

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2024

Week Twenty: "We got this."

"We've found our identity, but we haven't found our ceiling yet" – Commies HC Dan Quinn on his team's fight for their first Super Bowl appearance since 1992.

PROLOGUE

The Look Man has retired from the work-a-day world, launching into the next phase of his career. One of the lessons the Look Man learned over many years is to trust his own intuition. Apparently, that knowledge didn't help his picks last week.

The Look Man really liked the DC Commies last week at Detroit for two reasons: (1) they got hot at the right time, and (2) that Detroit defense was cobbled together with chewing gum and bailing wire after a LOT of injuries.

DC Aaron Glenn did everything he could with the available talent, but when CB Amik Robertson went down in the first quarter, the cake was all dough. The worst part is that it was friendly fire from LB Jack Campbell [no relation to Dan] that broke Amik's arm, and it was mangled.

Detroit had no pass rush other than the blitz, and QB Jayden (Jack) Daniels eats the blitz for breakfast. The final score was not indicative of how bad that beating was, especially with Jared (Subway) Goff baking up turnovers at a prolific rate. Four turnovers typically result in a 20-point beatdown, but Subway kept putting it up, and the Cadillacs were a plucky bunch. Ironically, the Commies won a game in which they turned it over four times, so turnabout is fair play. Or foreplay, depending on your bent.

A lot was made of Baltimore losing to the Bisons, but that game was an MVP referendum. Irrespective of Lamar (Action) Jackson's regular season numbers, his inability to throw outside the numbers always betrays him in the playoffs. The NFL is easy if you only have to cover one third of the field.

With the conference title games settled, attention turned to the coaching carousel, and there was plenty of intrigue. Dallas dallied with Deion, Chicago jumped on Detroit OC Ben Johnson, and the rest of the field was just media fodder. NFL teams tear up contracts so often that it doesn't matter who the head coach is for most. Many just want a convenient scape goat until the roster matures.

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



Scary Terry and the Commies have found their identity...

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LAGNIAPPE

Where Wolf: the Legend of Xavier Babudar

The Four-Letter Network has unveiled a new 30 for 30, this time focused on KC Superfan Chiefsaholic. Xavier Babudar is the man behind the mask, and this documentary explores the gambling addiction which led to his incarceration.

Baby Backs Fan has fallen out of favor with the public, which would like to see another team win the Lombardi. PTI's Michael Wilbon was fond of calling KC 'a dynasty of one' but that reality has now changed after three rings in five years. The Baby Backs have successfully reinvented themselves after losing key contributors while they continue to win. The core group is now comprised of Mahomes, TE Travis (Tritt) Kelce, and DL Chris Jones. And that is a pretty good group.

The episode is a solid exploration of loss of self, and how sports gambling can affect society. It's worth a watch even if you don't bleed red and gold.



Huffed and puffed?

Coaching Carousel!

The carousel yields some minor surprises this week as follow:

Pete (Lewis) Carroll hired to coach in Vegas; he got a four-year deal at 73, meaning he is unlikely to see the end of the term. He is the oldest HC in the NFL, and the margin is not close.

Brian Schottenheimer in Dallas created some confusion. Schottie is willing to accept TE Jason Witten on his staff as Assistant HC while most qualified coaches nixed that idiocy. Jerrah is the real coach and GM of this cash-strapped team, and his hunger for Lombardi is unlikely to be quenched before he heads to that Big Rodeo in the Sky.

Mike Vrabel accepted the head job in Beantown, and promptly hired Josh McDaniels as OC. McDaniels was last seen getting a version of the home game with the Raiders and Donkeys.

Aaron (John) Glenn took the job for the J-E-T-S, but he has no QB. This is a team with bad ownership, bad drafting, and a future to match.

Finally, Liam (Neeson) Coen has accepted a head coaching vacancy in J-Ville after stiff arming Tampa. He now has a real QB to coach along with a very particular set of skills as playcaller.

One has to wonder how many of these new hires will survive even two seasons.

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ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

Villain Status?

The Rear Admiral shared a Zebra meme with the Look Man this week, and it brought up an interesting cultural phenomenon. Even Joe Buck and Troy Aikman went postal over the calls in the Houston-KC game, and this is the result:

"Unnecessary roughness on the Texans for breathing in Patrick Mahomes' personal bubble... 15-yard penalty, automatic first-down"



Vinovich is making them whine...

The Look Man is not buying the hype; KC gets calls just as New England before it. The NFL needs a front runner, and when you earn home field advantage, you get home cooking.

Mahomes bought both calls with crafty veteran savvy. The helmet-to-helmet roughing call and collision between two defenders attempting to punish him were anticipated. Mahomes simply allowed the overzealous defenders to do something just over the top. He tried to buy another late hit on the sideline without success, triggering every Bengal Fan in the hemisphere.

