. Sanchez then body slammed the trucker, and punched him repeatedly. Fearing for his life, the trucker stabbed Sanchez three times, critically injuring Sanchez. Both ended up in the hospital, where Sanchez was subsequently charged with felony assault.

The driver is suing Sanchez and Fox Sports, and Sanchez is in jeopardy of losing his career and facing one to six years in the pokey. The saddest part of the story was the rush to judgement by politicians, who

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suggested Indianapolis law enforcement was liable and the National Guard should be sent in under the Insurrection Act. Crime is down in Indy, unless former NFL QBs who are afraid of butts are on the prowl.



*69-year old victim Perry Tole: "You should see the other guy..."*

The Look Man is astounded at this story, which did not involve former Ponies punter Pat McAfee. McAfee was once arrested for public intoxication after swimming in Indy's Broad Ripple Creek at 3 AM. When asked by officers why he was wet, McAfee responded, "It was raining."

Since it had not rained in several days, the officers hauled McAfee away and booked him for being an intoxicated asshole. When asked about the story, former Indy QB Peyton Manning mumbled something about 'idiot kickers.'

#### *Making Moves...*

While Flacco trade was the big news, Browns GM Andrew (Huckle)Berry also swapped CBs with the Jacksonville. CB Greg Newsome is taking his show to J-Ville in exchange for CB Tyson Campbell and two late round picks. HuckleBerry is going full Doc Holiday, getting picks for the 2026 season. He makes timely and smart moves, including the acquisition of Flacco for a 2023 playoff run. If Cincinnati had a GM like Berry, it would be looking at a deep playoff run instead of outside looking in. Despite the albatross of the Deshaun Watson trade, which set the franchise back a decade, the Look Man loves the Ivy League brain trust in C-Town.

#### *A Rivers Runs Through It*

The late great Robert Redford directed an epic period piece about an early 20th century Montana family headed by Sir Anthony Hopkins. The story revolves around two brothers, one stoic and grounded, the other reckless and feckless. A great deal of the allegorical film surrounds the men's love of fly fishing, and their inability to reconcile the Industrial Revolution with their pastoral lifestyle.

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The Look Man told you that story to tell you this one: the Bengals are attempting to reconcile their lack of a 2025 offensive strategy.

Bengals RG Jalen Rivers is now playing in place of free agent Dalton Risner. Rivers has looked decent, ripping open holes for RB Semaje Perrine, but not Chase Brown. Risner is now a highly compensated backup, showing up on payday with a gun and a mask.

The news was not all good for Rivers, who got run over in pass protection on a couple of occasions. Still, as Troy Aikman declared, you cannot simply go from a passing to a running team by simple edict. You must practice run blocking. Are you listening, Kevin Stefanski?

No fish were killed or injured during the making of this segment. The Bengals have a strict catch and release policy for players and opponents.

### THE LOOKAHEAD

#### Blitzburgh Stillers at Cleveland Browns (+5/38)

Cleveland shocked the world, but not the Look Man, with an upset win over Green Bay in Week Three. They followed by losing to Detroit and Minnesota on the road, leading to the benching of Joe Flacco for Dillon Gabriel.

The Look Man doesn't really like Gabriel, who while accurate and timely, is too small to play in the AFC North. This Stillers game will be a good test to see if Gabriel plays a decent horn, or if he gets his teeth knocked out like Colt McCoy before him. It is unclear why the Browns Front Office keeps drafting these sub-six footers. Anyone who has seen the Jynts' Jaxson Dart can see how important size is in QBs.

Still, the Browns will bring the pepper on Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers, and have the corners to shut down the Stillers aerial attack. Browns, baby, Browns.



*"Shedeur who? I'm the Captain, now!"*

#### Arizona Dead Birds at Indianapolis Ponies (-6.5/47.5)

The Ponies have shocked the world by turning journeyman QB Danny (Dimes) Jones into a baller. He has now been hereby promoted to "Indiana Jones," replete with John Williams walk-up music and a bullwhip.

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Arizona QB Kyler Murray battling a foot, after losing Concrete Charlie Conner for the season. Backup RB Emari Demercado spiked the ball at the one-yard line in a premature TD celebration, and the Dead Birds lost to the hapless Flaming Thumbtacks.

