

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

### Week Sixteen – Tank Time

*“The Browns were never trying to see what DTR gives them. They already knew. They’re tanking to move up higher in the draft. Pay zero attention to anything else they have to say. They have no credibility whatsoever and they think we’re all stupid and it pisses me off.” – Anonymous Browns Fan who speaks for most of the Browns Backer Nation. Browns HC Kevin Stefanski announced Dorian Thompson Robinson (DTR) will start on Sunday after stinking it up at Dawg Pound South in Cincinnati last Sunday.*

#### PROLOGUE

Week Sixteen did little to clear up the playoff picture. In point of fact, it did almost nothing. The Bisons clinched the AFC East, and the DC Commies pulled off a surprising win over the Philly juggernaut, but other than those two games, the chalk prevailed.

The Look Man might have missed something as he made his annual sojourn to the Battle of Ohio Part Deux with Long-suffering Bengals Fan Sundance. The game itself was desultory, but the crowd and the company were first rate. Here’s a sample:

Concussion Girl: “The Browns should put someone at the goal line to return this FG when Cade York misses it.”

Look Man: “Number 21, Denzel Ward is already back, but this kid has a huge leg. He was drafted in the fourth round by the Browns. He can make a 59-yarder easy.”

LSBF Sundance: “HAHAHAHA!” as the kick clears the crossbar handily.

That was about as much drama as the game held, with the possible exception of watching Ja’Marr Chase extend his league leading yardage and TD totals. Chase will win the receiving Triple Crown for catches, yardage and touchdowns in 2024. Pay the man.

Without further ado, the Look Man Report 2024 for Week Sixteen.

#### LAGNIAPPE

##### Play of the Year?

Detroit placed its entry for Play of the Year with a dual stumble on play action for a touchdown pass. Both RB Jahmyr Gibbs and QB Jared (Subway) Goff pretended to trip in the backfield before Goff threw a dime for six.

The POTY category has stiff competition, with the following entries:

“GET OFF ME!” - Bengals at Flaming Thumbtacks: Tacks 390-pound DT T’Vondre Sweat strip sacking Joe Burrow and rumbling, bumbling, stumbling for a TD after stiff arming Bengals OG Alex Cappa.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1868367629687177543>

The Catch” – Houston-Jets: one handed TD grab by WR Garrett Wilson to send Houston on a losing skid.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1852180213070991793>

But the Look Man still has to go with Saquon Barkley’s reverse hurdle/Three Stooges Move. This might be the play of the decade. <https://twitter.com/i/status/1853191677399245255>

##### “I DEMAND IT!”

The NFL made significant schedule changes to spotlight crucial games. They swapped start times for the Cheeseheads-Hornheads and Pokes-Iggles, after the Pokes were officially eliminated last week. Pokes-

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Iggles will move up to the early Sunday window, while the Cheesehead-Hornheads moves to the 4:25 slot. Both games remain on the Fox network.

Minnesota is at 13-2 with a chance to grab the One Seed in the NFC, competing with Philly and Detroit for honors. Detroit gets the MNF slot and can hold on for dear life with a win, but they will know ahead of time whether they really need the One Seed or the rest.

#### “Soup, Soap, and Salvation”

Bengals RB Chase Brown paid homage to Zeke Elliott in Week Fourteen, jumping into the Dallas Salvation Army Kettle after a TD run. The NFL promptly fined Brown for “illegal celebrations and vulgar acts.” The Look Man thinks the real penalty was ticking off Jerrah Jones in his own crib, adding salt to the wound of missing the postseason.

Brown has now won an appeal of the fine under the Charitable Contributions fine print. The Salvation Army received numerous contributions following the free publicity. Meanwhile, Brown is having a breakout season, with 923 rushing yards, seven TDs, and a solid 4.4 yards per-carry average.

#### THE LOOKAHEAD

Week Seventeen is make-or-break for a whole bunch of teams, and the culmination of games on Christmas Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. The NFL has captured the viewing public and has only Tuesday as an open date in 2024. It is nothing short of amazing.

With all of that drama, there are far too many games and playoff permutations to cover, but here is the lookahead for Week Seventeen.

#### **Saturday**

##### Denver Donkeys vs Cincinnati Bengals (-3.5/49.5)

It's Bo vs. Joe as these two teams face off in Cincinnati on Saturday afternoon. The Bengals have feasted for three straight against the bottom feeders of the NFL. They now face a legitimate team looking to get into the postseason with a win. Denver can clinch a playoff berth with a win.

There are two keys to this game: (1) WR Tee (Magnum) Higgins must recover from the knee/ankle injuries from the Browns game. Magnum seemed unable to walk the Lads by the end of the Cleveland game and was used largely as a decoy. (2) the Bengals defense needs to be better against the screen game favored by the Donkeys. They should be better given their lack of a pass rush, but the secondary is suspect.

The Bengals need to win out just to get into the postseason, and even a win at Pall Bearer Stadium sets them up for a game at the Confluence against the Stillers in Week 18. Blitzburgh is on a cool streak, having lost three straight via multiple turnovers at crunch time.

The Look Man believes Tee Higgins will play and the defense will pick off Bo. Even if Denver loses, they can sneak in the back door with a Week Eighteen win at a KC team that will likely rest its starters. Bengals.

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*Shortest name in the NFL...*

#### **Sunday**

##### *Green Bay Cheeseheads vs Minnesota Hornheads (-1.5/48.5)*

The Hornheads are in position to steal the One Seed in the NFC if Detroit and Philly falter. But this NFC Black and Blue special will not disappoint.

