

Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter

Dennis Stagliano's Gridiron Gold Sheet
An Award Winning Football Newsletter Since 1981



For the first time ever a sports service went the entire season without a single losing week. Ron Sataloff, President Sports Features Syndicate

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TOP 25 RANKED BOWL GAMES

- No. 1 Alabama vs. No. 4 Notre Dame (CFP Semifinal) | 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 1, 2021 | ESPN
- No. 2 Clemson vs. No. 3 Ohio State (CFP Semifinal) | 8:45 p.m. Friday, Jan. 1, 2021 | ESPN
- No. 5 Texas A&M vs. No. 13 North Carolina (Orange Bowl) | 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2 | ESPN
- No. 6 Oklahoma vs. No. 7 Florida (Cotton Bowl) | 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 30 | ESPN
- No. 8 Cincinnati vs. No. 9 Georgia (Peach Bowl) | 12 p.m. Friday, Jan. 1 | ESPN
- No. 10 Iowa State vs. No. 25 Oregon (Fiesta Bowl) | 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2 | ESPN
- No. 11 Indiana vs. Ole Miss (Outback Bowl) | 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2 | ABC
- No. 12 Coastal Carolina vs. Liberty (Cure Bowl) | 12 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 26 | ESPN
- No. 14 Northwestern vs. Auburn (Citrus Bowl) | 1 p.m. Friday, Jan. 1 | ABC
- No. 15 Iowa vs. Missouri (Music City Bowl) | 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 30 | ESPN
- No. 16 BYU vs. UCF (Boca Raton Bowl) | 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 22 | ESPN
- No. 18 Miami vs. No. 21 Oklahoma State (Cheez-It Bowl) | 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 29 | ESPN
- No. 19 Louisiana vs. UTSA (First Responder Bowl) | 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 26 | ABC
- No. 20 Texas vs. Colorado (Alamo Bowl) | 9 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 29 | ESPN
- No. 22 San Jose State vs. Ball State (Arizona Bowl) | 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 31 | CBSSN
- No. 23 NC State vs. Kentucky (Gator Bowl) | 12 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2 | ESPN
- No. 24 Tulsa vs. Mississippi State (Armed Forces Bowl) | 12 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 31 | ESPN



The Bills hadn't won the AFC East in 25 years. It was a long, playoff-less drought for a quarter century. The wait is finally over. The Bills, by defeating the Broncos last week, clinched the AFC divisional title.

Recap

Bills 48, Broncos 19

The Bills hadn't won the AFC East in 25 years. It was a long, playoff-less drought for most of the quarter century, as Buffalo watched the Patriots claim the division almost every single season.

The wait is finally over. The Bills, by defeating the Broncos on Saturday night, clinched the divisional title. That said, they have greater aspirations, especially after losing in the playoffs last year. A Super Bowl championship is certainly possible, so the Bills will be hoping that this is just the beginning of their success.

Despite the final score, this game was in doubt at halftime. Thanks to a muffed punt and a bogus roughing-the-passer penalty, the Broncos scored two touchdowns to keep the score to a 21-13 deficit. However, everything went against them in a bloody third quarter in which Buffalo outscored them, 17-0. The Bills had a great kickoff return to set up a short-field touchdown, and then Drew Lock lost a fumble, which was stripped by Tre'Davious White taken back for six by Jerry Hughes. Suddenly, the score was 35-13, and the Bills were in full control.

It didn't help that the Broncos had no answer for Josh Allen. Down their top two cornerbacks, Denver watched Allen shred them the entire afternoon. Allen went 28-of-40 for 359 yards and two passing touchdowns. He also rushed in two scores, scrambling thrice for 33 yards. Allen's numbers could've been even better, as he had two passing touchdowns called back by penalty, albeit on the same drive. hilariously, Allen remarked, "How many times do we need to score?" following the second infraction.

Though Stefon Diggs didn't find the end zone, he had a monstrous game against Denver's injury-ridden secondary. Diggs caught 11 of his 13 targets, and one of the miscues was a near-deep completion, but Diggs was able to get just one foot inbounds. Cole Beasley also topped the century mark without finding the end zone, hauling in eight balls for 112 yards. Gabriel Davis, conversely, was a disappointment with his two catches for 18 yards.

So, who caught Allen's touchdowns? The answer would be Dawson Knox (2-36) and Jake Kumerow (1-22) in what had to be a frustrating day for those who stacked Allen with his primary receivers on DraftKings.

Devin Singletary owners had to be frustrated as well for most of the afternoon. He had a touchdown wiped out by penalty and saw Zack Moss handle nearly double the workload; Moss rumbled for 81 yards on 13 attempts. Singletary had just 17 rushing yards on seven carries until the final drive of the game, but that's when he sprinted for a 51-yard touchdown. Singletary finished with 68 yards and a score on eight attempts, thanks to garbage time.

The Broncos tried to run the ball early in this affair, and they had some success doing so. Melvin Gordon rushed for 61 yards and two touchdowns on 11 carries, while Phillip Lindsay notched 38 yards on as many attempts. However, the Broncos couldn't rush the ball as much as they wanted because of the huge deficit following the early third-quarter touchdowns.

Lock had some nice moments in the early portion of this game, especially in the 2-minute drill right before halftime. However, Lock had a meltdown in the second half. In addition to the fumble returned for a touchdown, Lock also had a potential pick-six that was dropped. This was one of two possible picks that was dropped.

Lock finished 20-of-32 for 132 yards, a touchdown and his lost fumble. He couldn't complete passes to his receivers, which was a huge problem. Lock has some great potential, and he displayed flashes of brilliance at times this year - specifically against Carolina in Week 14 - but he has a long way to go in his development.

