

Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter

\$15

College & Pro Football Best Bets Newsletter

Dennis Stagliano's Award Winning Football Newsletter

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Thanksgiving Day Egg Bowl Featured

COLLEGE PICKS 34-24 59% UNDERDOG PICKS 8-4 67% MISSISSIPPI RIVALRY GAME

College Football Recap

- Miami-Florida had a slight hangover after their dominating win against Notre Dame a week ago. They trailed Virginia 28-14 in the third quarter before the alarm clock went off at Hard Rock Stadium. The Hurricanes then proceeded to rattle off 30 unanswered points for the 16-point win, but the Cavaliers were still able to hang on for the road cover. Miami might be 10-0 SU overall, but they're just 2-4 ATS over their past six, and 1-4 ATS in five games as a double-digit favorite this season. ... Alabama had their annual November cupcake game, essentially resting before playing in the Iron Bowl against Auburn next week. Mercer of the FCS was this season's sacrificial lamb, and it went about as well as you would expect for the Bears. The Tide led 35-0 at half, and they went on to win 56-0. Hey, at least the Bears got paid over \$1 million this season to be punched around by both Iron Bowl participants.

-- Auburn struggled with Mercer earlier this season, winning just 24-10 despite being a 40-point favorite. And they nearly lost to FCS Jacksonville State a couple of seasons ago, surviving the Gamecocks in overtime back in 2015. The Tigers faced Louisiana-Monroe, the last unranked team to beat Nick Saban and Alabama back in 2007. So, did the Warhawks pull off the big upset Saturday? Nah. It was 7-7 after the first quarter, and just 14-7 in favor of the Tigers at the half. However, the 38-point favorite Tigers pulled away in the second half, although ULM was never in danger of failing to cover. As a favorite of 21 or more points, Auburn is a dismal 0-2-2 ATS this season.

-- Memphis can score with the best of them, and their high-octane offense was on display at the Liberty Bowl on Saturday against visiting Southern Methodist. The Mustangs held their own after the first quarter, and they were down just 45-38 after three quarters. However, the Tigers were too much for Chad Morris' group, running away for a 66-45 win and cover. The Tigers rank fourth in points scored (44.7 PPG) and sixth in total yards (519.5), but 113th in the FBS in defense with 452.3 yards per game allowed. The Tigers are 4-0 ATS over their past four games, and 5-0-1 ATS over the past six.

-- West Virginia entered as a three-point favorite against visiting Texas. The Longhorns turned the tables on the Mountaineers, who will tumble out of the Top 25. The Longhorns improved to 4-1 ATS in five road games, while the Mountaineers slipped 0-2-1 ATS over their past three games at Milan Puskar Stadium in Morgantown. The 'under' has cashed in three straight for WVU.

-- Georgia bounced back with a 42-13 win against Kentucky in between the hedges. The 'over' has now cashed in five of the past six for UGA, while the Bulldogs are just 2-3 ATS over their past five overall. It was Georgia's first cover of the season as a favorite of 18 or more points after going 0-3 ATS in their first three tries.

-- Florida St took out a season of frustration on poor ol' Delaware St of the FCS, 77-6. The Hornets were no match for the Seminoles. FSU covered the biggest spread on the board Saturday (52 points), and they had scored a total of 72 points over their past four games combined. The cover was also the first of the season for the Seminoles after opening the season 0-7-2 ATS through the first nine. ... North Carolina picked up a win on FCS Western Carolina, 65-10, improving to 3-8 SU. Suddenly, the Tar Heels are 3-0 ATS over the past three outings. ... Duke put the brakes on a six-game slide, topping Georgia Tech by a 43-20 count. The Blue Devils started out 4-0 SU/ATS, then were 0-6 SU/0-5-1 ATS over the past six, before finally covering again. The 'over' result snapped an eight-game 'under' run, too.

-- Purdue shocked Iowa in Kinnick Stadium by a 24-15 score. The Boilermakers improved to 5-6 SU, and can punch their ticket to a bowl with a win at home in the Battle for the Old Oaken Bucket next week against Indiana. ... Speaking of the Hoosiers, they outlasted Rutgers 41-0 at 'The Rock' for their second straight game. Whomever wins in West Lafayette next week will win their sixth game and a trip to the postseason. IU entered Saturday's game 0-6-1 ATS over their past seven, and they're 0-4 ATS in their past four road games heading into next week's battle in Purdue.

-- Oklahoma State was dumped by Kansas State in Stillwater, as the Wildcats were the biggest underdog (+19) to win outright on Saturday. K-State became bowl eligible in grand style, improving to 3-0 SU over their past three road games, and 2-0 ATS over the past two away from home. They haven't covered back-to-back games since Sept. 2-9. ... Kansas didn't want to shake Baker Mayfield's hand before Saturday's tilt in Oklahoma, and the quarterback made them pay. He even showed them something below his waist. But the Jayhawks were able to cover for the second straight outing, and they're 3-1 ATS over their past four.

-- Oregon took care of Arizona by a 48-28 score, securing bowl eligibility in the process. They improved to 5-1 SU/4-2 ATS in six games at Autzen Stadium, which is where they'll host Oregon State in the Civil War next week. It's weird to see, but the 'under' has been hitting frequently for the Ducks. The under is 5-1 over the past six outings, and 7-2 over their past nine outings. ... Washington held off pesky Utah by a 33-30 count, never coming close to covering a 17 1/2-point number. The Huskies are a poor 2-3 ATS over their past five outings heading into the Apple Cup next week against Washington State. The Cougars were off this past weekend.

-- South Carolina faced one of the better FCS opponents of the weekend in Wofford, a team that entered 9-1 SU. The Terriers led 3-0 after the first quarter, but the Gamecocks ended up getting some distance in the second half. ... Tennessee continues to struggle, falling 30-10 to Louisiana State. The Vols are 0-7 in the SEC, as is next week's opponent, Vanderbilt. The Vols and Commodores will battle to avoid the basement at Neyland Stadium.

