

The Doggity Chiefs Report

Week 9 - Chiefs vs Bye – Take the week off, guys!

Dog Heads – This season and last's Doggity Reports are wasting bandwidth at www.georgeblowfish.com!

Valuable Instructions –

Well, it's Bye week – time for Dr. Doggity's midterm report card on the Chiefs. In an effort to help you understand the convoluted Doggity Grading System, here is an explanation of how it works. You should find this as useful as the Mandarin-to-English translation of the instruction manual that came with your VCR. First, each phase will be graded – O, D, Specials, Head Coach, Others. Then grades will be given to each coordinator or executive, followed by individuals within that unit. Grades are awarded based upon three factors – expectations, past performance, and performance compared to league averages. For players with measurable statistics, their rankings are objective NFL data, for others, the Dog subjectively looked at others across the league and ranked them accordingly. Finally, a worthy member of each unit will be awarded the "Charles Nelson Reilly Award" (for most fabulous) and the "Pamela Anderson Award" (for the biggest bust). At the end, the first half's Bone and Dog will be awarded to the overall winners and losers.

Overview –

What a ride the first half has been. Clearly the W/L ledger looks better this year than last. We all said that if the defense could come up to mid-pack and the offense does not suffer a huge drop off in production, this would be a playoff caliber team. That looks pretty smart right now, doesn't it? The O is only slightly behind last year in key categories. The "bend it like Beckham" approach to defense yields a ton of real estate, but so far very few points and a lot of thievery. In the mostly unimportant, but league-preferred metric – total yards – the KC offense is ranked 7th and the D is ranked 27th. You say you want more meaningful stats? Well, the Chiefs have the league's top power ranking! What is more important than scoring? KC's O is ranked #1 in total points and points per game. The D is tied for fourth in fewest points allowed and fourth in defensive touchdowns. The Chiefs are #1 in turnover margin and #1 in points off turnovers. KC is also has the fewest penalties and fourth fewest penalty yards against them. The Specials are ranked #2 in punt return average yards and #1 in kickoff return average yards. They are, of course, number 1 in scoring on both kicks and punts. KC's special team also leads the league in Letterman appearances. That's some meaningful stuff, there. The nattering nabobs of negativism would tell you that KC's op record is only 26-38, but if my failing math skills still serve me at all, the opponents would be 34-30 if not for being beaten by the Chiefs! As for expectations – I think we all would have been thrilled to be 5-3 coming into the easy part of the season. As for comparison to last year we were 4-4 at the bye, with that Cleveland game in the W column only because of Dwayne Rudd's entry into the Olympic helmet toss. Compared to the rest of the league – the #1 power ranking and the best record are pretty good. In the NFL, you can't really even ask for 8-0, much less anything better. The overall grade for the first half has to be an "A".

Offense –

Al Saunders – coordinator: Meets expectations. Offense is comparable to last year. The wide outs have a more prominent role. Tony Gonzo is more involved. The load is off Priest to carry the team as much. Compared to the league, Al is one of the top two or three O – coordinators in the NFL, but he was last year, too. GRADE = **A-**

CNR Award –

Priest Holmes: Priest has fewer touches this year than last, but still leads the league in total yards from scrimmage and touchdowns. His average yards-per-touch is above last season. He is third in the league in total points scored – in a category usually dominated by kickers, only two of them have more points than Priest. Compared to last year, he is a little better despite the injury and less use. Compared to the league, he is the best all-around back in the NFL. GRADE = **A**

PA Award –

Larry Johnson: From Heisman candidate to street-clothes bench warmer. Joins D.J Dozier, Curtis Enis and Ki-Jana Carter in the annals of sad backs out of Happy Valley. What could we have gotten that would have been better with our #1 pick? How about NFC October rookie of the month – Green Bay LB Nick Barnett! He went two picks after Johnson. GRADE = **F**

Starters –

Trent Green: Still too many picks, barely below last year, #7 in NFL – GRADE = **B**

Tony Gonzalez: More like the old Tony, better than last year, # 2 in NFL – GRADE = **B+**