Noah Fant was the only Bronco with more than 20 receiving yards; he snatched eight balls for 68 yards and a touchdown. As far as Lock's receivers are concerned, Jerry Jeudy and K.J. Hamler both caught one pass for 19 and four yards, respectively. Both dropped passes, but Lock couldn't connect with them. Tim Patrick (3-14) was the only Denver wide receiver with multiple catches.

The dark cloud over this divisional victory for the Bills was a pair of injuries to Diggs and White. Both left the game in the fourth quarter. The severity of these injuries is unknown.

Chargers 30, Raiders 27

The Raiders' playoffs hopes were on the line in this game, which is what made Derek Carr's groin injury especially painful. Carr pulled his groin while trying to score on the second drive of this affair and was ultimately lost for the rest of the evening. However, we quickly remembered that the Raiders have one of the best backup quarterbacks in the NFL, Marcus Mariota.

Mariota not only seemed like he would bail out the Raiders; for most of the evening, he appeared to be an upgrade over Carr! Mariota completed all five of his passes for 80 yards and a TD in the opening half, including a beautiful tear drop to Darren Waller for a 35-yard score. Mariota was also clutch. He converted three fourth downs in the second half, including two on a drive in which he was down 24-17 in the final frame. Connections to Nelson Agholor and Waller moved the chains, and Mariota ultimately leapt into the end zone to tie the game.

When Michael Badgley whiffed on a 47-yard field goal on the ensuing drive, Mariota had a chance to lead his team to a victory. He moved into the edge of field goal range, but threw a terrible pass, firing behind Zay Jones. Chris Harris promptly intercepted it to put the Chargers into a winning position. However, Justin Herbert, who also enjoyed a mostly great evening, made his own mistake this time, taking a terrible sack to put Badgley in position to kick a long field goal. He was wide left from 51, sending this game to overtime.

This time, it was Jon Gruden's turn to screw up. Mariota got the Raiders into a first-and-goal to potentially win the game - albeit with the help of a dropped interception - but Gruden's horrible play-calling forced a field goal. It's safe to say that he missed the Covid-stricken Greg Olson when he called two poor Josh Jacobs runs, followed by a roll-out throw to the fullback. A field goal gave the Raiders the lead, which wasn't remotely safe because of how poor the Raider defense was all evening. Thanks to two ticky-tack penalties, the Chargers moved inside the 5-yard line, and they converted, unlike the Raiders. Herbert scored on a sneak to give the Chargers the win.

This game was a failure for the Raiders, who are now an extreme long shot to make the playoffs. While the offense made the aforementioned mistakes, their defense was utterly atrocious. Las Vegas allowed the Chargers to move up and down the field at will, averaging 6.5 yards per play in the process. This doesn't even include all of the penalties, including the many committed by Trayvon Mullen, who was seemingly flagged for pass interference on every drive despite the Chargers barely having their top two receivers, as Keenan Allen and Mike Williams were both on pitch counts.

Herbert, despite missing two offensive linemen with Bryan Bulaga sidelined, didn't have Allen or Williams on most snaps, with the two combining for just three catches. Despite this, Herbert was excellent, going 22-of-32 for 314 yards and two touchdowns. He also rushed in a third score, scrambling four times for 14 rushing yards in the process. He didn't make any mistakes except for that bad sack near the end of regulation.

Allen caught a single pass for 17 yards, while Williams (2-22) drew an interference flag in the end zone. Instead, it was Jalen Guyton (4-91), Hunter Henry (5-65) and Tyron Johnson (3-61) doing most of the damage. Henry and Johnson caught touchdowns.

Austin Ekeler was also on a snap count, which would explain why he caught just four passes for 19 receiving yards. Ekeler rushed for 60 yards on 13 carries, as Kalen Ballage (8-11) vultured a touchdown.

Despite Jacobs failing to get into the end zone at the end, he still managed to score earlier in the game. He was a disappointment overall, however, rushing for just 76 yards on 26 carries against a poor run defense. He also caught three balls for 38 receiving yards.

Mariota ended up out gaining Jacobs on the ground, scrambling nine times for 88 yards and a touchdown. Aerially, he was 17-of-28 for 226 yards, one touchdown and the aforementioned interception. Mariota played very well for the most part, but he really cost his team with the pick, as the Raiders simply could have kicked the game-winning field goal in regulation.

Mariota was wise to throw to Waller as much as possible. The talented tight end caught nine passes for 150 yards and a touchdown. Agholor was next on the stat sheet with four grabs for 49 yards. He had an eventful drive in the third quarter. He dropped a pass, dislocating his finger in the process. He missed one play and then returned to draw an interference flag shortly later.

Packers 24, Panthers 16

This game certainly did not look like it was going to come down to the final drive, based on what transpired in the opening half. The Packers seemingly scored at will, converting every third down imaginable. This includes a 21-yard Aaron Jones run on the first possession and an Aaron Rodgers scrambling touchdown in the second quarter. Conversely, the Panthers crushed themselves with mistakes. There were several drops, but the true killer was Teddy Bridgewater's fumble at the goal line. Bridgewater tried to leap into the end zone on a sneak, Drew Brees style, but had the ball knocked out of his hands before crossing the goal line. The Packers returned the fumble to midfield and scored shortly after that.

This touchdown put Green Bay up 21-3. The Packers outgained Carolina in the opening half, 242-150, so it didn't seem likely that the Panthers would be able to keep this game close. And yet, they had a complete turnaround in the second half. Their defense harassed Rodgers in the pocket and shut down the run. They were able to get off the field on third down frequently for a change. Meanwhile, Bridgewater caught fire and engineered multiple scoring drives. Carolina got the margin to within eight, but a series of penalties derailed a potential game-tying drive at the very end.