-- UCF won 45-19 on the road at Temple, avoiding the upset in a place many have fallen before. The Knights are 10-0 SU, but their cover was the first since Oct. 14, entering the game 0-3-1 ATS over the past four. ... Tulane scored a 20-17 win against Houston, keeping their dreams alive for a bowl berth. The Green Wave have won back-to-back conference games. The 'under' is 3-0 over their past three outings, too. ... South Florida was unable to cover for the fourth straight game, but they topped Tulsa 27-20 to move to 9-1 SU leading up to their huge matchup against UCF next Friday.

-- Florida Atlantic moved to 7-0 SU in Conference USA play, punching their ticket to the league's championship game with a 52-24 win against rival Florida International. The Owls are an impressive 6-1 ATS over their past seven conference battles heading into next week's regular season finale at Charlotte. ... The 49ers haven't exactly been 'Packing the Mine' this season, mostly because they're 1-10 SU. They were buried 66-21 at Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, slipping to 5-6 ATS on the season. However, they are a respectable 5-2 ATS over the past seven despite their losing ways. If you like offense, you got your fill with the North Texas Mean Green and the Army Cadets combining for 14 TD's and 101 total points as UNT drove down the field and kicked the only field goal of the game from the 19 yard line with 9 seconds left.

-- Temperatures were around freezing with winds around 20-25 mph, so you figure the weather would favor Wyoming. However, it was the California team from the Valley, Fresno State, winning 13-7 in the frigid conditions. The 'under' has cashed in five straight for the Cowboys, and it's 9-2 in 11 games overall. ... Colorado State bounced back after their implosion last week against Boise State, 42-14 in a win over San Jose State. However, the Rams were unable to cover for the sixth consecutive game to close out their regular season.

-- Coastal Carolina posted a 13-7 win at the Kibbie Dome in Moscow, Idaho in the final FBS home game for the Vandals. Idaho is leaving the Sun Belt Conference and dropping down to the FCS level to join the Big Sky Conference. ... Georgia Southern was one of just two winless FBS teams entering the weekend. They not only won, they pounded South Alabama, 52-0. It was the first shutout of an FBS opponent in Eagles' history.

-- If you had the 'over' (40.5) in Minnesota-Northwestern, my condolences. First off, things didn't get off to a great start with a scoreless first quarter. However, the Wildcats posted 25 points in the second half to get things on track. While the Gophers didn't help you at all, getting blanked in the 39-0 game, it was a blocked extra point and two failed two-point conversion attempts that made the difference. -- If you had Rice (+240) on the moneyline, first off, you're a lot more adventurous than I. Secondly, you took a bad beat, as they held a 21-17 lead until :37 left in regulation in Norfolk when Old Dominion pulled off the 24-21 win. -- The 'over' (77) in Arizona-Oregon looked like a sure thing, as the Ducks scored with 13:54 left in regulation to take a 45-28 lead. The Ducks drove back into the red zone, but had to settle for a 24-yard field with 8:09 to go, moving within one point of the 'over'. That's how it stayed.



MY BOOKIE

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PRES COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

Mississippi at MISSISSIPPI St. Over 62 by 13

For the 22nd time in the history of the Egg Bowl, the Ole Miss Rebels and Mississippi State Bulldogs will battle on Thanksgiving. The visiting Rebels have lost six of their 11 games this season and need a win on Thursday to become bowl eligible. The Mississippi Rebels were shutout in the second half in a 28-24 home loss to Texas A&M last week. Jordan Ta'amu was decent, throwing for 189 yards with two touchdowns against one interception. The junior quarterback has played well in place of the injured Shea Patterson, notching 1435 passing yards with a 9:3 TD to INT ratio in five games played. Rebels' leading rusher Jordan Wilkins was terrific in the losing cause, rushing for 147 yards on 19 carries. a losing effort for the Rebels. Through their first eleven games, Ole Miss ranks 20th in total offense and is scoring at a 33 point per game clip. Mississippi State ranks 9th nationally in yards allowed and gives up 19.5 points per game.

The Mississippi State Bulldogs are a game above .500 in SEC Conference play and have won eight games overall. The 16th ranked Bulldogs are led by QB Nick Fitzgerald, who has six games this season of 100-plus yards in passing and rushing. The Mississippi State Bulldogs scored 14 unanswered points in the final four minutes to defeat Arkansas by a 28-21 score last week. Nick Fitzgerald was tremendous, throwing for 153 yards with two touchdowns, and also rushed for 101 yards with one rushing TD. The junior quarterback is a dual-threat, notching 1770 passing yards with a 15:10 TD to INT ratio, and has accumulated 968 rushing yards. Aeris Williams also made his presence felt on the ground last week, rushing for 71 yards. The junior running back has rushed for three TD's in his last two games, and has recorded 944 rushing yards on the season. For the season, Mississippi State ranks 52nd in total offense and scores 32.5 points per contest. Ole Miss is a mess on defense, ranking 114th in yards allowed and giving up 35.2 points per game.

