

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Nineteen: More Cowbell

"I don't think he's a great coach at all. He's a nice coach. To me, and I've said this, he's really a great cheerleader guy. I don't know what he does. But I don't think that he's a great coach at all. His name never even pops in my mind when we think about great coaches in the NFL." – HOF QB Terry Bradshaw on Stillers HC Mike Tomlin last week on the FS1 show "Speak for Yourself."

PROLOGUE

The Look Man had mixed success in the Lookahead picks segment for Wild Card Weekend. He correctly posited that an LA team would struggle due to the wildfires, but he bet on the wrong LA team. He assumed the Stillers would play well against a division opponent in Baltimore, but didn't account for team tension in the offensive locker room.

On the positive side of the ledger, he predicted (Cake) Baker Mayfield would ruin the souffle with turnovers, allowing DC to score an upset win. He identified Hornheads QB Sam (Ghosts) Darnold susceptibility to pressure, but didn't believe the Rams had the players to take advantage.

When the smoke cleared, the Commies were the only road team to win. The NFL's expanded playoff format was a bust that should be renamed Blowout Wild Card Weekend. And Sam (Ghosts) Darnold lost whatever cache he had created with a 14-3 regular season record. Instead of being at the top of the free agent QB heap, Darnold landed on the refuse pile of system QBs with an Achilles Heel.

The other key story is the coaching carousel, which added Pokes HC Mike McCarthy to the list of Former Football Coaches of America. Owner Jerrah Jones blocked McCarthy from interviewing with Chicago, only to sack him a week later. Jerrah is now looking to hire a rainmaker who won't mind giving Jones the spotlight and credit. Problem is that those guys are not named Deion Sanders or Bill Belicheat.

Candidates like Aaron Glenn, Ben Johnson, and Tampa OC Liam (Taken) Coen would be crazy to take a job with cap-strapped team that has Dakota Prescott at QB. Once the Pokes sign DE Micah Parsons (Brown) to a mega-deal, it will "game over, man, game over" in Big D.



Corn Kings OC Liam Coen has a very particular set of skills...

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

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Nineteen: More Cowbell

LAGNIAPPE

More Cowbell

It is fitting that celebrate NBC Saturday Night Live during its 50th anniversary. The show changed comedy and the way we look at ourselves.

The Look Man has many SNL favorites including *Celebrity Jeopardy* with Sean Connery ("I'll take The Rapist for two hundred please, Alex."), *Schweddy Balls* with Alec Baldwin, and *Dick in a Box* with Justin Timberlake. But one of the all-time best was *More Cowbell* with Christopher Walken, Jimmy Fallon, Dana Carvey, Chirs Kattan and Will Ferrell.

Fallon, who appeared I the sketch as Blue Oyster Cult drummer, said, "It was the funniest thing I've ever seen in my entire life. It was so surreal and bizarre, but you could feel in the air that it was working. And the room kinda got hot." That could be an understatement, as Fallon broke character throughout the skit, laughing uncontrollably.

Will Farrell, whose work in *The Other Guys* is a comedic apex, played a percussionist who sways violently and unpredictably. Walken narrates the signature line in his own unusual accidence. It was comic gold, jerry. Comic gold.

Darrell Hammond, who did not appear in the sketch, remarked, "I can remember looking at the crowd above my head, going, 'Holy moly, this is what we do this for.'"

Walken may be the most underrated performer the Look Man has ever seen. If you haven't seen *More Cowbell* or *Things to do in Denver When You're Dead*, you're missing out.

Terry's Talking Sh!t

Bradshaw's comments are echoed by Stillers Fan, who believe their team is better than it is. They believe Tomlin is the reason they haven't succeeded. Never mind the fact that the AFC was dominated for years by Tom (Terrific) Brady, Belicheat and the Chowds. Never mind the fact that Tomlin has won with quarterbacks like Mason (the Redneck) Rudolph and Kenny (Two Gloves) Pickett. Or that they have drafted poorly during Tomlin's tenure. Tomlin is the reason.

The Burgh owners get players on the cheap *because* they have issues. Antonio Brown was a free agent, LeVeon Bell and George Pickens were first round picks who fell to the 2nd round because they were head cases. Najee was a wasted first rounder with little tread left on his tires, and he is fifth year free agent.

The Stillers would rather churn and burn picks after they implode, and Tomlin is an underappreciated alchemist.

