

THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2025

WEEK FIFTEEN: THE NEW GOLDEN AGE OF QBs

"Ben Johnson is the best first-time head coaching hire since Sean McVay. It's very difficult to develop a young quarterback and simultaneously win games." – Talking Head Colin Cowherd on the Bears rookie HC.

PROLOGUE

Week Fifteen lived up the hype, as Buffalo came back to beat New England, Denver, the Bolts, and Blitzburgh held serve in the AFC. The Pokes laid an egg in a must win prime time game, and the Iggles, Baltimore and Chicago dominated.

The Big Story was injuries, as Patrick Mahomes and Micah Parsons tore ACLs. The NFL has a 100% injury rate, but seeing superstars go down late in the season is sickening. One has to wonder why the NFL is so insistent on expanding to an eighteen-game season when folks can't even finish the seventeen-game slate. No one wants to see backups in the Super Bowl, but that looks like where we are headed.

The Old Heads are still spouting about the '83 QB Draft Class featuring Dan Marino, John Elway, and Jim Kelly. All of them are in the Hall of Fame, despite the fact that only Elway ever won the Lombardi.

But the current NFL 2024 draft class of (Me 'n) Caleb Williams, Bo Nix, and Drake Maye may be better. Each of these guys has shown athleticism, arm talent, and moxie. Perhaps it was COVID, which extended their college careers.

Maybe it was NIL, which paid these guys to stick around in college and learn the position. What is inescapable is that each is a franchise QB with a real chance to go deep in the postseason and perhaps win a chip in their first three seasons.

We will have to wait to see if they end up in Canton, but the throws that they have made in 2025 have brought the Look Man off the sofa in excitement.

Without further ado, the Week That Was.

LAGNIAPPE

Nature vs Nurture?

Joe Burrow, Justin Herbert, Bryce Young, and Cam Ward have been pounded into submission in their early years. They lead the NFL in sacks taken because they were drafted by bad organizations with horrible offensive lines and awful draft expertise. Instead of plugging them into ready-made situations, the NFL draft rewarded tanking teams with superior talent.

Nix fell in the draft but got saved by an organization that saw the talent and coached him up. Chicago blew it with Justin Fields, but Ben Johnson saved Caleb Williams by force-feeding him early, and adopting plays and a style suiting the player. Ditto for Sean Payton, who looked at Nix and 50 starts in college. Irrespective of the path, these guys are flourishing in the NFL, as is Justin Herbert.

All roads clearly lead to Rome, as Josh Allen emerged from Wyoming to become the Man in Crapchester. Lamar Jackson was drafted at 32 after four years at Louisville. Whatever the reasons, we are clearly in the Golden Age of NFL QBs. And we should enjoy the show.

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Nature vs Nurture II

It is not a coincidence that Baker Mayfield and Sam Darnold enjoyed career renaissance after spending time in Sean McVay's system. Dave Canales and Keivn McCarthy were able to build on that experience, whispering advanced QB knowledge once they had the basic scheme in place.

The real question is whether Cleveland's Kevin Stefanski can replicate that experience. He wanted Dillon Gabriel but not Shedeur Sanders. Neither has excelled, but that may be more indicative of a bad owner who prioritizes skill positions over a solid offensive line.

Even if the Browns were to have the draft capital to acquire a top ten QB, the offensive line is in shambles. They would do better to work with Shedeur Sanders, rebuild the team with high picks, and bide their time. Chicago traded the Number One overall to Carolina for WR DJ Moore and picks. They used those picks and free agency to acquire linemen to protect Caleb Williams and the rest is history in the making.

Drafting a QB high results up in self-immolation after the brutal pounding. We don't yet know if Bryce Young can emerge unscathed, but we do know Andrew Luck walked away due to the punishment and the losing. Joe Burrow is making noise about leaving and he was in the Super Bowl in 2022. The Bengals just signed Ja'Marr Chase and Tee Higgins while Burrow has never played behind an O-line rated above 23rd in the NFL.

The Browns are on the clock. Indiana's Mendoza is out of reach, and Oregon's Dante Moore has less than twenty starts on his resume. What remains to be seen is whether the Browns rebuild the team, and wait until 2027 to obtain a QB, IF they still need one.

2024 QB draft prospects

Promising quarterback prospects for the 2024 NFL draft, showcasing diverse skills and leadership qualities



Caleb Williams
Heisman Trophy Winner



Drake Maye
Prototypical Built



J. J. McCarthy
Poised Leader



Michael Penix Jr.
Accurate Passer



Bo Nix
Savvy Scrambler

Who will be the first to hoist a Lombardi?

Samuel L

Celebrity Samuel L. Jackson was interviewed by Jimmy Kimmel last week, when the ABC host asked if he was an NFL fan.