Mississippi State should exploit the Ole Miss rush defense and the Rebels feature a strong passing game that should do damage. The Ole Miss defense is allowing an average of over 35 points per game, and they will likely give up big points on the road, plus the over is 4-1 in their last five road games. The Ole Miss offense has been very productive and should also move the ball with success. Also, Mississippi State features a powerful offense that has scored at least 34 points in all but one home game this season, and the over is 8-1 in their last 9 conference games. Last year they scored 75 points, sounds good to me for this year too. For the side pick on this Thanksgiving night game, get our [guaranteed pick right here](#).
Projected Score: Mississippi St . 45, Mississippi 30

DJ COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

Ohio -3 Over BUFFALO by 10

The Ohio Bobcats went into their game with the Akron Zips riding a four-game win streak and installed as 14.5 point favorites, But Akron would have none of it as they walked out with a 37-34 home. The Bobcats has outscored their previous four opponents by a count of 179-71, but the Zips were able to keep up with their offense in the game and now the Bobcats have to win this game and hope that Akron loses in order to win the MAC East. The Bobcats had a nice offensive game against the Zips as they piled up 395 yards of total offense, including 282 yards on the ground. Leading the way was QB Nathan Rourke, who ran for 165 yards and two TDs. He didn't have a good game passing as he hit just 9/22 passes for 110 yards with two picks and no TDs. Those picks were costly. He has 14 TDs and six INTs on the year, while on the ground he has run for 828 yards and 19 TDs. The defense has been very tough for the Bobcats this year, but it struggled in the loss to the Zips as they allowed them to pile up 443 yards of total offense, including 322 yards through the air. They will be facing an even better offense in this one.

The whipping boys of the MAC Conference this year has been the Ball State Cardinals, who are 0-7 in league play and they have been outscored 359-87 in those games. The latest team to take advantage of their struggles was the Buffalo Bulls, who won 40-24 at home last week. The 24 points were the most that the Cardinal has scored on a conference opponent this year. Ball State had just 337 yards of total offense, but they ran for 194 yards on this defense and that has to be concerning against a very good Ohio ground game. The offense for the Bulls has been very good this year and they had 565 yards of total offense against a porous Ball State defense. Tyree Jackson had a very good game as he hit 18/26 passes for 350 yards with four TDs and an INT. He has now thrown for 1802 yards with 10 TDs and three INTs in seven games this year. The ground game also had a good showing against Ball State as they ran for 215 yards in the contest. Leading the way was Emmanuel Reed, who had 123 yards. They will need good balance on offense if they hope to pull out a win in this one.

The Ohio Bobcats need to win this game or it could be the Zips that play in the MAC Title. The Bulls have an edge on offense, but it is a slight one, while the Bobcats have a pretty good edge on defense. In a game like this played in the cold Lake Erie weather, I feel that a good defense and running game is tantamount to a win. So, it will be the Ohio defense that carries them to at least a ten-point victory in this one. The clincher is the fact on Fridays, the Bobcats are 12-3 ATS in their last 15 games, while the Bulls are just 2-8-1 ATS in their last 11 games. The Bobcats are the Friday afternoon pick.

Projected Score: Ohio 27, Buffalo 17

BAGS COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

Miami -13.5 Over PITTSBURGH by 21

The Panthers have had a weird season, to say the least. They have now been beaten three times by a single score, all of which have come since the start of October. Last week's 20-14 loss to Virginia Tech was disheartening in that, it clinched a losing season and ended any chance of getting into a bowl game. The Pittsburgh offense has only scored more than 31 points in one game this season. The team has never really settled into a quarterback this season, and the backfield has been completely uneasy with James Conner moving on to the NFL. The season was really summed up nicely at the end of the game against V-Tech when the Panthers ran the ball from the 2-yard line with 0:03 left in the game and were pushed back off the line of scrimmage almost immediately.

Miami keeps forcing turnovers and keeps finding ways to win games. The Hurricanes have been no strangers to being behind and living to tell about it this year. They were behind by two scores against Virginia early on last week and came back to put the duel away relatively easily. The 44-28 victory looked a lot more impressive on the scoreboard than it was on the field, but that's nothing new either. Outside of a 28-10 win over Virginia Tech and a 41-8 win over Notre Dame, "The U" hasn't done a lot all that impressive this season. The Canes have had far too many close calls, but they keep living to tell about it because their defense keeps coming up with big play after big play. For five consecutive games, the Canes have forced at least three turnovers, the longest such streak in the FBS this season.

I keep talking about the Canes and their "Turnover Chain," and its cult following has been borderline ridiculous this season. Still, it's hard to say that this gimmick hasn't worked out well. Even the special teams unit is getting in on the act, as starting running back Travis Homer got the Turnover Chain for the first time this year when he recovered a fumble on punt coverage against UVA. The Panthers are turning the ball over 1.8 times per game this season, and that's a number that could easily rise in their last game of the season.

There are going to be a lot of sharp bets on Pittsburgh in this last game of the season, with the thinking that this is their Bowl Game. But I think this is a game in which Miami is going to roll. The Hurricanes' offense has been significantly better over the course of the last several games, and I can't imagine them not scoring 30+ in this game. You probably don't realize that Homer is averaging 6.6 yards per carry, and you almost certainly don't know that Malik Rosier is on the verge of throwing for 3,000 yards and has a 23/9 TD/INT ratio.

At some point, you just have to realize that this Miami squad is rock solid. This is a game against a Pittsburgh squad that strikes me as mentally and physically finished. So lay the wood in this Friday afternoon game.

Projected Score: Miami 35, Pittsburgh 14

SAMMY COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

Baylor at TCU Under 52 by 8

The Baylor Bears are a horrendous 1-10 heading into their final game of the season, a visit to the TCU Horned Frogs at Amon G. Carter Stadium on Friday afternoon. Baylor picked up its first victory earlier this month over Kansas, but it has since succumbed to Texas Tech and Iowa State. The 9-2 Horned Frogs are coming off a blowout of Texas Tech.

The Big 12 is known for prolific offenses and high-scoring shootouts. Baylor was once the ringleader. But the program—and the whole school—has fallen upon hard times in recent years and no longer does it boast any kind of formidable offense. The Bears at least managed to score at least 36 points in three of their first seven games this season, but they have posted more than 24 only once in their last four. Baylor scored seven in a loss to Texas and 24 in a setback against Texas Tech before falling to Iowa State 23-13 this past weekend. Against the Cyclones, Baylor finished with a mere average of 3.5 yards per rushing attempt. The home team carried it 38 times for 133 yards and its only touchdown came through the air.