The Look Man has never liked coddling of the QBs, but it is directly attributable to Tom (Terrific) Brady. Zebra (Feet of) Clay Martin didn't go full Hulk Hochuli and yell, "Leave Patrick alone!" The intent is clear: you cannot do what Baltimore and Tony (Goose) Siragusa did in 2000: knock QBs out of the postseason and win ugly with punishing defense. Offense puts asses in seats, and the NFL is QB driven league.

KC has somehow become the villain, and they have earned it. They're just too damn good, and Mahomes is reaping the hate.

Lord of the Rings...

The hate extends to the NFL announcement of Super Bowl XLI zebras. Look Man favorite pinata Ron (the Eighth Man) Torbert has been installed, but the background palette looks like a KC tailgate party. The old meme of the fix being part of the NFL has reemerged, and Torbert is at the center of the controversy. He's a bad zebra, and the Look Man is tempted to turn off any game he officiates.

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One zebra to rule them all?

THE LOOKAHEAD

The Conference Championships promise to be outstanding battles. Crapchester and KC have history battling for AFC supremacy and the Iggles and Commies play their third matchup of the season.

It is fitting that 2024 comes down to these teams, and the script writes itself. Irrespective of which team you favor, the Conference Championships are going to be incredible.

Sunday

Crapchester Bisons at KC Baby Backs (-1.5/47.5)

The Bisons dispatched the Dumpster Ducks in a game that was close only because Lamar (Action) Jackson dealing. Bisons QB Josh (Irwin) Allen was bowling over defenders, eschewing the passing game and leveraging a quick physical defense that shut down Brobdinagian RB Derrick (King) Henry.

It didn't help that Baltimore lost the turnover battle with two key fumbles in the cold, and dropping game tying two point conversions. But the game did not come down to Mark Andrews' drop; Crapchester dominated them on offense and defense.

The Bisons now take their undersized D-line and slow secondary to KC, where the Baby Backs would like to Three-Peat. Mahomes and the offense have replaced angry RB Isaih (Ferdie) Pacheco with former Browns RB Kareem (Adbul) Hunt, who is running hard.

The Look Man likes KC in this game. Crapchester owns the regular season, but KC finds a way in the postseason. Mahomes and the Baby Backs can win any way they need to, and Allen will have to reveal his secret true identity to win this one. KC.

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DC Commies at Philly Cream Cheese Iggles (-6/47.5)

DC has a Cinderella storyline, and the Iggles are physical and tough. HC Dan (the Mighty) Quinn has done a remarkable job, and former disgraced owner Dan Snyder has a bad case of FOMO.

This game is a referendum with Philly QB Jalen Hurts (So Good) banged up and the passing game in disarray. Saquon (Big Valley) Barkley is going to have to carry the load, and he appears to be capable. As stated here previously, Big Valley is the real MVP of the 2024 season.

DC went 1-1 against the Iggles in 2024, including a win in which they turned the ball over four times. That won't happen again, as the Commies best the Iggles, sending the fan base into a snit over HC Nick Sirianni. Commies in an upset.

EPILOGUE

Detroit received its comeuppance after making it through the season with a patchwork defense and gritty attitude. KC and Philly did 'just enough to win' and Buffalo forced Baltimore into its usual end of season errors for the win. The Divisional Round lived up to the hype of 'best weekend in football.'

Belicheat is fond of saying you can't win a game until you avoid losing it. Baltimore and the Rams proved the point by making critical errors with the games on the line. While weather was a factor, the real driver is guts. You play to win the game, not make mistakes at crucial times. And there are no moral victories in the National...Football...League.

Speaking of moral victories, the Commanders are spiking the punch bowl on the 2024 postseason. They have not made it to the Lombardi Round since 1992 in Super Bowl XXVI against the Crapchester Bisons. That team, led by HC Joe (Jethro) Gibbs and QB Mark Rypien finished 14-2 before crushing the Dirty Birds and Cadillacs. They went on to send the Bisons to their second consecutive Lombardi loss en route to winning their third Lombardi Trophy.

Teams that have a two Lombardi minimum are few and far between, escalating the drama in the conference championship round. Here is the list:

These teams have great leadership in common, building teams from the ground up and perpetually reinventing themselves. Teams like Detroit, Jacksonville, and Cleveland have never appeared in the Big Game, and the reason is obvious.

The fight for superiority is also compelling and most of the teams on this list despise each other. If you have ever witnessed Poke Fan and Stiller Fan in close proximity you know what the Look Man is laying down. Interestingly, none of these juggernauts have ever won three in a row, something the Baby Backs would like an opportunity to attempt with a win on Sunday.

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Team	Wins	Most recent win
Patriots	6	2019
Steelers	6	2009
Cowboys	5	1996
49ers	5	1992
Chiefs	4	2024
Giants	4	2012
Packers	4	2011
Broncos	3	2016
Commanders	3	1992
Raiders	3	1984

The omissions are obvious...

Peace,

The Look Man