Tragedy in LA

The terror attack on Bourbon Street was front and center last week, and this week LA took the spotlight. Over 150,000 folks are now homeless after fire ravaged the Greater Los Angeles area. The media is focused on political malfeasance, but the real story is simple math. You cannot fight raging fire with hurricane level winds by digging trenches or having fully charged water hydrants.

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Nineteen: More Cowbell

This devastation is incredible in scale. The fire spread quickly and destroyed thousands of acres, killing scores. It will be a decade before rebuilding can be completed, and some of the most iconic areas in our country have been affected.

The Look Man doesn't understand the blame attribution here. The victims are not just Hollywood actors. The majority are hard-working Americans who lost everything. They don't need handouts, they need help. If you can contribute, please lend a hand.



Devastation on a massive scale...

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

Say what?

Something unusual happened in the WCW matchup between the Hornheads and Rams. A facemask call on Rams RB Kyren Williams was missed, but the zebras conferenced following the play.

No flag was thrown, but one allegedly appeared after the herd dispersed. John (That Little) Hussey announced a personal foul and assessed the yardage. Even Joe Buck and Troy Aikman commented on the unusual nature of the call, and those guys are typically higher than kites.

The Look Man has never been a fan of the Zebra headsets, but this is particularly insidious. It would appear that the game is being called in Manhattan by Walt (Disney) Anderson and a bunch of suits. If this is the case, NFL fans have a huge problem.

Hornheads QB Sam (Ghosts) Darnold was face masked late in a previous regular season game that likely determined the home team for this game. The NFL stated that the call was not reviewable at the time. Now, in similar circumstances, they issue a delayed penalty when NY overrules the field zebras.

Allegations of game-fixing have been rampant in 2024, but this takes the cake. The fans deserve better.

THE LOOKAHEAD

The Divisional Playoffs feature heavy hitters in both conferences. The Dumpster Ducks head to Crapchester in the Two vs. Three, and the plucky Commies look like David vs. the Detroit Goliath. It's called the Best Weekend in the NFL for a reason, and the Look Man likes these matchups.

Here is the lookahead for the Divisional Playoffs.

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Nineteen: More Cowbell

Saturday

Houston Slim Shadies at KC Baby Backs (-9.5/41.5)

Houston actually resembled a real football team last week, destroying the visiting Bolts. Granted, Bolts QB Justin (Eden) Herbert looked like a bad Star Trek TOS episode, throwing four picks and generally stinking up NRG Stadium, but who saw this coming? Well, the Look Man should've seen it coming after attending last year's Wild Card with Cleveland at Houston. After all, the script was the same with a mid-level QB against a physical and ball-hawking defense in a town hungry for a winner.

Enter Adny (Kool Aid) Reid, and the Baby Backs, who haven't played in nearly a month. The Baby Backs will appear in their first playoff game in defense of their Super Bowl crown and Three Peat challenge. Kool Aid's record is 30-6 with an extra week to prepare including the postseason, for a remarkable winning percentage of .833.

Houston QB CJ Stroud has been up and down this year, playing without WR Nico (Barnabas) Collins much of the year. Perhaps more telling is the offensive line woes, with OG Juice Scruggs battling injury. Stroud's numbers against man-to-man coverage are stellar, ranking in the top three per dropback against man coverage. Those numbers fall to the bottom third against zone, and KC DC Steve (Spags) Spagnuolo runs a mean zone blitz.

Slim Shadies RB Joe (Richard Milhouse) Mixon has a way of disappearing, so Look for Mahomes and TE Travis Kelce to get hot early. Mixon stinks in pass protection, which is one of the reasons for Stroud's poor numbers vs. the zone.

Once Houston abandons play action, they become beatable, as demonstrated in losses to the Hornheads, Flaming Thumbtacks, Cheeseheads and Jets. They also lost at KC earlier this season in a game closer than it had a right to be. Baby Backs win, Houston covers.

DC Commies at Detroit Cadillacs (-8.5/55.5)

Detroit has become America's Team, parlaying unorthodox play calling and a gritty defense into a possible title run. QB Jared (Subway) Goff has a rags-to-riches story and HC Dan Campbell (Soup) is a modern-day John Wayne.

DC has a likeable story as well. Dan Snyder was forced to sell a dysfunctional organization which hired retread HC Dan (the Mighty) Quinn. Quinn and the front office pulled a George Allen special with a twist, mixing wily veterans with a generational rookie QB. The result is a fantastically entertaining team that inspires legend.