TCU Shawn Robinson replaced Kenny Hill and helped the Horned Frogs pick up a 27-3 victory over Texas Tech last week. Robinson threw for just 85 yards, but he tossed one touchdown pass compared to no interceptions and he also rushed for a team-high 84 yards. Robinson will likely start again when the Horned Frogs visit Baylor, although Hill's status is a question mark right now. Either way, TCU's defense will be the deciding factor in this game.

Baylor's 3.5 yards per rush against Iowa State is actually better than its season mark of 3.4. Not exactly dangerous through the air, either, Bears' passers have combined for 21 touchdowns and 12 interceptions. The under is 4-0 in the Bears' last four overall, 4-1 in their last five on the road, 6-0 in their last six on the road against opponents with winning home records, 4-0 in their last four against the Big 12, and 8-3 in their last 11 following a loss. It is also 16-5 in the Horned Frogs' last 21 overall, 4-1 in their last five at home, 4-0 in their last four against losing opponents, and 20-7 in their last 27 against the Big 12. With the Frogs freshman quarterback, I see this one staying under the total also. Pick: Under

Projected Score: TCU 34, Baylor 10



CONSENSUS COLLEGE FOOTBALL UNDERDOG BEST BET

Navy + 6.5 Over Houston by 4

Last season, Navy shocked Houston at home, 46-40. That wouldn't be a shocker this season, as the Cougars are playing without quarterback Greg Ward Jr. The Cougars fell to Tulane, 20-17 last week to halt at two game winning streak. One of those wins came against USF, 28-24 on the road. The Mids are coming off a tough loss at Notre Dame, 24-17.

Mids are struggling but playing hard. Navy is 4-3 in the AAC West, tied with Houston for second place behind 6-1 Memphis. The Mids gave No. 9 Notre Dame all they could handle last week. Navy led 10-3 but gave up a late touchdown run by quarterback Brandon Winbush with 8 seconds left in the half to tie the game at 10-10. Quarterback Zach Abey came back with a 12-yard touchdown pass to Craig Scott to put the Mids ahead, 17-10. But the Irish scored the last two touchdowns on passes from Winbush to Kevin Stephenson to finish the game.

Abey did not have one of his premier games, rushing for just 87 yards on 29 carries and passing for 41 yards with one TD and one pick. He was missing one of his best weapons in Malcolm Perry, who was out due to an ankle sprain. Perry played option quarterback the previous game against SMU and ran for 282 yards. He has 736 rushing yards and 267 passing yards for the Mids. Abey leads with 1,289 rushing yards and 758 passing yards. Navy ranks second in the nation with 360.5 rushing yards per game. They rank 84th in passing yards allowed with 236.3 yards per contest.

Cougars was stuffed by the Green Wave last week. Houston scored just three points in the first half and found themselves behind 13-3 at the half to Tulane. The Cougars came on in the second half but didn't have enough to get over the hump. Quarterback D'Eriq King played decently, but an interception in the corner of the end zone down 13-3, came back to haunt the Cougars. King completed 18 of 26 for 225 yards with no TDs. He also ran for 141 yards and two TDs on 10 attempts. Houston's offense amassed 445 yards, but wasn't up to the task defensively. They allowed 421 yards including 251 in the air to Tulane.

King has 714 yards passing with five TDs and a pick and 284 rushing yards and six TDs. The Cougars averaged 441.7 yards per game of offense and 259 passing yards. They allow 430.6 yards per game and 287.5 in the air (143.1 ypg) on the ground.

If Perry returns, Navy should win this easy. Even without him, they should be able to win straight up with their option offense, especially after Tulane notched 170 rushing yards last week against the Cougars. Notre Dame was able to slow down the Middles triple option some. Houston's defense is nowhere as good as Notre Dame's. Navy is 6-2-1 ATS last 9 road games and 7-1 ATS last 8 after scoring less than 20 points in their previous game. Houston is 3-10 ATS last 13 conference games and 1-5 ATS last 6 after a SU loss. Navy dumps Houston in this Friday afternoon game.

Projected Score: Navy 30, Houston 26

Gridiron Gold College Football Bowl Game Packages

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3 TURKEY DAY BEST BETS

MINNESOTA @ DETROIT

LA CHARGERS @ DALLAS

NY GIANTS @ WASHINGTON

NFL Football Recap

-- The New York Giants fell to the winless San Francisco 49ers in Week 10, so they were going to get creamed by the Super Bowl hopeful Kansas City Chiefs, right? Well, the hard-to-figure G-Men ended up putting up a tremendous defensive effort in a 12-9 overtime victory against the Chiefs. The Giants improved to 2-8 SU and 4-6 ATS, as you never know which team is going to show up. Remember when they won straight-up on the road against the Denver Broncos as 13 1/2-point underdogs back on Oct. 15. The 'over' was also 5-2 over their past seven, so naturally the game was the lowest-scoring game on the entire schedule after overtime no less.

-- With a total of 44, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers kicked the game-winning field goal with :04 left in regulation, taking a 23-20 lead on the Miami Dolphins. 'Under' bettors are OK, right? Wrong. The Dolphins had a series of laterals, all the while going in the complete opposite direction. Naturally, the ball clips off a Miami player and falls into the end zone where Adarius Glanton of the Bucs pounces on it for the 29-20 win with :00 left. Of course, the NFL makes them kick the meaningless extra point, too, just in case bettors could use an adjustment to the result of their teasers, too. OMG!

-- The Philadelphia Eagles tried their hardest on Sunday Night Football to cash the 'over' (48.5), putting up 30 second-half points. The Dallas Cowboys didn't come along for the ride, however, going without any points in the second half, and with just three field goals for the entire game. Nah, they're not missing Ezekiel Elliott at all after two outings of his six-game suspension. No wonder Jerry Jones is working hard to make sure Roger Goodell is not brought back as NFL Commish.