AZ HC Jonathan Gannon was fined one hundred large for swatting Demarcado in an ugly sideline scene. "My @ss is on the line and you fumble the game away??!! Fumble this!," said Gannon during the altercation. He later told the press that one play never determines a game, it's always darkest before the dawn, and there's no place like home.

Indy is not good enough to look ahead to the Week Eight Bolts game. Ponies.



*"Henry, I'll take Danny Dimes for \$200, please..."*

#### LA Rams at Baltimore Dumpster Ducks (+7.5/45)

Baltimore typically owns the Rams, winning five of the last six. Unfortunately, Lamar (Action) Jackson is questionable this week, owing to a hammy. His backup, Cooper Rush, formerly of Big D, is a talentless hack; he's a poor man's Andy Dalton.

The Ducks also have a M\*A\*S\*H unit on defense, with DT Justin Madabuike on IR, and LB Roquan Smith, and CB Marlon (Hubert H) Humphrey questionable. LB Kyle van Noy and safety Kyle (Alexander) Hamilton should return this week after being out.

The Rams attempt to rebound after a physical Niners battle, and need the win. Rams QB Matthew Stafford leads the league with 1,503 passing yards and Baltimore allows over 260 passing yards per game, the second-worst mark in the NFL. Receivers Tutu Atwell and Puka Nacua should toast the Ducks secondary, and the Rams' running game is solid with Kyren Willaims.

The Look Man likes the Rams' speed against a challenged defense, and the game could pivot on the availability of LT Rob (the Rabbi) Havenstein. The Rabbi is a 6'8" mountain of a man, and protects Matt Stafford's blind side.

Baltimore gets a bye in Week Seven, and badly needs one. Rams win to set up the NFC West fight to the finish.

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*Hamstrung by injury...*

#### Dallas Cowpokes at Carolina Black Cats (+3.5/49.5)

Dak Prescott has been on a heater, and it's a good thing since WR (A-B)CeeDee Lamb has a high ankle. The George (Slim) Pickens acquisition is looking like genius from an organization that has won the *Bad Idea Jeans Award* for the last two decades ("I know I should wear a condom, but I won't be back in Haiti..."). Owner Jerrah (the King of Pop) Jones was fined \$250 large for flipping off Jets Fan last week at the Meadowlands. Hard to blame Jerrah; those Jersey fans are hard to take.

New D-Coordinator and former Bears HC Matt Eberflus has turned Doomsday Lite around in recent weeks, and Brian (Marty's Boy) Schottenheimer has fabricated a run game out of smoke and mirrors. The Pokes are winning in shootouts, and the offense is masking its defensive liabilities.

Dallas gets caught looking ahead to the Commies next week, while Carolina saves HC Dave Canales' (means "mediocre coach" in Spanish) job for another week. Carolina always struggles against Dallas, but Black Cats cover.

#### Cincinnati QB Killahs at Green Bay Cheeseheads (-14.5/44.5)

The Browns and Bengals pulled off their first ever trade, with Cleveland acquiring 2026 picks in exchange for the benched Joe Flacco. Cool Joe will start immediately, replacing Jake Browning (Automatic). Both Flacco and Automatic are battling for the lowest QB rating in the NFL.

Dillon Gabriel (Horn) was awarded the starting job for Cleveland in London, but couldn't create enough offense despite two defensive turnovers, three sacks, and a bowl of bangers and mash. The Browns lost another close game while failing to break the 20-point threshold.

Flacco now has a rare opportunity to beat the Pack for the second time this season after beating them in the Seal Brown and Orange. The last guy to do that was Jack Kemp, who went on to a distinguished career in the US Senate.

Flacco's new team features orange, and an offensive line that is, well, offensive. The O-line got Joe (Brrr) Burrow killed, and turned Jake Browning (Automatic) to become a benched muzzle loader. Oddly, Browning had been rated the second-best backup QB in the NFL by ESPN only a month ago.

Flacco was able to defeat the Cheeseheads despite the loss of both offensive tackles, but he could not trust the Browns' receiving crew to run the correct routes, or the O-line to keep him from getting blown up. He faces a ticked off Green Bay squad that will unleash the hounds on an immobile gunslinger with outstanding weapons.