Rodgers had an incredibly disappointing stat line when considering what Drew Lock did to Carolina's defense the week before. Rodgers was 13-of-19 for 99 yards and a touchdown in the opening half, but he couldn't do anything following halftime. He was 7-of-10 for only 44 yards after intermission. Carolina's relentless pressure was the catalyst for Rodgers' struggles.

If you don't feel like doing the math, Rodgers' overall numbers were 20-of-29 for 143 yards and a touchdown. He also scrambled five times for 26 yards and another score. Rodgers will play better when his offensive line is healthier; Green Bay is currently down two starting offensive linemen.

Davante Adams did not have his usual, big fantasy game. He caught seven of his 10 targets, but for only 42 scoreless yards. He had a drop in the second half. Despite this, he was second on the team in receiving, trailing only Allen Lazard (5-56). Robert Tonyan (3-18) hauled in Rodgers' sole aerial score.

Aaron Jones was the best fantasy producer on the Green Bay roster in this game. Though Jones' workload is often limited versus weaker opponents, the Packers fed him 20 times, allowing Jones to turn those opportunities into 145 yards and a touchdown. His only blemish was a dropped pass early in the game. Jamaal Williams was given just one carry.

I expected a big rushing performance from Mike Davis as well, but Davis didn't get many chances to run the ball because of the early, multi-score deficit. He finished with 59 yards on 14 carries. He also caught just two passes for as many yards.

Bridgewater was able to rebound from his ugly start to go 21-of-35 for 258 yards. Like Rodgers, he ran into the end zone, scrambling four times for 26 rushing yards. Bridgewater obviously would have scored two rushing touchdowns if it wasn't for that aforementioned fumble.

Bridgewater's primary target was D.J. Moore, who caught six passes for 131 yards. I was expecting superstar cornerback Jaire Alexander to smother him, but Alexander limited Robby Anderson (2-21) instead. Curtis Samuel was a disappointment like Anderson, snatching four balls for 42 yards. He dropped two passes in the first half and was inches away from making a deep reception in the fourth quarter.

Titans 46, Lions 25

On the WalterFootball YouTube channel - please subscribe and like! - I said that Derrick Henry would have a decent chance to break the single-game rushing record in this contest. The Lions, missing many starters and coming off their "Super Bowl" loss to the Packers, wouldn't have the incentive to play this game. Henry, in a great matchup, could hit 300 rushing yards if everything went right.

Henry did not break the single-game rushing record, but he got halfway there at least. He rumbled for 147 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries. He had a great game, but his fantasy owners must be very frustrated, based on what occurred near the goal line in this game. Using play-action the first time and a zone-read option on the second occasion, Ryan Tannehill stole not one, but two touchdowns from Henry! It ultimately didn't matter in the grand scheme of things because the Titans won in a blowout, but Henry's owners may have lost their semi-final matchups because their dominant back didn't reach his statistical potential.

Speaking of Tannehill, he had a mostly positive game in the first half that kept the Lions within striking range for a while. He had an early 75-yard touchdown bomb to Corey Davis, but then took a sack in the end zone for a safety as a result of holding the ball too long. Tannehill ultimately misfired on just six occasions, going 21-of-27 for 273 yards and three touchdowns. He also scrambled thrice for 21 yards and a pair of scores on the ground.

Tannehill's safety made it a 21-9 affair, and Detroit scored a touchdown shortly later to creep to within six points. However, the Lions capsized in the second half. They needed to keep pace with a red-hot Tannehill and unstoppable Henry, but T.J. Hockenson's lost fumble in the red zone allowed the Titans to open up a two-score lead, which they continued to expand late in the afternoon.

Tannehill's touchdowns went to Davis (4-110), A.J. Brown (5-44) and Darrynton Evans (2-27). Jonnu Smith didn't find the end zone, but he caught five balls for 52 yards.

Matthew Stafford, meanwhile, played shockingly well considering that he wasn't even expected to play early in the week. Stafford threw some darts in this game and moved the chains for most of the afternoon despite missing Kenny Golladay and three offensive linemen.

Stafford went 22-of-32 for 252 yards and a touchdown. However, those who played him didn't get to enjoy garbage-time stats because the Lions subbed in Chase Daniel in the fourth quarter once the Titans expanded their lead to a three-score advantage. It's unclear if Stafford aggravated his rib injury, but he took a nasty hit to that area from Jeffery Simmons on his final drive.

With Golladay sidelined, Marvin Jones continued to pick up the slack. Jones had a great day, catching 10 of his 12 targets for 112 yards and a touchdown. He also drew an interference flag. No other Detroit wide receiver logged more than 38 receiving yards. Hockenson, who lost the aforementioned fumble, was a huge disappointment, as he caught just two passes for 18 yards.

D'Andre Swift chipped in as a receiver with four catches for 15 yards. He also rushed for 67 yards on 15

carries. He scored two touchdowns, but lost a fumble at the goal line.

Colts 27, Texans 20

Two weeks ago, the Texans had a chance to beat the Colts, but an errant snap near the goal line of the final drive resulted in a lost fumble and a defeat for Houston. The Texans had another chance to defeat Indianapolis in this contest despite being seven-point underdogs. Down by that exact margin, Deshaun Watson engineered an excellent drive to move into the red zone. He hit Keke Coutee with a short pass, and the quick receiver appeared to have a nice lane to the end zone. However, Darius Leonard seemingly came out of nowhere to lodge the ball out of Coutee's hands. The ball trickled into the end zone, where a Houston player had a chance to pounce on it. Bobby Okereke, however, grabbed the ball to seal the victory for the Colts, crushing Houston's hopes and dreams for the second time in three weeks.

