

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

### Week Seven – Achilles and Agamemnon

*“Some people just ain’t meant for the lights and that’s okay!!!” – Dallas LB Micah Parsons when asked about former Pokes players who didn’t like tours of The Star while they were preparing for games. Former Pokes RB Tony Pollard, DT Dorance Armstrong, and others said the tours were a distraction to game prep.*

#### PROLOGUE

The 105<sup>th</sup> NFL season reminds the Look Man of the story of two of the most significant characters in The Illiad: Achilles and Agamemnon. Both were key contributors to the epic trojan War narrative, and their relationship is marked by the friction between honor and pride.

Agamemnon, who led the Greek city states in the Trojan War, is jealous of Achilles, and claims his wife. Achilles, a hothead favorite of Olympus, responds with anger and vengeance. He believes he is invincible since his mother dipped him in the River Styx to confer immortality on any body surface in contact with the water.

Unfortunately, since she held onto ankle at the Achilles' heel, he suffered a mortal wound when struck there by an arrow. He later visited Dan Marino, Kirk Cousins, and Aaron Rodgers, conferring the weakness on them as well.

Pride is a key concept in Greek mythology, and we still say, “Don’t look a gift horse in the mouth as a metaphor for the Trojan Horse stratagem. We also name our sports teams after horses, including the Denver and Indy franchises.

NFL teams can get caught up with the concepts of honor and pride as well. Owners fire head coaches who take up too much of the limelight. They play inferior QBs who make the most money. Head Coaches maintain playcalling powers despite the fact that they have competing priorities, like winning.

The Browns plummeted to 1-6 last week, and it feels like a death in the family. When your team is out of the hunt this early in the season, it makes the whole season seem tragic. It becomes harder to get up for games, and the weekly highlights lack a certain thrill.

When your NFL team wins, the coffee tastes a little better, the air smells a little fresher, and all is right with the world.

Without further ado, the Week that Was:

#### LAGNIAPPE

##### 4th Quarter Magic by Mike T

With the game pretty much decided, Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers attempted to quick snap the ball to catch the Stillers with twelve men on the field. The Discount Double Check Special is to hurry the snap, to get a free play, and an automatic five yards even if he fails.

Stillers HC Mike (Epps) Tomlin anticipated the chicanery and called timeout instead. The Zebra blew the whistle and Rodgers looks over at the sideline. Tomlin gave a nod to DDC, as if to say, “Nice try, punk.”

The Aeronauticals are a dumpster fire this year, and the Stillers are now 5-2 with two quarterbacks no one wanted. Tomlin’s gutsy move to install (Dange)Russ Wilson on Football Night in America was

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brilliant, and the Stillers are poised to make a run. Discount Double Check is poised to blame someone else for the team's failure.



*"The standard is the standard."*

#### Browns Equal Pokes?

The Browns are officially out of the playoff hunt, and the Look Man blames Browns ownership. Watson's career was mismanaged by the Browns and targeted by the NFL owners. This ownership is meddling in football operations, making decisions based upon dollars and cents as opposed to actions on the field of play.

In many ways the Pokes and Browns are mirror images. Both have meddling owners who believe they know more than the football staff. Both owners have made millions, developing egos the size of Texas in the process. And both teams have underperformed for decades, failing to have playoff success or appear in the Big Game.

Sometimes you must protect a player from himself. The Cleveland front office failed to learn that same lesson with Baker Mayfield, who held the team hostage with a torn labrum. He selfishly demanded to start despite having a very capable Case Keenum on the bench making \$6 million annually.

Instead of returning healthy late in the year, the Browns missed the postseason and jettisoned Mayfield, who demanded \$40 million per year. Mayfield is currently making \$30 million for Tampa and leading the NFL in TD passes. He is not better than Watson, he is just managed more effectively.

Watson single-handedly beat Baltimore in 2023 with a broken shoulder and started Week One in 2024 despite not being healthy. The front office was more worried that the backup QB would outshine Watson and embarrass the organization, so they forced him onto the field with starting tackles who were part-time matadors.

In Week Seven, they demoted Jameis Winston so Thompson-Robinson would be the backup. That decision was the primary reason for a 21-14 loss and a 1-6 overall record. Meanwhile, Mike Tomlin benched his 4-2 QB in favor of a guy who can take them to the Lombardi. Fortune favors the brave, and Tomlin has never suffered a losing season in seventeen years at the helm in Pittsburgh.

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This Cleveland team will never be successful despite a two-time COTY and Ivy League GM. Ownership simply won't let them succeed.

**THE LOOKAHEAD**

As we approach the metaphorical midpoint of the season, we have some key matchups. The Look Man is going to omit a few in order to focus on the most intriguing.

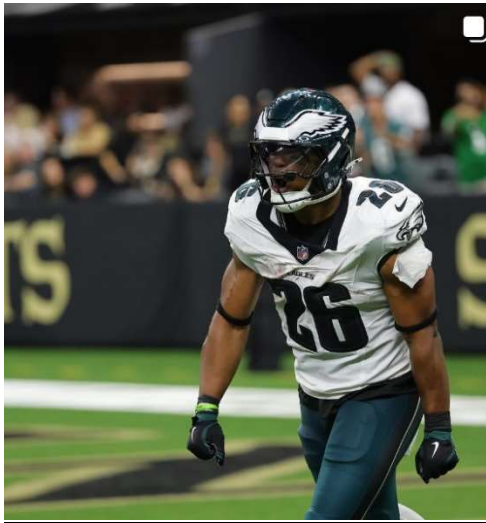
*Illadephia Iggles at Cincinnati Bengals (-2.5/49.5)*

This game was checked on the schedule before the season began, and the Look Man was surprised it was flexed from a 4:25 to 1:00PM kickoff. It could be one of the best of the year.