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Ja'Marr Chase and Tee Higgins are among the best in the NFL, and Flacco has the arm to get the ball downfield. He also knows how to read a defense, and if he has the time, can fabricate homemade gunpowder into an effective weapon to defeat the Gorn, er Parsons. *If* he has the time, Doctor.

As the saying goes, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." Go, Pack, go.



*Parsons - "Gonna 'snacko' on Flacco..."*

#### Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings at Frisco Niners (+3/47.5)

(Cake) Baker Mayfield has won his last four games at the buzzer, parlaying his turtlesque scrambling and timely passing into wins. He put up points at Seattle after the Legion of Boom knocked itself out via colliding secondary players. The 38-35 road win said more about Sam (Sixth Sense) Arnold seeing ghosts than Tampa's QB, and fans are now bandying the MVP term regarding Cake's season.

Of course, Cake is getting a lot of help from the zebras, who allow Columbian neckties by the Kings' O-line at crunch time. Rookie wideout Emeka Egbuka has Rookie of the Year potential while HOF WR Mike Evans has his annual Hamstring of the Year.

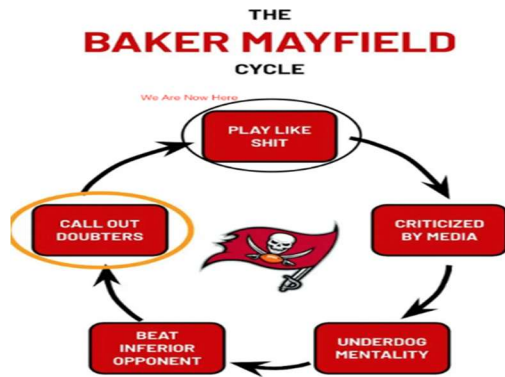
Niners QB Brock Purdy (Good) has missed three of the last four with a turf toe, and backup Mac (the Dull Knife) Jones got savaged in a Week Five win. The Niners D played out of its mind, forcing a goal line fumble to beat the rival Rams in the Game of the Week. Mac the Dull Knife's butt pads were hanging around his thighs and he looked as if he wouldn't be able to finish the game for most of the fourth quarter.

This game comes down to whether you believe Tampa or Frisco is the best 4-1 team in the NFL. The Look Man's money is on the Niners, who are 3-0 in the NFC West. Oh, and Tampa will be looking ahead to Detroit in Week Seven. Niners.



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*MVP=Most Vilified Player (by the Look Man)*

#### Detroit Cadillacs at KC Baby Backs (-2.5/52) – Football Night in America

KC got robbed in Week Five, losing to a J-Squareds team that featured seven players in black and white uniforms. The Look Man is intrigued by the KC fatigue, with the rabble complaining about favorable officiating. Still, J-Ville was the most penalized team in the NFL going into Week Five, and received only four penalties vs. the thirteen walked off against KC. Fishy or downright BS? You make the call.

Detroit lost both starting corners in the road win over the Bengals in Week Five. The game was fierce, with folks being carted off on both sides, but Detroit got the worst of it. Tough to believe they can beat a desperate KC squad that is 2-3 after several heartbreaking losses.

Baby Backs establish the run and create turnovers against a Detroit squad that is vulnerable to speed and guile. Baby Backs, baby.

#### **EPILOGUE**

There are no undefeated teams remaining in the NFL after Buffalo got robbed in Week Five. The AFC is stinking up the joint, and no team is running away in either conference. The Look Man believes this parity is being legislated by the zebras, who are principally responsible for the number of come-from-behind wins in 2025. Teams are winning 47 percent of these games as opposed to 23 percent historically. It ain't calculus; something is amiss.

The first quarter of the season is history, and bye weeks will now come into play. The Stillers and Pack return from their early byes in Week Five, and Houston and Minny enjoy one this week. The League typically allows a bye week following international games, but the Browns decided they would rather help their tanking chances by waiting.

Bye weeks continue through Week Fourteen, with no byes during Thanksgiving Week Thirteen, when every team plays. This schedule creates gambling uncertainty, and the NFL decided it would be nice if no team got too far ahead before the end of October. Look for teams to come back to Earth, creating a mad dash to the finish line, and epic postseason races. It would seem unlikely that any team will sit starters in the final two weeks of the 2025-2026 season.