-- The two lowest totals on the board -- Jacksonville-Cleveland (37) and Cincinnati-Denver (37.5) each cashed the 'under'. In fact, the Jags scored a defensive touchdown late, or the score would have been even lower. The Bengals-Broncos game might have been a push at some shops, but officially it cashed by a half-point at most shops. The 'over' had been 3-1 in the past four for Cincinnati, while the 'over' was 3-0 in the past three for Denver, mostly because their defense hasn't been able to stop anyone.

-- The New England-Oakland (55.5) game at Estadio Azteca in Mexico City was expected to be a shootout at elevation, but only the Patriots got the memo. They posted 33 points, while the Raiders didn't score their first points until the fourth quarter well after the result of the game was decided. At least Washington-New Orleans (53) was as advertised. The teams combined for 25 points in the fourth quarter in a game decided in OT. The 'over' is 3-2 at the Superdome this year.

-- The 'Over/under' is 1-1 through the first two primetime games of Week 11, and the 'over' is 21-13 (61.7%) through the first 34 primetime games of the 2017 season with Monday's Atlanta Falcons-Seattle Seahawks game still pending. Officially, the 'over' finished 27-24 (52.9%) through 51 games under the lights in 2016. In 2015, the over finished 20-28-1 (41.7%) in 49 primetime games. In 2014, the over went 33-17 (66.0%) in primetime games, and the over was 28-22 (56.0%) in 2013. Speaking of prime time games, our prime time game expert handicapper DJ is on fire with 7 straight TNF wins ATS and a 31-18 63% ats record going into the MNF game.

Injuries

-- Rams WR Robert Woods (shoulder) had his arm in a sling after Sunday's loss at Minnesota due to a shoulder injury. Check his MRI result.

-- Redskins RB Chris Thompson (leg) suffered a fractured fibula which requires surgery and he is done for the season.

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PRES PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

Minnesota at DETROIT Over 44 by 10

The Vikings made a huge statement last week when they beat the snot out of the Rams 24-7. This wasn't the prettiest game on the face of the earth, but the fact that this defense held the top scoring offense in the NFL scoreless for the last three quarters of the game was telling.

Statistically, this unit ranks No. 5 in the NFL in total defense, but we'd be hard-pressed to try to find four other teams that feel like they have a better defense than Minnesota at the moment. The really impressive stat with the Vikings is that they rank No. 5 in total offense. They're still counting on Case Keenum to keep the ball moving up and down the field in spite of the fact that Teddy Bridgewater is healthy and has been serving as the active backup. Keenum has almost remarkably only tossed five picks on 300 pass attempts in his nine games under center this season.

But let's remember that Detroit is just two games back of the Vikes and would have a season-sweep in this series with a win in this game. The difference between a victory and a defeat is the difference between being a game back with the tiebreaker in hand and being three-games back with virtually no chance to come from behind.

The Lions have quietly won three games in a row, albeit against Brett Hundley's Packers, DeShone Kizer's Browns and Mitchell Trubisky's Bears. In fact, virtually all the quarterbacks Detroit has beaten this season have trended more on the stiff side and less on the star side, including with that win over the Vikings at U.S. Bank Stadium on October 1. The key to the last meeting in a 14-7 away victory for the Lions came in controlling the clock. The Lions held the ball for 36:27 over the course of that entire game, and they ran 68 plays against Minnesota's 54.

There were several reasons why that game featured just one touchdown on each side. Detroit's biggest problem was that Matthew Stafford was sacked six times. Minnesota's problem came with a failure to convert in short-yardage situations.

Stafford only went 19-for-31 for 209 yards, but Ameer Abdullah scored the game's only touchdown and dominated at the point of attack for much of the night. Dalvin Cook had a respectable game for the Vikings out of their backfield, but they didn't have a single run that went for more than 10 yards and only had two passing plays beyond 20 yards for the game.

Common logic suggests that this is going to ultimately be a low scoring game, but we think the Lions and Vikings may showcase their offenses on Thanksgiving Day. Take the Over. [Click here to get our guaranteed side pick in this game.](#)

Projected Score: Minnesota 28, Detroit 26

DJ PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

LA Chargers at Dallas Over 47 by 8

The Cowboys are officially in a lot of trouble. They turned the ball over four times in last week's debilitating 37-9 loss to the Eagles, a defeat that assured their only path to the NFC playoffs will be through a Wild Card.

Effectively, Ezekiel Elliott's suspension proved to be a hammer blow to Dallas' season. Alfred Morris hasn't done poorly statistically speaking in Elliott's place, but if we're being realistic, losing a stud like Elliott is going to be a massive problem for an offense that already felt like it was starting to teeter just a bit.

Dallas has now been beaten by a combined score of 64-16 in its last two games against the Falcons and Eagles, though this game feels like a bit of a respite after playing three consecutive games against legitimate Super Bowl contenders.

The Chargers have been beaten 14 times in the last two seasons by a single score. The remedy to that? Don't play in a game that's all that close.

The Bolts scored 37 points in the first half last week against Buffalo, the most points scored in franchise history in the first half. Along the way, the Chargers scored 31 points off of turnovers, the most by any team in the NFL in three years. They finished off the Bills with a 54-24 victory and improved to 4-6 to at least stay alive in the playoff chase in the AFC.

It's really hard to pin all of Dallas' woes on one offensive linemen, but at some point, Tyron Smith has to come back to the lineup and start to keep Dak Prescott protected. Prescott has been sacked a total of 12 times in his last two games combined, and he's been on the run.

Of course, we all know about Elliott's suspension, but he's probably the third-most notable absentee at this point. Both Smith and Sean Lee are saying all the right things about getting back on the field this week, but this is a strange spot to be coming back in the lineup, and both feel a lot more questionable than likely to play.