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"I'm still a Falcons fan. I can't not be a Falcons fan, but um I cheer most for the Baltimore Ravens cause Lamar Jackson is my b*stard son." He added, "That's what everybody thinks, so I roll with that. There are all kinds of side-by-side pictures of us online."

This may be the funniest thing since the interview where the reporter thought Samuel L Jackson was Dennis Haysbert, the Allstate spokesperson. "You need to get your black celebrities straight. I'm the 'What's in your wallet' guy!"



"Say 'hut' again, (thirteen letter expletive)!"

ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

The Look Man has avoided the ZOTW in 2025, if only because the officiating has been a favorite punching bag. The advent of legal sports betting has cast a shadow over the zebras, and with good reason. Former NFL commissioner Pete Rozelle was raised in Brooklyn, and he knew the potential for organized crime to undercut league legitimacy.

The current management is simply greedy and short-sighted, and the result is games where fans cannot even definitively determine what is a catch or TD.

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If you saw the Detroit-Rams game last week, a Rams TE caught a ball and went down inside the one-yard line. Dan Campbell rightly challenged the call, and the review came back as a TD. That call, and a dozen more in 2025 have not even been close, and that includes some of the expedited review calls.

No professional sports league can endure this undercurrent. Rams WR Puka Nacua went on record challenging the zebras and he will be fined accordingly. But who guards the guardians?



TD Rams!??

THE LOOKAHEAD

The Look Man went 3-3 in Week Fifteen, including missing on the Chowds, KC, and Browns. He was in good company, as few saw the injury carnage coming to Mahomes and Micah. This week is even more challenging, with divisional matchups that will dictate the playoff field. Like Dallas owner Jerrah Jones, the Look Man finds it difficult to describe a miracle, but he can count.

LA Rams at Coffeetown Seahawks (-1.5, 44.5) – Thursday Night Prime

This heavyweight matchup could determine the NFC One Seed and the NFC West Division. Seattle is struggling to run the football due to O-line injuries, but lost a 21-19 meeting at SoFi after four picks by QB Sam (Ghosts) Darnold. Darnold is subject to bad feet when pressured, which allowed the Rams to jump routes.

The Rams will likely be without uber WR Davante Adams, who went down with a hammy last week. Adams should be shelved for the balance of the regular season in order to be ready for the postseason. McVay and the Rams have parlayed WR Puka Nacua (means “bad man” in Polynesian) and a strong running game featuring three TEs. TE Cody Parkinson is balling out, and Puka leverages his physical strength into RAC. The Rams have eight TDs and over 700 yards to tight ends alone in the last two weeks. (Not a misprint).

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The Look Man is willing to overlook Darnold's skittishness because of the Seattle *Legion of Whom* defense. The LOW has third stringers which could start on ten other squads, and will give MVP Matt Stafford seven kinds of hell. By the way, Stafford has been unbelievable in 2025, and his arm talent is off the freaking scale.

The Twelves make the difference on a rain-soaked Lumen Field. Seahawks.

Green Bay Cheeseheads at Chicago Monsters of the Da Red Hot (-1.5, 46.5)

Most of the talking heads are counting the Cheeseheads out due to the loss of difference maker Micah Parsons (Brown). The Look Man still believes in the Pack, but believes the loss of DT Devonte Wyatt is just as important as Parsons. DC Jeff Hafley has received a lot of attention in head coaching searches, and with good reason.

For the few who watched the Browns-Bears were rewarded with the throw of the Year by (Me 'n) Caleb Williams. That dime TD pass to Moore went through four Browns players. The Look Man isn't ready to call it *The Catch*, but Dude has arm talent galore.

What is lost on the folks watching Chicago is the fact that they are a physical running team with a passing attack. They beat you up on offense, and slit your throat in the red zone with precision bullet passing. Green Bay does it with finesse and speed, and WR (Sister) Christian Watson is still recovering from his annual season-ending injury of the year.

This may be the Look Man's favorite game of the week. Given the similarities at head coach and QB, it would appear that Jordan Love (Broker) and Matt LeFleur have the edge. But the real story is that Chicago is a team that knows its identity and beats you with physicality. The defense is nothing special, they simply lead the NFL in turnovers. HC Ben Johnson has placed his stamp on this team, and they are well ahead of schedule.

Bears win, propelling the NFC into chaos.

Buffalo Bisons at Cleveland Browns (-10, 42.5)

This spread started huge and keeps growing. Apparently because Browns Fan expected rookie QB Shedeur Sanders to play errorless football.

Granted, the NFL has been grinding its axe on Sanders since before the draft, but you simply cannot expect the kid not to lay a few eggs. Sanders went from Rookie of the Week to Bum of the Year in one week, but it wasn't all his fault. He played with a makeshift O-line and a wideout that turned a dime TD pass into a pick.

The biggest problem in Cleveland has been the lack of a running game, with rookie star Quinshon Judkins averaging 2.7 per carry over the last two weeks. Those numbers coincide with the loss of 80% of his offensive line.

