

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2025

### WEEK FOURTEEN: RUH, ROH...

*"If I want to keep doing this, I have to have fun doing it. I have been through a lot. If it's not fun, then what am I doing it for?" – Bengals QB Joe (Brr) Burrow on his future in Cincinnati*

#### PROLOGUE

Week Fourteen was interesting, if only because the playoff races tightened up. Teams were ready to roll after a mini-Thanksgiving bye week, and the divisional matchups provided some drama. When the smoke cleared, the Rams reclaimed the NFC One Seed, and New England strengthened its hold on the AFC.

There was some very questionable officiating, highlighted by the Blitzburgh-Ravens. That catch by Baltimore TE Isaiah Likely in the end zone reaffirmed confusion over the definition of a catch. That confusion was heightened by the tightness of the game and the great defensive effort by the Stillers.

Indy suffered a crippling blow to its playoff hopes with the loss of QB Daniel (Indiana) Jones, and Detroit suffered the season-ending loss of S Brian Branch to an Achilles. Both teams are now in a real pickle, but Indy's future is seriously in jeopardy after they place all of their archeological treasures in the hands of an oft-injured hurler.

Without further ado, the Week That Was.

#### LAGNIAPPE

##### Raise the Flags

Tampa Bay now has an Amazon Prime documentary on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Corn Kings, the first team to lose 26 games in a row. This week is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their first win, with characters like Steve Young, Jameis Winston, Dewey Selmon, Warren Sapp, and Ronde Barber.

This expansion team was awarded in 1976, purchased for \$16 million. Teams now cost upwards of a billion dollars. Worth a watch.

##### Joe Brrr Comments

Joe Burrow introduced doubt in a seismic press conference this week. The quote pushed a narrative that he is going to force his way out of Cincinnati or retire.

Most fans remember Andrew Luck and Carson (Mr. Tonight Show) Palmer walking away at the peak of their careers. Burrow has been sacked twenty-nine times more than Luck in thirteen fewer games. His O-line stinks, his defense is revolting, and he has already garnered two Comeback Player of the Year awards in his short career.

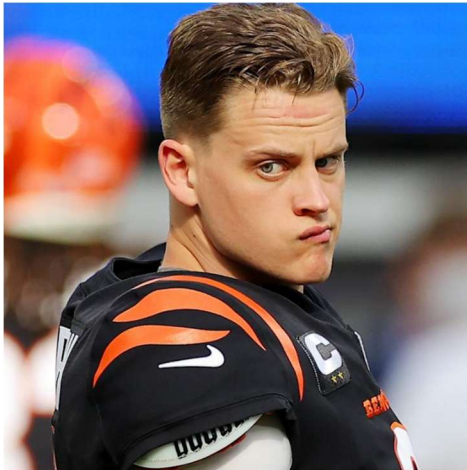
Look at the injuries:

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Date	Injury	Games Missed	Details
22-Nov-20	Knee ACL Tear	6	Burrow suffered a torn left ACL during Week 11's loss to Washington. He was placed on IR and was shut down for the 2020 season.
22-Nov-20	Knee MCL Tear	6	Burrow suffered a torn left MCL during Week 11's loss to Washington. He was placed on IR and was shut down for the 2020 season.
22-Nov-20	Knee PCL Tear	6	Burrow suffered a partial tear to his PCL during Week 11's loss to Washington. He was placed on IR and was shut down for the 2020 season.
22-Nov-20	Knee Meniscus Tear	6	Burrow suffered a partial tear to his meniscus during Week 11's loss to Washington. He was placed on IR and was shut down for the 2020 season.
5-Dec-21	Hand Finger Dislocation	-	Burrow suffered a dislocated pinkie finger in the Bengals' loss to the Chargers
2-Jan-22	Knee Unspecified Strain	1	Burrow twisted his knee towards the end of the game vs. the Kansas City Chiefs.
13-Feb-22	Knee MCL Sprain	-	Burrow suffered an MCL sprain in the final minutes of the Super Bowl
27-Jul-23	Leg Calf Strain	-	Burrow sustained a right calf strain while rolling out in practice. He returned on August 30th and hasn't missed a game due to this injury. However, Burrow reportedly re-aggravated the injury in Week 2 vs. the Ravens.
16-Nov-23	Hand Wrist Ligament	7	Burrow left in the second quarter of Week 11 vs. the Ravens with a right wrist injury. He missed the remainder of the 2023 NFL season.
14-Sep-25	Pedal Toe Turf	9	Burrow suffered a turf toe and ligament injury that the team fears is Grade 3 turf toe that would require surgery and cause Burrow to miss multiple weeks.

There are 30 teams in the NFL that would love to see Joe play in their colors, and the Look Man believes he will be leaving the Nati sooner rather than later. The Raiders, Jets, and have been mentioned, but the Look Man believes the Rams are the real monster. They could give up two first rounders AND fix the holes in the Nati defense with players they would be forced to pay.

Burrow's cap hit would destroy the Bengals organization, but frankly, they are doing a decent job of that already. The Rams could create a retirement path for Stafford while simultaneously creating cap space to pay Puca Nacua and others.



