

The Doggity Chiefs Report

Preseason 1 – 2004

Chiefs at NY Giants from Hoffa Memorial Stadium, Meadowlands, NJ

The quadrennial “silly season” has descended upon us. When two rich white guys try to make the multi-ethnic, anything-but-wealthy populace of America believe that they are just like us and can relate to our problems – while trying to convince us their opponent is a rich white guy. Another, more serious season has arrived, as well... Football season! As sure as the dog-days of summer bring the browning of heartland lawns, August begets the Doggity Chiefs Report. And you know that you will anxiously open and read the Doggity again this year... attracted by the same compelling urge that makes you look at a traffic accident as you drive by.

For the third year, the Illustrious Potentate, George Blowfish will compromise the integrity of his noble URL and host the Doggity Report at www.georgeblowfish.com! Be sure to check out the link to “Radio Blowfish” – music that makes Blowfish twitch. If you know others who might want to get this report in the ‘junk’ folder of their e-mail inbox every week – send me their addresses so we can add them to the tens of people who regularly read the Dog. I promise not to sell their names to anyone selling generic Mexican Viagra.

Overview – The “machine” that is the Al Saunders offense continues to interchange parts and drive down people’s throats with a cold, cruel efficiency. Equally cold and cruel for the opposite reason is the KC run defense. This game traces it’s bloodline back to January at Arrowhead against the Colts – who marched up and down the turf at the Head without KC ever making “Hunter the Punter” put his helmet on. Unless I see more out of Gunther’s unit in the next few weeks than I saw last night, I will be compelled to print the most humbling of mea culpas – perhaps it wasn’t all Greg “Dr Evil” Robinson’s fault. Egad! It also seemed the officiating crew was in pre-season form, as well. Some calls – going both ways – could be smelled from here. They hurled more yellow laundry than you could find in Lance Armstrong’s hamper.

Offense – The number one O unit is unparalleled in the NFL. Sorry Colt fan; Sorry Lamb fan – the Kansas City starting offense is the best in the game. I know, I know, “Where are the wideouts?” Well there aren’t any. So what? No, there is no Isaac Bruce or Randy Moss or Marvin Harrison on this squad. But last night, despite sitting both starting flyers – Morton and Kennison – as well as number 2 backup, Marc Boerigter – and starting a rookie, KC cut open the Giant D like a chainsaw through Spam. The youngin’s were particularly impressive. Kris Wilson is the guy who made all Chiefs fans spend draft day saying, “What the...?” A second-round pick on a tightend when you have Tony Gonzalez? So far this camp and last night, that question has been answered.

This kid can ball. And he can play fullback, H-back, tightend and receiver. And he catches everything thrown at him. Image you are a defensive coordinator (It's OK to dream). You see KC come out on a second and short with a two tightend formation, a Pro-Bowl fullback (Tony Richardson) and Priest Holmes in the backfield. Had you better respect the run, and bring in another linebacker, or cheat up with the safeties? You don't and you're selling insurance next week. Then Green sees the mis-match, and calls a play-action that freezes the secondary and puts Priest and T-Rich in pass protection. Now you have Kris Wilson and Tony Gonzalez wide open up the middle. So you're now selling insurance for failing to cover two of the best receiving TEs in football. As for backs – your starters were both invited to Hawaii. Derrick Blaylock and Larry Johnson are solid back ups and Omar Easy looked pretty solid. Rookie wideout Richard Smith and NFLE standout receiver Chris Horn had very nice games, as well.

Defense – I'm not convinced. The pass rush was much better. Eric Hicks looks like his Y2K self. In 2000, under Gunther's scheme, Hicks planted the QB 14 times. He has never gotten close to that since. Last night, he looked like the Prodigal Son. In fact, the DE's looked pretty good. The pass pressure was improved over the "read and take a nap" scheme of Dr. Evil. Former #1 pick, DT Ryan Sims' picture will be on your milk carton this week. A rookie O-lineman made him vanish before our eyes. The corners were generally solid. Eric Warfield looked as good as I have seen him since he traded in that "N is for Knowledge" hat. Julian Battle was flagged twice for groping receivers like Schwarzenegger at a Hefner pool party. Lyle West managed to keep his mitts to himself and post a decent performance. The real killer was the linebacker and safety play. Granted, Starters Mike Mazlowski and Pro-Bowler Jerome Woods were not in the game, but Scott Fujita and Kawika Mitchell are starters and Shaunard Harts was in 2002. They should know how to tackle. Monte Beisel has been praised in the press for his training camp effort, but that needs to translate into smart decisions under live fire. He was out of position on two long TD runs. The KC linebackers made Ron Dayne of the Giants look like the Ron Dayne of the Badgers. Dayne posted over 100 yards and two TDs in the first half.

Special Teams – We didn't really see "the real deal" since Dante didn't take any kicks. Chris Horn was acceptable, and Larry Johnson did a nice job – with one he nearly broke. The blocking and coverage units are still gelling, but didn't do anything really stupid. The "batting" penalty on Gary Stills was a joke. Lawrence Tynes did what was asked of him, but with this offense, a place kicker does most of his work from the 2 ½ yard line.

For the record – and you can go to the Blowfish site to verify – my AFC West predictions for last year were:

#1 Kansas City Chiefs

#2 Denver Donkeys

#3 San Diego Lightning Bolts
#4 East Bay Convicts

Technically, the Convicts finished statistically ahead of the Bolts, but they were both bottom feeders with identical 4-12 records. So I didn't do too bad. I caught a lot of flack from the Bay City over that prediction, with the Convicts coming off the Super Bowl in 02. I stuck with it and was sweetly vindicated by the complete meltdown of the geriatric parole violators.

As in the past, I will not give my AFC West predictions until the final week of pre-season.

Throw Him A Bone Award –

Last night's Boner goes to rookie Jared Allen. The fat boy plays the unlikely combo of long-snapper and defensive end. Whatever. In any case, his name was called all over the place. The Idaho State Bengal was the picked by the Chiefs in the fourth round this year. You gotta love the fact that in college he won the "Buck Buchanan" trophy as the top D-2 defensive player. That guy from Grambling they named the trophy after had a decent run for KC.

The Doggity Dog –

Darnell Alford gets the rolled-up paper on the muzzle. There is no doubt that we can't assume the O-line will go through their fourth season without an injury – so good backups will be necessary. Alford would not qualify. There is a reason this 325 pound speed bump has only managed to get his lard butt into 5 games in four seasons. He's bad.

Next week –

The Governor's Cup – The Lambs at the Head on MNF! The Dog will be in the front row!

Expect the full playbook Doggity Report to resume when the regular games start. It's good to be out of that long – off season kennel.

Your faithful scribe,
Mr. Doggity