L.A. has its problems for sure, the Chargers still have no concept of how to stop the run, and their rushing attack ranks No. 25 in the NFL. Even if Smith doesn't play, Morris should be in for a monster game against a team allowing 138.9 rushing yards per game, worst in the NFL. [Click here to get our guaranteed side pick in this game.](#)

Projected Score: LA Chargers 28, Dallas 27

BAGS PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

NY Giants at WASHINGTON Over 44 by 9

Week 11 was a bizarre one for sure across the NFL, and the Giants and Redskins were right in the middle of it all. Washington looked like it was going to save its season on the road against New Orleans last week. The Redskins were game throughout, and they really should have put things away with a 31-16 lead and less than four minutes left to play. Instead, Drew Brees happened, as he led the Saints on two straight touchdown drives to send the game into overtime then won it in the extra frame on a field goal. That's now four losses in five games for a team that started off the campaign with some bright results. You'd like to think that winning these last six games of the season would be the only route into the playoffs.

There hadn't been a double-digit underdog to pull off an upset in 2017 until the G-Men surprisingly got the job done against Kansas City. New York's method for winning that game in a driving wind was to keep passes short, come up to the line of scrimmage to play stout defense and take what the Chiefs gave it. The plan worked rather masterfully, though it should be noted that Kansas City always felt like the better of the two teams.

Samaje Perine is going to have to be a monster for the rest of the season for Washington. There's a good chance he's going to be the only healthy running back on the roster who started the season on the active roster. With Rob Kelley out (and generally ineffective even when he was in the game) and Chris Thompson having broken his leg last week, Perine has been vaulted into a role of playing on virtually every down. That's a big role for a rookie to be playing, but what choice does Washington have? To his credit, Perine does lead the Redskins in rushing with 327 yards, but he only has a few runs beyond 10 yards and has scored just one touchdown. Clearly, the Redskins' rookie runner will need a big game in this one to keep the Giants at bay.

The general betting public is probably going to be all over the over in this game, but we aren't so sure that should be the case. Yes, the Redskins are coming off of a high scoring effort against the Saints and they also gave up a lot of points against the Saints. The fact that this game is being played on a short week isn't going to help at all. The NY Giants are also playing on Thanksgiving Day with a suspect rushing attack. These division rivals know each other very well. The Giants D has been playing very well lately so I will go under 45. [Click here to get our guaranteed side pick in this game.](#)

Projected Score: Washington 30, NY Giants 23

SAMMY PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

NEW ENGLAND - 18 Over Miami by 10

What a disappointment the Dolphins have been in the second go round of the Adam Gase regime. After winning 10 games and ending their playoff drought a year ago, the Dolphins looked primed for a middle tier first round pick in the upcoming NFL Draft after managing just four wins through their first 10 games. On top of that, they've only managed a poor 3-5-2 record versus the linemakers.

Miami actually went off the betting board a 1-point home dog to the visiting Tampa Bay Buccaneers last week, and went on to lose that game by a 30-20 final count. Jay Cutler was knocked out of the game with a concussion, but Matt Moore shined once again throwing for 282 yards and a touchdown in one of his patented "come off the bench and excel" outings. Let's see how he does with time to prepare. In the past, that scenario hasn't played out nearly as well.

The New England Patriots are once again firing on all cylinders. If you doubted "The Hoodie" after his team got out to a 2-2 straight up start, shame on you! If you were still a believer and backed your beliefs up by hitting them on the Super Bowl LII odds at a much better return, good for you! Either way, this dynasty isn't going anywhere until none other than the fabulous Tom Brady decides to hang up his cleats.

Entering Week 12, the Patriots are owners of the league's No. 2 ranked total and No. 1 ranked scoring offense. Only the Rams average more red zone scoring attempts than New England, but the Pats have had a tough time turning those appearances into touchdowns evidenced by them ranking No. 19 in that department. Matt Patricia's much-maligned defense from earlier in the year has now only allowed an average of 12.5 ppg since the team incurred its last defeat. The defense has buckled down in the points allowed department, but it's still giving up its fair share of yardage to opposing ball carriers (131.7 ypg last 3). The Raiders had no problem rushing on the stop unit early, but was forced to go away from it due to game script. If Miami is to have any shot of not getting blown off the field in this tilt, both Damien Williams and Kenyan Drake have to find a way to keep New England's defense on the field by moving the chains on the ground. If not, the only shot Dolphins backers will have of covering the game would be to pray Moore and the offense find a way to kick in the backdoor.

The Patriots have have cost bookmakers a ton of money due to their easy romps over both Denver and Oakland. No way I'm laying this type of chalk with any team in the NFL, regardless of how bad Miami has looked recently. Take the points.

Projected Score: New England 27, Miami 17

COLLEGE & PRO FOOTBALL LEANER PICKS

All leaner picks by Sammy & Bags. If game is not listed, it's a pass or not a leaner pick.