*"I did not know that. Did you know that, Tee?"*

### THE LOOKAHEAD

After several weeks of tough sledding, this looks to be a good week for betting. Perhaps more importantly, the matchups are incredible, just in time to provide clarity to the playoff picture. KC and Dallas are hanging by threads, and the injuries in Indy and Bolt City threaten to unravel their playoff dreams. Any way you slice it, we are now left with contenders and spoilers.

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#### Cleveland Browns at Chicago Monsters of the Red Hots (-7.5/40.5)

Shedeur Sanders was named the starter for the rest of the year following an Offensive Rookie of the Week Award in the loss to Tennessee. Consider this game an audition for Sanders to play elsewhere, as the Browns want to draft a QB. In truth, they need to embrace Sanders and rebuild the O-line and receiving corps.

Sanders looked incredible last week, accounting for nearly four bills of offense. His 364 passing yards and explosives haven't been seen in Cleveland since Flacco in 2023. The Browns surpassed their season highs for points and yardage despite the loss.

Da Bears fell from the NFC One Seed in Week Fourteen based upon a tough loss at Flambeau. The Rams retook NFC primacy, and Chicago needs every game to keep pace. (Me 'n) Caleb Williams is developing into a franchise QB but his accuracy remains below the Mendoza line at 58%. Williams is the NFC version of Josh (Irwin) Allen, but he needs to eschew the Big Play for some game management. No one is asking for Captain Checkdown, but he needs to hit his RBs and TEs in order to get his accuracy up.

Chicago overlooks Cleveland due to the Lookahead Factor of a Green Bay rematch in Week Sixteen. Browns, baby, Browns in a frigid upset.



*Have the Browns found their franchise?*

#### Baltimore Dumpster Ducks at Cincinnati Bengals (+2.5/52.5)

Sub-freezing temps in the Nati this week, as Baltimore attempts to bounce back after a horrible loss. If the Ducks don't win the AFC North, they are out of the playoffs. The NFL wants Lamar Jackson in the postseason. Tee Higgins is out. Ducks.

#### Los Angeles Bolts at Kansas City Baby Backs (-4.5/43.5)

The Bolts beat the Iggles at SoFi last week, and continue to do it despite the worst O-line in the AFC. QB Justin (Eden) Herbert turned into Rooster Cogburn, running, passing and generally being a nuisance.

KC is operating with fourth string offensive linemen. The defense is using smoke and mirrors. So, what. They have a crazy good home record, and beat the Bolts before bowing out. Baby Backs.

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*Buffalo Bisons at New England Chowds (+1.5/49.5)*

Big game for the Bisons, who nearly blew it last week against the Bengals. These Chowds have been waiting for this rematch, using a Week Fourteen bye to scheme up.

Buffalo has no deep threat, relying instead on tight end play. They do have a solid ground game featuring James (Can) Cook, but he keeps putting the rock on the ground. Their only hope here is that Josh (Irwin) Allen puts on the cape yet again. They simply do not have the offensive talent to compete.

The Look Man doesn't see how Crapchester beats this rested Chowds squad. New England.



*Bills Mafia hit on McD?*

*Green Bay Packers at Denver Donkeys (+2.5/42) – Game of the Week*

The Pack knocked off Chicago last week and their reward is to go on the road to Denver, which has won ten straight. The Donkeys are home dogs despite this accomplishment, as the NFC is considered the stronger conference. Denver clinches a playoff berth with a win over Green Bay.

This game is going to be a war, and both teams have tough games in Week Sixteen. The Pack travels to Chicago and Denver faces off with a suddenly resurgent Jacksonville.

Denver's defense is for real, and the way the officiating has gone at Mile High Investigation Field, half of the team wears black and white striped jerseys. The Look Man likes the Walmartians in a close home dog win with a lot of homer calls. Denver.

*Miami Marine Mammals at Pittsburgh Stillers (-3.5/42) – Monday Night Football*

DE TJ Watt got the Tyrod Taylor treatment when a pain killing dry needle treatment punctured his lung. The Stillers need him to bring the pain, but he will not be available. The Marine Mammals are quietly getting hot down the stretch, attempting to save HC Mike McDaniels' job.

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The Stillers feel the same way about HC Mike (Omar Epps) Tomlin, who is a killer on Monday Night Football. Further, Tua plays poorly in freezing temps. The Look Man is not betting against Tomlin. Stillers.

**EPILOGUE**

A boatload of NFL coaches are on the hot seat, and it will be tough to know who circles the wagons and who simply cashes their checks. Stefanski, Tomlin, Zac Taylor, and John Harbaugh are all in play, but if the Bisons lose to the Chowds, you can add McDermott to the list.

The Look Man is not fond of seeing regime change in the NFL, and all of these guys are competent. We tend to focus on QB play, but rookies do not come into the league ready for the rigors. For one thing, the rookie wall is real, and ten games create a physical toll.

Belicheat was fond of saying the season doesn't start until Thanksgiving, but the Rams and Chowds are running away with the One Seeds. KC, Buffalo, and Baltimore look to be in trouble, replaced by New England, J-Ville, and da Bears.

Any way you slice it, the officiating has stunk, but the NFL 2025 season has been incredibly entertaining.

Peace,

The Look Man