This spoiled another brilliant game from Watson, who went toe to toe with one of the best defenses in the NFL. Watson was especially hot in the second half, going a ridiculous 18-of-20 for 174 yards and a TD following intermission. He obviously would've thrown for a second score after the break had Coutee not fumbled.

Watson's final stats were 33-of-41 for 373 yards and two touchdowns. He made a huge mistake in the first half when he lost a fumble on a strip-sack, resulting in an Indianapolis touchdown to give the host a 14-0 lead.

Watson's top receiver was actually David Johnson, who caught all 11 of his targets for 106 yards. Somewhere, Bill O'Brien was laughing maniacally, shouting, "See, the trade was totally worth it!" Johnson didn't do much on the ground, however, as he was limited to just 27 yards on eight carries.

Aside from Johnson, Brandin Cooks was Houston's leading receiver, catching six balls for 59 yards. Watson's touchdowns were thrown to Chad Hansen (2-55) and Coutee (5-53).

As for the Colts, Philip Rivers was extremely accurate, much like Watson. He misfired just six times, going 22-of-28 for 228 yards and two touchdowns.

Both of Rivers' touchdowns went to Zach Pascal, who made five catches for 79 yards and two touchdowns. He paced the team in receiving, barely edging out T.Y. Hilton's four grabs for 71 yards. Hilton was relatively quiet all afternoon until a 41-yard reception put the Colts into a first-and-goal to set up the decisive score.

Jonathan Taylor had a nice game despite receiving just 16 carries. He rumbled for 83 yards and a touchdown. He didn't get a chance to handle the ball very much in the second half because Watson monopolized the time of possession.

Buccaneers 31, Falcons 27

The Buccaneers looked dead in the first half. Their defense had no answer for Matt Ryan, while Tom Brady couldn't keep the chains moving to save his life. All Brady could do was dink and dunk thanks to immense pressure, as his 16 attempts in the opening half went for just 70 yards. The Falcons outgained the Bucs by halftime, 261-60, as Tampa Bay averaged just 2.5 yards per play, coming up well shy of the Falcons' 6.5 figure.

I'm not sure what sort of fungus Brady ate at halftime, but he suddenly began firing downfield strikes with relative ease in the third quarter. This should have been prevalent throughout the entire afternoon, given that the Falcons were down two starting defensive backs, but the Buccaneers will say better late than never.

Brady's first-half stat line was 10-of-16 for 70 yards, yet he finished 31-of-45 for 390 yards and two touchdowns. The Buccaneers generated 356 net yards in the second half. It was a complete reversal from what we saw early in this contest.

Brady's top receiver was Mike Evans, who caught six of his seven targets for 110 yards. Evans, however, didn't score, though he landed at the 1-yard line following a deep catch. Evans watched both Antonio Brown and

Chris Godwin reach the end zone. Brown snatched five balls for 93 yards, while Godwin hauled in four passes for 36 yards to go along with a drop of about 20 yards in the second quarter. Godwin also fumbled on the same drive, but was lucky to recover. The tight ends contributed as well, with Cameron Brate (4-54) outgaining Rob Gronkowski (3-29), who should have drawn an interference flag in the end zone during a drive that resulted in a field goal.

Ronald Jones was ruled out with a pinky injury. Leonard Fournette handled the workload instead and was rather pedestrian, mustering only 49 yards on 14 carries to go along with three catches for 16 receiving yards. He also dropped two balls. However, he scored twice to save his desperate fantasy owners, though both touchdowns occurred after a pair of deep Evans receptions.

Despite Fournette's lackluster afternoon, he still outgained every back on Atlanta's roster, as the Falcons couldn't generate a ground attack to hold their second-half lead. Ito Smith led the team with 24 yards on six attempts. Todd Gurley was a disaster outside of a one-handed catch he made on the opening possession. He lost a single rushing yard on one carry, and he blew a blitz pick-up on a crucial drive in the fourth quarter.

The Gurley-surrendered sack was one of three times Ryan was brought down in the second half, as he was under siege and couldn't maintain drives in the fourth quarter as a consequence. There was a potential fourth sack on a key third-and-16 during the final offensive drive, but Ryan simply quit and tossed the ball away. His offensive line really let him down.

Still, Ryan finished with a great stat line, going 34-of-49 for 356 yards and three touchdowns. He didn't commit a turnover, but was lucky that he wasn't intercepted three times in the opening half. That includes a pass that was almost pick-sixed on a weak floater to the end zone in the second quarter.

Calvin Ridley had a monstrous output with Julio Jones sidelined. He caught 10 of his 14 targets for 163 yards and a touchdown. Russell Gage (5-68) also scored, as did Hayden Hurst (4-21).

Dolphins 22, Patriots 12

The Patriots needed to win this game to keep their dwindling playoff hopes alive, so their defense had to come up big. This should have been an easy task, given that Bill Belichick was matching wits with a rookie QB. This rookie, Tua Tagovailoa, struggled mightily against another great, defensive-minded coach in Vic Fangio a couple of weeks ago, so his outlook wasn't very bright. Making matters worse for him, he'd be without his top four weapons, as DeVante Parker, Mike Gesicki, Preston Williams and Jakeem Grant were all sidelined.

Yet, the Patriots had extreme difficulty stopping the Dolphins. Miami's point total wasn't very high, but that's a very misleading result for what transpired in this contest whenever Miami had the ball. The Patriots missed so many tackles that I lost count. It was embarrassing. Every Miami run was extended by more yards than it should have gone because a Dolphin player slipped through a pathetic New England tackling attempt. On one drive in the second half, the Patriots allowed a 31-yard Salvon Ahmed run on second-and-10, and a 12-yard run to the talentless Patrick Laird on a third-and-8 that allowed the Dolphins to move into field goal range. The Dolphins didn't settle for a kick, however, as Tagovailoa was able to run into the end zone for a touchdown to take the lead with - you guessed it - a missed tackle, this time on a potential sack.