Johnny Morton: Significant part of the O, better than last year, #27 in NFL – GRADE = **B-**

Eddie Kennison: Too many drops, similar to last year, #34 in NFL – GRADE = **C**

Tony Richardson: Consummate team guy, similar to last year, #2 in NFL – GRADE = **A-**

Willie Roaf: The Dominator, better than last year, #2 in NFL – GRADE = **A**

Brian Waters: Still underrated, similar to last year, #2 in NFL – GRADE = **A**

Casey Weigmann: Undersized but quick, barely below last year, #4 in NFL – GRADE = **B+**

Will Shields: Near the top of his game, similar to last year, #1 in NFL – GRADE = **A**

John Tait: Playing well, better than last year, #4 in NFL – GRADE = **A-**

Others –

Dante Hall: (Offense only) Has nearly equaled his 2002 stats, better than last year – GRADE **B+**

Jason Dunn: One of the best blocking TE's in NFL, better than last year – GRADE **B+**

Marc Boerigter: (Offense only) He's on the milk carton, way below last year – GRADE **D**

Defense –

Greg Robinson – coordinator: Meets expectations (however low). Defense is improved over last year, to be sure. In terms of yards, they have gone from 32 to 27! That said, Dr. Evil did make a few beneficial changes – mostly he let the guys play ball, rather than scheme them into failure.

The talent level is also better. They force a lot of turnovers and don't yield many points. This defense reminds me of his units in Denver – that isn't necessarily a good thing, but they did win two Super Bowls. GRADE = **B-**

CNR Award –

Jerome Woods: Romey has proven why his presence was so badly missed last season. He nearly single-handedly won the game in Green Bay with a pick-6 and a forced fumble in OT. He has two INT's for TD's this year, but more importantly he has elevated the play of the entire secondary – and goodness knows they needed it. He is one of the top 10 safeties in the NFL
GRADE = **A –**

PA Award –

Eddie Freeman: He looked so good last year, what happened? Maybe it was because Duane Clemons and Eric Downing looked so bad that he was able to rise above. I know he has been hurt, but he can't even suit up. GRADE = **D**

Starters –

Eric Hicks: Decent season, better than last year, #35 in NFL – GRADE = **B-**

John Browning: Solid on the inside, better than last year, #36 in NFL – GRADE = **B**

Ryan Sims: The kid can play, better than last year, #33 in NFL – GRADE = **B+**

Vonnie Holliday: Better than Hugh Douglas, new – but upgrade, #29 in NFL – GRADE = **B-**

Scott Fujita: Tied for team lead in tackles, better than last year, #27 in NFL – GRADE = **A-**

Mike Mazlowski: In a more natural position, better than last year, #35 in NFL – GRADE = **B-**

Shawn Barber: Provides spark, major upgrade from last year, #29 in NFL – GRADE = **B**

Greg Wesley: Tied for team lead in tackles, better than last year, #28 in NFL – GRADE = **B+**

Dexter McCleon: His best season yet, major upgrade over Bartee, #4 in NFL – GRADE = **A-**

Eric Warfield: Playing well, much better than last year, #6 in NFL – GRADE = **B+**

Others –

Shaunard Harts: (Defense only) Few reps, barely below last year – GRADE **C+**

R-Kal Truluck: Starting to get the hang of it, better than last year – GRADE **B**

Special Teams –

Frank Ganz, Jr. – coordinator: Meets expectations. Special teams are an enigma. Crash Junior has Dante Hall, who is the salve for whatever ails him. The coverage units have been sub par, allowing way too many return yards. The kicking has been sporadic. Kickoffs go from touchbacks one time to 20-yardline the next. Two blocked punts up the middle are unacceptable. Even old Grandpa Morten has been erratic. That said, special teams have won a couple of games for us this year. GRADE = **B–**

CNR Award –

Dante Hall: Who else? The Human Joystick makes an impact even when he doesn't touch the ball. KC has among the best starting positions in the league, due in large part to people trying to kick away from Hall. Dante will likely break the NFL TD return record, and may become only the second specialist to be league MVP. GRADE = **A**