Joe (Cool) Burrow and the Bengals need this win and the Iggles are coming off a revenge win over the New York Football Jynts. RB Saquon Barkley dismantled the Jynts, amassing 176 yards on 17 carries. It was the most incredible single game rushing record since the Bengals' Cedric Benson ripped off 189 against Chicago way back in 2009.

Ja'Marr Chase and Tee (Magnum) Higgins were simply adequate in the Browns road win, and this defense still hasn't proven it can stop the run because Cleveland didn't even try. Nick Chubb got the rock a few times vs. an eight-man box, but Saquon is a different animal. The Bengals haven't exactly lit it up against good running teams in 2024.

Even though there will be a letdown after the revenge game last week, the Iggles are back on track with their real identity: a running team with deep passing ability. DeVonta Smith and AJ Brown contribute, but this team will ground and pound the Bengals. Iggles.



*"Who dey? Well, I will, of course..."*

*Buffalo Bisons at Seattle Seahawks (+3/48.5)*

The Amari (Coop) Cooper trade is already yielding benefits for Crapchester, which came back to beat the Flaming Thumbtacks in Week Seven. The Stat within the Stat is this: Josh (Irwin) Allen has yet to throw a pick in 2024. Stunning revelation. Seahawks looking ahead to the Rams. Bisons.

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*Baltimore Dumpster Ducks Cleveland Browns (+10/43.5)*

The Dumpster Ducks enter the contest straight off a 41-31 destruction of (Cake) Baker Mayfield and the Expensive Corn Kings. Tampa actually recovered not one but two onside kicks to make the score more respectable than it was.

Derrick (King) Henry sealed the deal with two long runs late after Lamar (Action) Jackson threw for five TDs. This win epitomized how Baltimore plans to attack the postseason: throw early and run the clock late behind a 280-pound Henry. You just know KC is looking at this game film and sweating.

The Cleveland Browns enter at 1-6, with Deshaun (DSW) Watson out for the season and, in all likelihood, his career in the Land. The Browns are starting (Famous) Jameis Winston at QB, and feature the debut of Ken Dorsey calling plays. Too little, too late for Cleveland, especially against this juggernaut. Still, a ten-point spread in a division game is ridiculous.

The Browns should have done this move in Week One, and these moves are an indictment of the terminal stupidity in ownership. The Browns win this one because Baltimore gets caught laughing its head off. In truth, the Browns should tank the season to get the best QB available. Browns cover and win to get to 2-6, and still somehow lose.

*Atlanta Dirty Birds at Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings (-1.5/48.5)*

(Cake) Baker Mayfield is quietly leading the NFL in TD passes, but lost Pro Bowler Mike (Good Times) Evans to a hammy and Chris Godwin to an ACL last week. Apparently, this spread is suggesting a strong Tampa defensive effort, but the Look Man doesn't concur. Their defensive backfield looks like a M\*A\*S\*H unit.

While the Look Man is not a Kirk (to Enterprise) Cousins fan, this Atlanta team has offensive firepower. Dirty Birds cover and win a key NFC South Division battle. Dirty Birds.

*Dallas Cowpokes at Frisco Niners (-7/47.5) Football Night in America*

Dakota Prescott and the Pokes come off a bye week to face their arch nemesis at Levi. This meeting follows fireworks from Jerrah Jones, former players sniping at the organization, and pressure on the lame duck coaching staff.

The Niners have problems of their own after WR Brandon Aiiuk (of the North) tore an ACL, and Deebo Samuels wound up in the hospital with pneumonia. Christian (CMC) McCaffrey is still at Cyberdyne Systems in Europe getting a leg replacement, and is not expected to return until after the Week Nine bye week to face the Corn Kings.

The Niners struggles coincide not only with CMC's injury but are promulgated by shoddy play of QB Brock Purdy (Good). Purdy has stunk up the joint, and the defense misses LB Dre Greenlaw, who tore his Achilles in Super Bowl LVII.

This is a must win for the Pokes, but the Look Man doesn't believe this defense can stop the run or the pass. Micah Parsons (Brown) is still out, and TE George Kittle is going to feast on Doomsday Lite. Niners.

*New York Jynts at Blitzburgh Stillers (-3.5/37.5) - Monday Night Football*

Back-to-back New York teams, back-to-back wins for Tomlin. Stillers prime time record is no joke and this Jynts team is an embarrassment. Stillers.

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**EPILOGUE**

The Look Man witnessed the worst officiated game of the season in Jets-Bisons, courtesy of Adrian Hill. Hill's crew called 22 penalties during the game, tying the high-water mark for most penalties in any game this season. There was more penalty yardage than Cleveland's average offensive output in 2024.

On Thursday Night Football on Amazon, Hornheads QB Sam Darnold was tackled by his facemask in the end zone, resulting in a game-ending safety. Head zebra Tra (Donald) Blake was out of position, and didn't see the penalty, but c'mon guys. New York has no problem interceding on conventional plays, but somehow, not one of the officials on the field saw the penalty?

Darnold and the Hornheads would still have needed a TD and two-point PAT to tie the game, but this call was blatant. How is a personal foul on a scoring play (safety) not reviewable? Why did the League not call in and tell them to fix the call? And how is Keith Gary still playing after all these years? Burning questions all.



*Darnold gets the Ken Anderson Exorcist treatment ala Halloween 1983*

The NFL must do something, because the integrity of the game is at stake. Or maybe just the integrity of Draft Kings? There is way too much organized gambling to allow this to happen. It turns the entire NFL into a sham.

Peace,

The Look Man