This score gave the Dolphins a 15-9 lead early in the fourth quarter. The Patriots had a chance to take the lead, but stalled in field goal territory, which was a common theme for them in this contest. They drew to within 15-12, and all they needed was one stop to go ahead or at least tie. However, they once again couldn't stop the Miami run, as Tua capped off that drive with a plunge into the end zone to put New England away for good.

The Patriots surrendered 246 rushing yards to the Dolphins, which is just mind-boggling. There's no excuse for that. They made Ahmed look like the second coming of Barry Sanders, as Ahmed sprinted for 122 yards and a touchdown on 23 carries. Matt Breida, meanwhile, resembled Walter Payton, dashing for 86 yards on just 12 carries. Even Laird looked like Mike Alstott with his 20 yards on two attempts.

Tagovailoa chipped in with nine rushing yards, scoring twice on the ground in the process. He was very accurate as a passer despite missing his top four targets, going 20-of-26 for 145 yards and an interception, thrown in the red zone under heavy pressure. This occurred early, and Tua rebounded nicely from that blunder. Only two Dolphins logged more than 18 receiving yards: tight end Durham Smythe (5-40) and Lynn Bowden (6-37). The Patriots lost Stephon Gilmore to a non-contact injury, which is something that Tagovailoa could have taken advantage of if he had Parker at his disposal.

Tagovailoa was the vastly superior quarterback in this matchup. Cam Newton heaved some hideous passes and was fortunate that he didn't commit two turnovers in the opening half. A horrible throw of his was dropped by Kyle Van Noy, which is remarkable because another Miami defensive player had a chance at the pick if the ball got past Van Noy. Newton then made an idiotic play, trying to extend for an extra yard when he was four yards shy of the first-down marker. Newton fumbled the ball, which was returned for six. However, replay review showed that a Dolphin player was barely out of bounds when he got his hand on the ball.

Despite these lucky breaks, Newton couldn't lead the Dolphins into the end zone, as the Patriots had to settle for four field goals on the afternoon. Newton finished 17-of-27 for 209 yards. He had better luck as a scrambler - nine carries, 38 yards - but he was dreadful overall.

Jakobi Meyers had a big game despite Newton's incompetence. He caught seven balls for 111 yards, though he lost a fumble at midfield. James White (4-52) and Damiere Byrd (3-24) were next on the list. New England's receiving corps needs to be completely overhauled, save for Meyers.

The Patriots didn't have as much success running the ball as the Dolphins did. Sony Michel had a nice average though, tallying 74 yards on just 10 carries.

Bears 33, Vikings 27

When Eric Kendricks was ruled out, it was apparent that the Vikings didn't have a great chance to win this game. They were still favored, but Kendricks has been the glue that has held the injury-ravaged defense together. Without him, Minnesota's skeleton-crew defense wouldn't have much of a chance to stop a Mitchell Trubisky-led offense, as sad as that sounds.

Trubisky, however, tried his hardest to kill his team's chances at the very end with crucial mistakes. He was nearly picked on a dumb throw into triple coverage late in the game and then proceeded to toss an interception into the end zone while up 30-27. This kept the Vikings alive, but Chicago's defense shut the door on Kirk Cousins with a couple of big stops on desperation drives.

Trubisky had an underwhelming stat line against an injury-ravaged secondary, going 15-of-21 for 202 yards, one touchdown and the interception. He scrambled eight times for 34 rushing yards. Trubisky did a good job of moving the chains on several drives in this game, but his late-game antics would have resulted in a loss if his defense didn't bail him out.

The Bears were able to endure Trubisky's late errors, thanks to their running game. David Montgomery was a monster, bulldozing the Kendricks-less Minnesota defense for 146 yards and two touchdowns on 32 carries. Montgomery didn't do much as a receiver out of the backfield for a change, catching just one pass.

Despite Montgomery's one reception, there were only three Chicago players who outgained him in receiving yardage. Allen Robinson led the way with four grabs for 83 yards, followed by Darnell "Mad Eye" Mooney with four receptions for 49 yards and a score. Jimmy Graham (2-25) was around to ruin things for Cole Kmet (2-12).

Montgomery out gained Dalvin Cook, but not by very much. Despite an extremely difficult matchup, Cook rushed for 132 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries. He did way more than Montgomery as a receiver out of the backfield, snatching five balls for 27 receiving yards.

Cook couldn't quite bail out Cousins, who had an inconsistent game. He put together nice drives, but made

mistakes, including a fumble on a strip-sack when he held the ball forever. This has been a problem for Cousins, as he just doesn't read defenses quickly enough, resulting in lots of sacks. However, his dynamic receivers give him a chance to post good numbers, which would explain his line of 24-of-35 for 271 yards, two touchdowns and an interception, which came on a Hail Mary at the very end of the game.

Justin Jefferson was Cousins' leading receiver, catching eight of his 11 targets for 104 yards. He didn't score, but Adam Thielen did, though Thielen caught only two passes for 11 yards. He also drew an interference flag on a third down. When Thielen scored, he begrudgingly did Jefferson's patented Eye Goggles dance.

As for Cousins' other targets, Irv Smith Jr. made a nice, 21-yard catch, but couldn't really expand his stat line beyond three receptions for 37 yards. The other TE, Tyler Conklin, made three grabs for 57 yards and a TD.

Seahawks 20, Redskins 15

The Seahawks easily could have looked ahead to next week's battle against the Rams, but given that they were recently removed from a shocking loss as a big home favorite to the Giants, they were focused against another NFC East foe. They crushed the Redskins for three quarters of this game.