Date/ET	Game	Line	Leaner Picks
11/21/17 7:00 ET	Kent St Akron	45.5 -15	Akron still has a lot to play for, expect them to cruise to the MAC championship game. Kent St D has been awful and it's hard to see them keep the offense in the game. Take Akron.
11/21/17 7:00 ET	Bowling Green E Michigan	59.5 -13	The Falcons are allowing an average of 38 ppg, ranking them 124th, and the over is 3-0-1 in the Eagles last 4 games. While E Michigan should at least contain the Falcons offense, B Green has turned it around offensively, plus the over is 6-0 in their last 6 games. Go Over
11/21/17 7:00 ET	Miami (OH) Ball St	-18 57.5	I'll go Under. Miami is 22-8-1 Under last 31 vs. a team with a losing record. Ball State is 13-5 Under last 18 after an ATS win.
11/24/17 11:30 ET	W. Michigan Toledo	61.5 -14	The over is 7-2 in the Broncos' last 9 overall and 7-2 in their last nine on fieldturf. Additionally, the over is 6-2 in the last eight meetings between the two teams and 6-0 in Western Michigan's last six trips to Toledo. Look for this one to go over the total.
11/24/17 12:00 ET	No Illinois C Michigan	-3.5 53.5	These two teams are fairly closely matched, but I just think the Huskies are a little bit better team and I don't think home field advantage is enough to make me think the Chippewas will win. I'll take the Huskies.
11/24/17 2:30 ET	Missouri Arkansas	-11 71	Missouri comes into this game having won their last five games in a row and all five wins have been by at least 24 points. I look for them to cover this one.
11/24/17 3:30 ET	New Mexico San Diego St	48 -20	The Lobos are just playing out the string, while the Aztecs are looking at a pretty solid bowl game. I think this one is a easy win and cover for the Aztecs.
11/24/17 3:30 ET	South Florida Central Florida	63.5 -11	The Bulls have been improved on defense this year as they have allowed just 19.9 ppg, while the Golden Knights have allowed just 20.5 ppg on the year. The Under is 8-2 in the Knights' last 10 Friday games. Take Under
11/24/17 4:00 ET	Iowa Nebraska	-3 54	Iowa followed up their biggest win with back to back losses. In this one, the Hawkeyes are talented enough to keep it real close in this tossup. Take the points.
11/24/17 4:00 ET	Texas St Troy	48 -25	The Trojans should be able to score a fair amount of points, especially given that Williams is playing by far his best football of the season right now. An upset is almost certainly out of the question, but almost four touchdowns worth of points will likely be enough to cover.
11/24/17 7:00 ET	W. Kentucky Florida Intl	-2 53	The Panthers have been the better team all season long despite the recent two game losing streak. I think the Golden Panthers win.
11/24/17 8:00 ET	Virginia Tech Virginia	-7 50	This is certainly a battle between the stout Hokies defense and the hot Cavalier offense. Cavs Benkert has been outstanding lately but the Hokies D is another level. Go under.
11/24/17 8:00 ET	Texas Tech Texas	55.5 -10.5	The Red Raiders want high scoring shootouts, but they haven't been getting them lately. I think Texas shuts them down on offense in a low scoring game. Go under
11/24/17 10:30 ET	California UCLA	64 -7.5	Throw in the fact that the Bruins fired Mora, so I think Rosen gets a free hand to toss the rock as he sees fit. Take the Bruins and the over.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Connecticut Cincinnati	59 -5.5	The Huskies will not have to score too much to win. Cincinnati is 103rd in the nation in total offense, 116th in scoring offense, and 99th in rushing offense. Take Uconn and under.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Indiana Purdue	47 -2.5	Purdue got a solid performance on both sides of the ball in their win over Iowa and now looks to win at home to secure bowl eligibility. Take the Boilers
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Ohio St Michigan	-11 50.5	The over is 4-0 in this series the last four and 6-2 Over last 8 from Ann Arbor. Michigan is 6-1 Over last 7 after a SU loss and Ohio State is 7-1 Over last 8 overall. Go Over
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Louisville Kentucky	-10 68	Jackson has seen his team have a down season this year but the reigning Heisman Trophy winner is still putting up stats. Cards are the side.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Georgia Georgia Tech	-11 52.5	The over is 5-1 in the Bulldogs' last 6, 4-1 in their last 5 following a win, and 4-1 in their last 5 on grass. It is also 4-1 in the Jackets' last 5 overall, 13-6-1 in their last 20 non-conference contests, and 6-2 in their last 8 following a loss. Look for this one to go over the total.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Tulane SMU	66 -8	The Green Wave have kept many of their recent results close and they have the momentum compared to the Mustangs. Expect this one to finish within one possession.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Kansas Oklahoma St	69.5 -40	I am taking Oklahoma State in this contest. I expect Oklahoma State to take last week's frustration out on Kansas and dominate this one from start to finish in a lopsided victory.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	East Carolina Memphis	80 -27.5	Memphis is one of the most explosive offenses in the nation. ECU defense is atrocious and the second worst scoring defense in the FBS. A bad combo unless you're a Memphis bettor.
11/25/17 12:00 ET	Florida St Florida	-5 44.5	Florida State got back in the win column by steamrolling Delaware State (whoopie). Offenses will struggle in this matchup. Go under.
11/25/17 12:20 ET	Boston College Syracuse	55	The under is 24-10 in the Eagles' last 34 and 19-7 in the Orange's last 26. Additionally, the under is 4-1 in the last five meetings. Look for this one to stay under the total.