PA Award –

Darrius Johnson: He's on IR now, but was on his way to replacing Lyle West in the "holds like a Boston Parrish Priest" award. He also touched a punt while standing in the end zone that would likely have died inside the 5. First to touch a punt after running out of bounds. GRADE = **D**

Starters –

Marc Boerigter: Some great plays, forcing two fumbles and downing punts deep – GRADE = **B+**

Monte Beisel: Solid tackler, better than last year, – GRADE = **B**

Derrick Blaylock: He's keeping a #1 pick on the bench with his play on specials – GRADE = **A–**

Jason Baker: Way too erratic, slight upgrade from last year, #24 in NFL – GRADE = **C**

Morten Andersen: Still better than average, slipped from last year, #16 in NFL – GRADE = **B–**

Kendall Gammon: No bad snaps – but two blocked punts past him – GRADE = **C**

Coaches –

Dick Vermeil (Head Coach) – What can you say? The scoreboard is your metric – GRADE = **A**

CNR Award – (tie)

Mike Solari (Offensive Line) – The best in the biz – GRADE = **A**

Jeff Hurd (Strength & Conditioning) – No major injuries through 5 preseason and 8 regular – GRADE = **A**

PA Award –

Joe Vitt (Linebackers) – In fairness, all of the coaches are doing a better job this year than last, but for the upgrade in talent, there are way too many big plays on runs where linebackers are out of position – GRADE = **B–**

Excused Absences –

Bill Grigsby (Mascot) – We wish Grigs well in his recovery from heart surgery. We have missed his "bee-u-tee-ful" input during the game – Grigs put the color in color commentary.

Lamar Hunt (Legend) – Chiefs' owner. Also recuperating from cancer surgery. Lamar is the legend that named the Super Bowl. He deserves the trophy that bears his name, given each year to the AFC champion.

Extra Credit –

KC Wolf (Mascot) – We love our Wolfie!

Len Dawson (Color Commentator) – Seems to have lightened up on the Chiefs this year.

Tony DiPardo (Louie Prima) – Got a ball from fellow little guy – Dante Hall.

"King" Carl Peterson (Deity) – Overall good job with free agents and staying out of the way, but Larry Johnson? Please!

The AFC West –

#1 (8-0) Kansas City Chiefs – the best team in football resides right in the center of the US!

#2 (5-3) Denver Donkeys – The Donkeys are again the under-achieving dud of the year. Good talent but disorganized and unfocused. They need to remove all furnishings and pets from the homes of their QBs!

#3 (2-6) East Bay Convicts – Anyone out there still doubt that Callahan took Chuckie’s team to the Super Bowl? They are circling the drain fast

#4 (1-7) San Diego Bolts – Marty will likely get to spend more time with his favorite waitresses very soon. This team is wasting some nice young talent.

Throw Him A Bone Award –

The first half Bone goes to Dante Hall. Yes, you could make a good case for Priest, but there are two games this year we would have lost without Dante. Fetch little guy!

The Doggity Dog –

While everybody seems to be better this year than last, Carl Peterson is the one who defied the wishes of Dick Vermeil and drafted Larry Johnson strictly as leverage in renegotiating with Priest – when we had so many other pressing needs. Credit to Carl for doing the right thing in the end, but he blew a precious #1 pick just to make a point. King Carl gets his nose rubbed in it, but winning is a great deodorant.

Tailgate Recipe of the Bye Week!

From Dr. Bob’s better half and avid football freak, Ms Priscilla comes what she calls “a brainless recipe that is pretty tasty, has a kick, and very portable” You gotta love that!

Black Bean Salad

1 16 oz can black beans, drained, rinsed
1 tbsp scallions, thinly sliced
1 tbsp olive oil
1/2 tsp cumin
1/2 tsp salt, or to taste
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper

Combine all ingredient and chill for several hours.

Next up – If you thought the first half of the schedule was a laugh, wait till you see the second half! The up coming competition is a combined 25 – 40 for the year! With Denver’s QB trouble and Minnesota getting beat by Green Bay at home, it is conceivable that KC will not be an underdog in any remaining game this season. That scares me.

Your faithful scribe,
Mr. Doggity