Some may have expected the Redskins' defensive line to dominate Seattle's blockers, but the Seahawks' offensive front has gotten healthier recently. It was still a mismatch in Washington's favor, so Russell Wilson compensated by either releasing passes quickly or scrambling. Wilson's positive play allowed the Seahawks to generate 178 net yards in the opening half. He didn't have as much success following intermission.

Wilson didn't generate the best passing stats - 18-of-27, 121 yards, one touchdown, one interception - but he kept the chains moving, especially via scrambles. He rushed for 52 yards on six runs. The Seahawks eventually led 20-3 and had the game in hand, but that's when the Seahawks began self-destructing.

The Redskins weren't doing anything of note offensively, but a muffed punt gave the Redskins a quick score. The Seahawks then gave Washington possession near midfield when a Wilson threw an interception that was tipped. Instead of expanding their lead - and potentially covering the spread - the Seahawks were suddenly in danger of allowing the Redskins to move into the red zone. However, Haskins, who improved his play in the second half, albeit a prevent defense, took two sacks, ending the game.

Haskins was dreadful in the opening half - he was 15-of-24 for 98 yards and a pick that he forced into double coverage - but the prevent defense allowed him to finish with a respectable stat line. His final numbers were 38-of-55 for 295 yards, one TD and two interceptions, with the second pick also going into double coverage.

Logan Thomas was a monster in this game, catching 13 of his 15 targets for 101 yards. You can't even credit this to garbage time, as Thomas had eight grabs for 64 yards by halftime. Terry McLaurin (7-77) and J.D. McKissic (9-56) also served as Haskins' primary targets. McKissic hauled in Haskins' lone score.

McKissic's production was a surprise, as his reception total was expected to decline with Haskins replacing Alex Smith. Still, McKissic was an incredible PPR option. He was just average on the ground with 51 yards.

Two Seattle backs out gained McKissic's rushing total, thanks to Carlos Hyde's 50-yard sprint into the end zone. Hyde (2-55) finished behind Chris Carson and his 63 yards on 15 attempts.

D.K. Metcalf paced the Seahawks in receiving, but still had a disappointing output with five catches for only 43 yards. He made an amazing, one-handed catch in the second quarter, but was ruled out of bounds. However, he drew an interference flag on the play even though he made the grab out of bounds. He also missed some action in the opening half with an injury, but turned out to be just fine.

Elsewhere in the Seattle receiving corps, Tyler Lockett also struggled with four catches for 34 yards. Jacob Hollister (2-17) caught Wilson's sole aerial touchdown.

Cowboys 41, 49ers 33

The Cowboys have somehow feasted on numerous lucky fumble recoveries in the past two weeks. They recovered three fumbles in the first three possessions against the Bengals last week, resulting in a misleading blowout win. The same thing happened in this game, as an early San Francisco fumbled punt return and a Nick Mullens strip sack granted the Cowboys an easy 14-0 lead to begin the afternoon.

However, the 49ers, even with Nick Mullens under center, have way more talent than the Cowboys, so they were able to make this a game, despite the early misfortune. They moved the chains methodically and ended up outgaining Dallas in the opening half to draw to within three by intermission. They eventually tied this affair, and even had possession with the chance to take the lead. That's when Mullens self-destructed.

Save for Mullens' fumble, he played well in the middle stages of this game. However, he crushed his team's chances with some reckless play late in the afternoon. Tied at 24, Mullens heaved an interception while drifting backward to set up the Cowboys with a field goal to give them what would end up being the decisive score. Mullens then had a chance to move his team in position to tie, but didn't see the defender over the middle of the field, resulting in another pick. This effectively ended San Francisco's chances.

Mullens finished 21-of-36 for 219 yards, two touchdowns and the three turnovers. He eventually banged his elbow and had to be replaced by C.J. Beathard, who launched a Hail Mary TD at the very end to Ken Bourne.

Thanks to Bourne's 49-yard Hail Mary catch, he led the team in receiving with four grabs for 86 yards and the score. That got him ahead of Brandon Aiyuk, who snatched nine balls for 73 yards and a touchdown. Jordan Reed (2-18) also found the end zone.

The 49ers split the workload evenly between Raheem Mostert and Jeff Wilson Jr. Mostert gained 68 yards on 14 carries, but couldn't quite reach the end zone when he was stuffed at the goal line. Wilson (16-60) had fewer yards, but managed to score a touchdown.

Tony Pollard was the leading rusher in this game, starting in place of the injured and fat Ezekiel Elliott. Pollard looked great, running for 69 yards and two touchdowns on just 12 carries. He also caught six passes for 63 receiving yards. Pollard should start the rest of the year because Elliott is so out of shape.

Andy Dalton's limitations forced him to toss checkdowns to Pollard, which was not a surprise. Dalton, unlike Mullens, didn't make huge mistakes, finishing 19-of-33 for 209 yards and two touchdowns. Dalton, however, misfired on some passes he should have completed, so he's lucky that his defense gave him such a big lead.

The only Dallas player with more receiving yards than Pollard was CeeDee Lamb, who had a very eventful afternoon. He caught five passes for 85 yards, but dropped a pass on third down. He also scored a touchdown on San Francisco's onside kick attempt at the very end.

Lamb didn't find the end zone on offense, as Dalton's two TD's went to Michael Gallup (3-26) and Dalton Schultz (2-14). Gallup was knocked out with an injury. Amari Cooper had just two grabs for 10 yards.

Ravens 40, Jaguars 14

The Ravens improved to 9-5 to stay close to a wild-card slot, and Baltimore is going to need some help over the final two weeks to get into the postseason. Jacksonville was no contest.