11/25/17 12:30 ET	Duke Wake Forest	-3.5 -12	Demon Deacons defense has allowed an average of 37 points in their last five games. Duke has to win this game to become bowl eligible, so I anticipate a valiant effort from them.
11/25/17 1:00 ET	North Texas Rice	-14 64	Rice has been competitive in their last few games. North Texas is now allowing an average of 35 points per game, giving me more confidence Rice can hang around in this one.
11/25/17 1:00 ET	UTEP UAB	47.5 -20	UTEP has yet to pick up a win and a major reason is that they simply lack the talent to be competitive. UAB should have enough in the tank to roll to a win and cover.
11/25/17 2:00 ET	Appalachian St Georgia St	-7 51.5	Georgia St HC Shawn Elliott is a 1996 graduate of Appalachian St and was a long-time assistant coach (13 years). He knows them inside & out and he has the talent to stay close
11/25/17 2:00 ET	Florida Atlantic UNC Charlotte	-21.5 63.5	Charlotte is one of the worst offensive teams in the Country with an awful passing game, and a mediocre running game that FAU should contain. Go under
11/25/17 2:30 ET	Southern Miss Marshall	48.5 -4	The Golden Eagles most recent outing marked the first time in five games that they had held an opponent to less than 24 points. Look for this one to go over the total.
11/25/17 3:00 ET	UNLV Nevada	67.5 -3	The Wolf Pack , despite the records, are the better team here and I think they win by a TD in a game that will be lower scoring than expected.
11/25/17 3:00 ET	Arkansas St LA-Monroe	-8 69	The Red Wolves come into this game in a four-way tie for first place, but the early smart money has come in on the Warhawks to cover.
11/25/17 3:00 ET	Old Dominion M Tenn St.	50 -12.5	The Monarchs have struggled on offense as they have averaged just 21.6 ppg and they will be taking on an offense that has averaged just 21 ppg at home. Under the total.
11/25/17 3:30 ET	North Carolina No Carolina St	55 -17	NC State has seen the under go 11-1 in their last 12 conference games, 7-1 in their last eight overall and 6-1 in their last seven in November. The under is 5-2 in the last seven meetings between the teams: that continues here.
11/25/17 3:30 ET	Iowa St Kansas St	49.5 -3	Kansas State has won the last nine games in this series, and I feel that streak continues based on the Cyclones being banged up a bit this week.
11/25/17 3:30 ET	Penn St Maryland	-21 57.5	Maryland should score a few more points at home this week against a Penn State defense that could get sloppy. Go Over
11/25/17 3:30 ET	Wisconsin Minnesota	-17 43.5	Badgers 4-1 in their last 5 road games and 9-3 last 12 conference games. These teams have gone over the total in 15 of the last 17 meetings: that trend continues here
11/25/17 3:30 ET	Boise St Fresno St	-7 48	This will be an awkward showdown with both teams facing each other again next week, but expect the Broncos to cover in a tough matchup.
11/25/17 3:30 ET	Alabama Auburn	-4 48	Auburn is 7-0 Over last 7 conference games and Alabama is 7-3 Over last 10 road games. Go Over 48.
11/25/17 3:45 ET	West Virginia Oklahoma	68.5 -23	The teams have gone over the total in five of the last six meetings: that holds true again as the Sooners are an over machine with their offensive assault.
11/25/17 4:00 ET	Michigan St Rutgers	-13 39.5	These teams are not very explosive offensively. Rutgers has a solid defense that can keep this game close early on. MSU's defense is top-notch and after watching RU get shut out last week, the Scarlet Knights will struggle to score again. Go under
11/25/17 4:00 ET	Vanderbilt Tennessee	46 -1	Flip a coin. This should be a close contest however I expect Tennessee to come through on their home field.
11/25/17 4:00 ET	Northwestern Illinois	-16.5 46	Illinois is having trouble scoring points as they have scored 14 or fewer points in four consecutive games, so I'm going under the total here.
11/25/17 4:00 ET	Idaho N Mexico St	55 -8	Even though the Vandals could be without their main QB again, they've still played very well on the road. Even though the home team could pull out the win, expect this one to be tight.
11/25/17 4:00 ET	Temple Tulsa	-3 57.5	It's a bit surprising to see Temple favored. The Golden Hurricanes may keep things competitive, but the loss margin won't be within three points.
11/25/17 4:30 ET	Arizona Arizona St	74.5 PK	This one should be one of the most entertaining rivalry games of the weekend and a game that is too tough to call the side. Just flipped a coin and it came out Arizona.
11/25/17 5:00 ET	Wyoming San Jose St	-20 48	20 home dog looks enticing but there is no way I can back San Jose State and be comfortable. Cowboys here.
11/25/17 5:00 ET	GA Southern LA Lafayette	57.5 -6	The Cajuns will be without a few quarterbacks and the Eagles have momentum so I have to side with Georgis Southern.
11/25/17 7:00 ET	Oregon St Oregon	64 -26	Normally, this contest has at least been played closely by the Beavers, but no too sure of that being the case this year. Take the Ducks.
11/25/17 7:30 ET	Clemson South Carolina	-14 46.5	The Gamecocks have been weak on offense this year and the Tigers have been strong on defense. Take the Under in this one.
11/25/17 7:30 ET	Texas AM LSU	49.5 -10	Tough to go over when LSU is playing because their defense is so good. The Aggies have improved defensively. A&M is 5-1 Under their last 6 conference games and 4-1 Under their last 5 vs. LSU. LSU is 13-3 Under last 16 in November. Stay with the trend.

11/25/17 7:30 ET	UTSA LA Tech	50 -1	With UTSA struggling over their latest games, go with the team that has a passion to grab their sixth win of the season and go bowling. That's LA Tech.
11/25/17 8:00 ET	Washington St Washington	60 -9.5	Washington is 7-2 Under the last 9 against Washington State and 8-3-1 Under their last 12 conference games. Washington State is 6-1 Under their last 7 on fieldturf. Go under.
11/25/17 8:00 ET	Notre Dame Stanford	-2.5 55	Last year, just 27 points were put up in this game. I can see this game being a low scoring game, especially since the Under is 6-1 the last seven games in this series.
11/25/17 10:00 ET	Colorado Utah	57.5 -10.5	So Utah is a big favorite in their last game? Colorado is a talented team that could put points on the board. They are also coming off a bye so they'll have enough energy to make this a very closely-contested game.
11/25/17 10:15 ET	Utah St Air Force	57 -2	When these two teams last squared off at Air Force, the Falcons prevailed 35-28. Look for this one to go over the total as AF is 37-18 over in their last 55 against the Mountain West.

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THIS WEEKS GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET BEST BETS

	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet	Underdog
CFB	Miss St Over 62	Ohio – 3	Miami – 13.5	TCU Under 52	Navy + 6.5
NFL	Detroit Over 44	Dallas Over 47	NY Giants Over 44	Miami + 18	



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