This game is a contrast in styles, with speed vs. grit. Detroit is in for a tough time stopping Daniels, and their offensive power and finesse create problems for DC as well.

The Look Man is gonna take a flyer here. Detroit wins, but DC covers.

Sunday

LA Rams at Philly Cream Cheese Iggles (-6/43.5)

Philly QB Jalen Hurts (So Good) didn't look great in his return from concussion protocol, but he didn't have to. The Iggles D destroyed the Cheeseheads as Jordan Love (Broker) threw picks in bunches. The Pack defense wore down over time, and the Iggles prevailed.

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Nineteen: More Cowbell

That won't be the case this week, as a physical Rams defense arrives in frigid Philly with bad intentions. The Rams young defense is tough, physical and dangerous, and hope to parlay offensive points into a road win. These guys are peaking at the right time and could be a problem.

The Look Man likes Saquon (Big Valley) Barkley, but WR AJ Brown is going to need do more than read books on the sideline if the Iggles want this one. Perhaps more importantly, Sirianni will have his hands full with Sean McVay coaching his beard off.

WRs Puka Nacua and Cooper Kupp create a problem for the Iggles D, especially with the loss of LB Nakobe Dean. Dean is the underrated leader of this defense and replacing him will not be easy. The Rams crossing patterns are deadly, and safeties Cooper DeJean and CJ (CJ-GJ) Gardner-Johnson will have their hands full.

The Rams struggle in cold weather, and Stafford really hates to get hit. He gets hit a lot. Iggles in a battle.

Baltimore Dumpster Ducks at Crapchester Bisons (+1.5/51.5)

The Dumpster Ducks destroyed the Stillers in the WCW, sending the Burgh to a fifth consecutive loss. Uber RB Derrick (King) Henry embarrassed the competition, dealing out stiff arms and rushing yards like a man possessed. They didn't even need their best wideout in Zay Flowers (for Algernon), with Henry and Lamar (Action) Jackson rushing for over two bills before letting up in the second half.

The Bisons rolled over Denver in style, with Josh (Irwin) Allen dropping dimes in the process. They had to beat eleven opponents and seven zebras in the process, after Bill (the Winemaker) Vinovich turned the game into Flag Day. The Winemaker told Allen to quit yelling about calls, so Josh went sci-fi with timely pinpoint passes that won the day.

The Bisons undersized D-line is going to struggle to stuff RB Derrick (King) Henry. The Look Man thinks Nickel Taron Johnson and safety Damar Hamlin are too small, and SS Taylor Rapp is too slow for the task. That means Buffalo is going to have to spy Jackson and stunt the D-line to slow down Henry.

Baltimore has struggled previously in the postseason but destroyed the Bisons in the regular season. Action still cannot throw outside the numbers, so Buffalo will need to funnel his throws to the middle in two TE formations. Baltimore will use 300-pound FB Patrick Ricard in a lot of isolation blocking for Henry, so the Bisons had better have two chinstraps for this game.

The Look Man likes the Bisons, but he hates the Ducks more. Bisons find a way as home dogs, where Allen is 12-2. Bisons.

EPILOGUE

So now, it's on to the Divisional Round, where the bye teams have a chance to leverage rest into a Super Bowl run. Detroit and KC got to see the competition get beat up while they scheme for wins. The Two Seeds await home games with formidable opponents. And the Cinderella Commies continue to wear the glass slipper for another week, playing with house money.

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Nineteen: More Cowbell

Detroit and KC are 15-2 and appear to be the class of the NFL. Buffalo, Philly, and Baltimore lead Tier Two, and all have a legitimate shot at a Lombardi. The Look Man would love to see Detroit and KC in Super Bowl LIX in the Big Easy, but the path will not be an easy one. Both teams have defensive issues and may face physical running teams if they make it to New Orleans.

The Look Man has enjoyed 2024, and hopes the final few weeks are worthy of the investment. DC QB Jayden Daniels looks like the runaway Rookie of the Year after reversing the fortunes of the Commies. Daniels took a 4-13 team and led them to the Divisional Round, giving hope that even a lowly, QB deficient teams like Cleveland and Denver can replicate this approach.

With the NFL Draft approaching, there are opportunities to change any team's fortune. And fortune, as we all know, favors the brave.



The Kid is having fun out there...

Peace,

The Look Man