The Ravens had a good opening drive going, but Lamar Jackson sailed a deep ball short and it was picked off by Jaguars S Josh Jones. A penalty on the return had the Jags drive starting just in front of its own end zone, and two plays later, Matt Judon sacked Gardner Minshew for a safety. Baltimore continued to move the ball, with Jackson hitting Marquise Brown for a gain of 27 yards, and that set up a short TD pass to Miles Boykin.

Jacksonville started moving the ball with getting to midfield, but on a fourth-and-short, Minshew was sacked by

Patrick Queen to kill the drive. Baltimore turned the short field into another score, with J.K. Dobbins darting into the end zone. The Ravens tacked on a field goal, and late in the first half, Jackson drove them close to the end zone before Dez Bryant caught his first TD in over three years. That gave the Ravens a 26-0 lead at the half.

In the third quarter, Minshew led a nice drive that included a fourth-down conversion to Keelan Cole. Minshew capped the drive by lofting in a pretty, 17-yard wheel route touchdown to James Robinson. Jackson answered by using his feet to pick up some yards and he then fired a 34-yard pass to Gus Edwards at the 5-yard line. On the next play, Jackson took a run behind the left side for a touchdown. Jacksonville got going with Tyler Eifert making a superb leaping 28-yard catch to get to the 10-yard line, but former Jaguar Yannick Ngakoue got his second sack of the game, and this one was a strip-sack recovered by Baltimore.

A funny play ensued with Jackson getting strip-sacked, but offensive lineman Tyre Phillips scooped up the fumble and ran it for about 15 yards before taking a bone-rattling hit while getting the Ravens a first down. Jackson lofted in a 44-yard pass to Brown to get into Jaguars territory, and to finish the drive, Jackson tossed a short touchdown pass to Mark Andrews (5-66-1) and expanded the lead to 40-7.

Jackson completed 17-of-22 passes for 243 yards with three touchdowns and an interception. Dobbins ran for 64 yards on 14 carries with a touchdown. Marquise Brown had six receptions for 98 yards.

Minshew completed 22-of-29 passes for 226 yards and two touchdowns. Robinson was held to 35 yards on 16 carries but had three receptions for 18 yards and a touchdown to salvage his fantasy production. D.J. Chark led the Jaguars with four receptions for 53 yards.

Jets 23, Rams 20

This game could go down in infamy in Jets franchise history even though they avoided going 0-16 this season. They achieved the ultimate victory with their shocking road win in Los Angeles, which will likely cost them a shot at Clemson's Trevor Lawrence, one of the best quarterback prospects to come into the NFL in decades. If the Jaguars lose their remaining two games, they would land the No. 1 overall pick in the 2021 NFL Draft because they hold a strength-of-schedule tie breaker over the Jets. Giving Jacksonville the win in the Lawrence sweepstakes is not worth a meaningless late-season win. The Jets can't even get tanking right.

For the Rams, this hurts their playoff positioning, and the embarrassment of losing to a winless team in December is going to be a tough pill to swallow. The Los Angeles offense produced only three points in the first half, as the New York defense, led by Quinnen Williams, completely shut down the Rams' scoring attack. In the second half, the Rams were much better once they started giving Cam Akers better blocking. This game provides further proof that Jared Goff needs to have a running game in order to be an effective quarterback. Goff is just not a quarterback capable of carrying an offense, and losing to the Jets is just shameful.

The Jets had a nice opening drive in the first quarter on which Sam Darnold made some precision passes and a coverage bust left Ty Johnson wide open in the flat for an 18-yard touchdown catch. In the first minute of the second quarter, New York blocked a punt to set up the Jets at the Rams' 27-yard line, and that ended up producing a field goal. Goff threw an awful interception to Bryce Hall, which spotted another field goal for the Jets, giving them a 13-0 lead.

The Rams moved into Jets territory with a completion to Tyler Higbee in the final seconds before halftime, and that set up a 45-yard field goal from Matt Gay to cut the Jets' lead to 13-3 at halftime. Quinnen Williams was a monster, and the Rams were lucky to be only down 10, having been completely outplayed in all three phases.

The Jets opened the second half by mounting a good drive that included Frank Gore converting a third down with a power run, a 21-yard pass to Breshad Perriman moving the ball to the Rams' 30, and Darnold finding Chris Herndon open at the six. On fourth-and-goal from the one, Gore plunged into the end zone behind Mekhi Becton to finish the drive, which had eaten up almost half of the third quarter. The Rams answered with Higbee breaking a tackle and racing down the field for a gain of 44 yards. A few plays later, Goff found Robert Woods for a 15-yard touchdown to cut the Jets' lead to 20-10. Darnold responded with a nice drive that came up short on third-and-goal, and this time, the Jets took the points to go up 23-10 entering the fourth quarter.

Los Angeles responded with a screen to Woods that went for 40 yards, putting the Rams were in New York territory. A Blessaun Austin pass interference penalty moved the ball inside the 10, and Higbee got open for a short touchdown that cut the Jets' lead to six.

After a punt, Goff continued to use Woods to move the ball to midfield. A few more completions set up Gay for a 42-yard field goal to make it 23-20 with 6:35 remaining. The Rams' defense forced a three-and-out, and Nsimba Webster returned the punt 34 yards into Jets territory. Just past midfield, the Rams went for a fourth-and-4, but Marcus Maye made a superb pass breakup in man coverage on Gerald Everett to get the ball back for the Jets. With just over two minutes remaining, Darnold converted a third-and-6 with a pass to Gore to get the game-clinching first down. From there, New York was able to take a knee to kill the clock and get its first victory of the season.

Darnold was 22-of-31 for 207 yards with a touchdown. Gore ran for 59 yards on 23 carries with a touchdown. Jamison Crowder caught six passes for 66 yards.