The Look Man has consistently been burned by this Hornheads team, which has no business winning but wins anyway. Last week's win over Seattle was a case in point. QB Sam (Sixth Sense) Darnold avoided the rush and threw a late fourth quarter TD that had no chance. WR Justin (George and Weezie) Jefferson turned around two DBs and scored the game winner.

Detroit clinches with a win and a Hornheads loss, plus a win at Levi on Monday Night. Not so fast, my friend, as Jordan Love (Broker) and the Pack shows Minny who is boss. Go, Pack, go.

##### *Carolina Black Cats vs Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings (-8/48.5) – Pepto Bismol Upset of the Week*

Everyone has Tampa in this game, but the Look Man saw Game One in this home and home series. The Black Cats had the game won and gave it away on some late game Cake Baker heroics.

That kind of loss sticks in your craw, and this Carolina squad is better than anyone thinks. They put the panties on Cake Baker and steal a win that catapults them into 2025 contention. Black Cats play spoiler, pushing the Corn Kings to the brink of elimination. Cats.

##### *Miami Marine Mammals vs Cleveland Browns (+6.5/39.5) Tank of the Week*

The Browns are in full tank mode with DTR at QB, and the team is near mutiny. One look at WR Jerry (Punch 'n) Jeudy, and you know these guys are ticked. They are running routes for nothing, because DTR cannot throw the ball more than 20 air yards. The DBs are back there laughing at deep routes.

Miami is still mathematically alive, but just barely. QB Tua Tagovailoa used to excel vs. Cover One, but he has failed miserably this season. The Browns run more Cover One than any other NFL team.

So what? The Browns are in full tank mode and if they threaten to win a game, Stefanski might install the Wing T formation and ten players on defense for the balance of the game. Mammals in an unwatchable win.

##### *Dallas Cowpokes vs Philly Cream Cheese Iagles (-9.5/39.5)*

Philly can clinch the NFC East by beating the Pokes on Sunday, or a DC Commies loss to the Dirty Birds during Football Night in America. The Look Man likes the Pokes chances if only because QB Jalen Hurts is still in concussion protocol.

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In typical fashion, the Iggles failed to obtain a suitable backup in order to avoid a QB controversy, and Kenny (East of LA) Pickett could be the starter. Pickett was last seen stinking it up in a Black and Gold Stillers uniform before being jettisoned by Mike Tomlin for impersonating an NFL QB.

The Pokes hope to cover, but they are missing WR CeeDee Lamb, who has been gutting out a shoulder most of the season. With Alphabet Soup on the pine, the Pokes will have to run the football against a stout front seven. Oh, and stop Saquon (Heath) Barkley from going over a hundy rushing.

Not bloody likely. Iggles clinch. Take the under.

#### Atlanta Dirty Birds vs DC Commies (-4/47.5) – Football Night in America

The Commies pulled a rabbit out of an Iggles butt last week, and are now positioned for a Wild Card. They need a win on Sunday, or some help out west in Week Eighteen. The Look Man has seen this before; a team rises up for a physical division win, and then has a letdown in the following week against an inferior team.

The Dirty Birds qualify in spite of a nice performance in Week Seventeen by rookie QB Michael (Big) Penix (Energy). Penix led the ATL to a nice win in a balanced attack. It was odd seeing a left-handed QB back in the NFL after years of Kenny (the Snake) Stabler and Boomer Esiason.

Atlanta has climbed back into relevance with a nice win and Tampa stumbling. Despite the NFC South being the weakest division in the NFL, the Dirty Birds swept the Expensive Corn Kings and win the division with a win on Sunday. ATL in an upset.

#### Detroit Lions (-3.5) vs San Francisco 49ers (+3.5) – Monday Night Football finale

Detroit can clinch the top seed and NFC North title this weekend, but it will take the Minnesota losing to the Green Bay, and Detroit beating the Niners at Levi on Monday night.

Interestingly, the Cadillacs will know their fate before the game starts, and the Look Man sees them resting players given the futility of their win. Not to mention the Niners will want to finish the season in style after an injury plagued down year. Niners.

### EPILOGUE

The playoff picture gets a lot clearer after Week Seventeen, and the Look Man believes it will cleave just the way he planned it. It would be extremely fitting if the Nati gets in, creating panic in the AFC and putting asses in seats at road venues. It has been so long since a home playoff game at Pall Bearer Stadium that the fans have donated all their cold weather gear to the homeless.

The NFC also has drama, for both the One Seed and the NFC Norse. The NFC is widely seen as Detroit and Philly, plus everybody else. In reality, the Pack, Minnesota, Commies, and the Rams could all knock off a division winner.

To win the AFC Asgard Division, the Stillers must beat the Nati next weekend, and hope Baltimore loses at home to Cleveland. In other words, they have two chances: slim and none, and Slim has his coat on.

The Bolts clinch a playoff spot for the second time in three years if they can beat the Chowds, and a win and a Denver loss catapults them to the sixth seed.

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The Look Man is buying the drama. The Stillers and B-More will be joined by the Bolts, Bisons, Baby Backs and Bengals. apparently, 2025 is the Year of the Killer Bs in the Chinese Zodiac. And hopefully 2025 will bring the Brownies a stud linebacker and QB in the draft.

Peace and happy New Year,

The Look Man