Crapchester surprised everyone by posting over 300 second half yards against the Chowds, but perhaps they left too much on the field. QB Josh (Irwin) Allen put on his cape in the third quarter, passing and

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running all over the depleted Chowds. LBs Robert Spillane, Christian Elliss (illness), and Harold Landry all missed time in the second half, opening up the run game for the Bisons. Each is questionable this week.

The Zebras are going to continue to maintain a blind eye, but the Browns bounce back from a soft tank, surprising the Bisons. Browns, baby, Browns in an upset.



Three more starts to figure it out in Cleveland...

Los Angeles Bolts at Dallas Cowpokes (-1.5, 49.5)

The Pokes lost a gimme last week at home against the Hornheads. They made QB JJ McCarthy look like Fran Tarkenton, which is no small feat. McCarthy couldn't find WR Justin Jefferson to save his life, with backup WRs Jordan Addison and Jalen Naylor caught everything in Arlington.

The Bolts are doing it with smoke and mirrors and true grit. QB Justin Herbert is playing with a broken hand, and looks incapable of being sacked. Herbert is also immune to grounding calls, ditching the ball only inches above the ground.

Here's the inside scoop: Marty Schottenheimer was fired after going 14-2 in San Diego. His son Brian now coaches the Pokes. Look for Dallas to whip out a can of whoop-ass to finish strong in a lost season. Pokes.

Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings at Carolina Black Cats (-2.5, 45.5)

The Look Man's dislike for (Cake) Baker Mayfield is widely known, but this Black Cats team is physical and deep. Look for Carolina to leverage HC Dave Canales' knowledge of the Corn Kings into a win, setting up a Week Eighteen game for all the marbles. Black Cats were looking ahead when New Orleans beat them in Week Fifteen, but they come ready on Sunday. Black Cats win, setting up Cake's usual 9-8 record.

Blitzburgh Stillers at Detroit Cadillacs (-7, 49.5)

Aaron (Discount Double Check) Rodgers and the Stillers dominated the Marine Mammals in the cold last week, largely with checkdown passes to RB/feature back Kenny Gainwell. The Cadillacs have two linebackers (Anzalone and Campbell) that ain't going for that particular *banana in the tailpipe*.

Detroit's defense is weak in the back end, having lost super safety Brian Branch, but they can stuff a mediocre run game like the Stillers. Rodgers makes a dent in their defense, but this game looks like a shootout. Take the over, as the Caddies win, but don't cover.

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New England Chowderheads at Baltimore Dumpster Ducks (-2.5, 48.5) – Football Night in America

The Chowds are licking their wounds following that BTA loss to the Bisons last week. The Dumpster Ducks are banged up, and something is wrong with QB Lamar (Action) Jackson. For one thing, he has the flu again, missing practice for the fifth time in six years. In what world does your franchise QB dismiss a flu shot?

HC Mike Vrabel and the Chowds get a two-fer, clinching a playoff berth, and knocking Baltimore out of the postseason with only Miami and the Jets between them and AFC East supremacy. Chowds overcome the injury bug, and win a hard-fought battle at the Inner Harbor. Chowds.

San Francisco Niners at Indianapolis Ponies (-5.5, 46.5) – Monday Night Football

The NFC West is the best division in pro football and Shanahan is the real Coach of the Year. He has lost more players than anyone, including Purdy, Aiyuk, Deebo Samuels, and Fred Warner. All he does is keep winning and this one sets up a run for the division title with home games remaining against the Bears and Seahawks.

If the Niners run the table, they can win the West, possibly with a One Seed. These guys are sneaky good. Niners.

EPILOGUE

The difference between winning and losing in the NFL is a razor thin margin. Coaches contribute one to three wins per year via clock management, and Seattle's Mike (Big Mac) McDonald stole one last week vs. Indy. Big Mac called all three of his timeouts to get the ball back on offenses after Old Man Rivers crafted a lead at the Two Minute Warning. Special teams gave Seattle the ball at the 40 after the kick went out of bounds, and Darnold got just enough yardage to set up a game winning 56-yard FG.

Coaches impart their stamp on the team, and this Seattle team is tough, physical, and strong-minded. The Look Man likes coaches who lend their personalities to the squad. Kevin Stefanski is intelligent, but too soft-hearted to dominate. Shanahan and McVay are sorcerers who fool you with motion and scheme. Tomlin wins with defense and low scoring.

The guys who the Look Man doesn't trust are guys who are more afraid to lose than who love winning. Sean McDermott is such a man; he can get you to the postseason, but he's too nervous to knock you out. Sean Payton in Denver is just an asshole who thinks he is smarter than everyone else, and gets help from the zebras.

The postseason is looming and the smart guys will rest players and make a run at the finish. The One Seed is important, but as long as teams get one or two home games, they have a shot. You don't have to win every game, just the ones that count.

Peace,

The Look Man