Goff completed 22-of-34 passes for 209 yards with two touchdowns and an interception. Goff just lacks a killer instinct, and this game was one an elite quarterback would not have lost. Akers ran for 63 yards on 15 carries. Higbee was the Rams' leading receiver with four receptions for 67 yards and a touchdown. Woods (6-56-1) and Kupp (5-39) were surprisingly held in check by the Jets.

Cardinals 33, Eagles 26

This game came down to two failed Hail Mary attempts, but it didn't seem like it would be that close because the Cardinals were clicking in every facet in the early stages of the afternoon. The defense kicked things off by forcing a safety when pressure led Jalen Hurts to an intentional grounding in the end zone. The offense then did its part, as Kyler Murray scored on a touchdown run. The special teams joined in after that when a blocked punt set up a first-and-goal. Kyler Murray found Chase Edmonds for a score to put Arizona up 16-0.

It didn't look like the Eagles had a chance at that stage of the afternoon, but Hurts came alive. He ripped through Arizona's secondary, engineering numerous touchdowns drives in the first half alone. Despite the safety, Hurts rebounded by going 12-of-18 for 177 yards and three touchdowns prior to intermission. Arizona had no answer for him, and it didn't help that the Cardinals began making mistakes themselves. As an example, Murray lost a fumble on a strip-sack to set up a Philadelphia touchdown, allowing the Eagles to cut the lead down to five.

Murray and Hurts battled back and forth in the second half. The former had a chance to give his team a touchdown lead, but stared down his receiver in the end zone, which was the second turnover on the afternoon for him. Hurts, meanwhile, was able to engineer a touchdown drive, thanks in part to a 23-yard pass on a third-and-29 that allowed him to run for a first down on fourth-and-6. Murray, however, had the last laugh. In a tie game, he launched a bomb to DeAndre Hopkins and then later found Hopkins on the same drive, as the Pro Bowl receiver made a ridiculous one-handed catch in the end zone.

Hurts had two chances to tie this game, but failed twice in Arizona territory. He came close - Dallas Goedert dropped a touchdown - but the two aforementioned failed Hail Marys allowed the Cardinals to hang on to the win and the final wild-card spot in the NFC.

Murray finished 27-of-36 for 406 yards, three touchdowns and an interception. He also scrambled eight times for 29 rushing yards and a fourth score. Murray played a great game for the most part, but the two turnovers allowed the Eagles to hang around. Fortunately for Murray, he wasn't ultimately penalized for these mistakes.

Murray out dueled Hurts, but only doing so barely. Despite missing most of his offensive line, Hurts was incredible. He went 24-of-44 for 338 yards and three touchdowns, and he would've thrown a fourth score if Goedert hadn't allowed the ball to hit the ground. Hurts was even better than Murray as a scrambler, rushing for 63 yards and a touchdown on 11 carries. It's still early to call it, but Hurts looks like the Eagles' quarterback of the future. His cheap deal would normally allow the Eagles to build an all-star roster around him, much like they did with Carson Wentz, but Wentz's albatross of an untradeable contract will prevent that from happening.

There's no doubt that Hopkins was the best skill-possession player in this game. He caught nine of his 11 targets for 169 yards and the amazing touchdown. However, Hopkins made a grave error early in the game when he lost a fumble deep in Philadelphia territory.

Murray's two other touchdowns went to Larry Fitzgerald (3-35) and Edmonds (3-19). Fitzgerald also made an acrobatic catch in the end zone. Dan Arnold (3-54) and Christian Kirk (3-33) made some contributions.

Not only did Edmonds do some nice work as a receiver out of the backfield, he also led the Cardinals in rushing. He gained 47 yards on 11 carries, while Drake mustered only 26 yards on 10 attempts.

Miles Sanders was the leading rusher in this game with 64 yards on 17 carries. He looked good, but the Eagles couldn't run as much as they wanted to because of the early 16-0 deficit.

Zach Ertz led the Eagles in receiving with only two catches for 69 yards. He made a great catch on the final drive along the sideline. Alshon Jeffery (2-63) also made a big catch in the fourth quarter, though he was lucky to get away with an offensive pass interference flag when he shoved the defender out of the way. Jalen Reagor caught the most passes with five receptions for 49 yards.

Chiefs 32, Saints 29

Drew Brees should not have played this game. Sean Payton is a great coach, but he seemed to make a big mistake by rushing Brees back from injury. It was clear that the long-time Saints quarterback was not healthy when he began the game 0-of-6 for the first time in his career. The Saints didn't even achieve a first down until their fifth series. By halftime, Brees was just 5-of-16 for 87 yards and an interception, which was a wobbly throw toward the sideline.

Despite this, the Saints somehow had a 15-14 lead in the third quarter. Patrick Mahomes didn't have much luck in the opening half, failing to complete half of his passes. New Orleans put heavy pressure on him throughout the afternoon, as Kansas City's injury-ravaged offensive line couldn't protect him. It didn't help the Chiefs that they gave the Saints a safety on a fumbled punt return.

Mahomes, however, picked up the slack in the second half. It seemed like the Saints wore down, and it didn't help that Cameron Jordan was ejected for throwing a punch. Mahomes, following intermission, went 13-of-20 for 133 yards and a TD, which was an incredible throw to the corner of the end zone after he sidestepped some potential sacks. This was one of many occasions in which Mahomes danced around in the backfield to buy himself time to connect with his receivers. He can't wait to get Mitchell Schwartz back from injury.

Mahomes ultimately finished 26-of-47 for 254 yards and three touchdowns. His lone blemish was a lost fumble in the fourth quarter as a result of being crunched by two defenders in front and behind him at the same time. Outside of that, Mahomes was excellent when he needed to be, and he was the superior quarterback, by far.

Brees was able to benefit from some garbage yardage and scores once the Chiefs opened up a 29-15 lead, yet it still wasn't enough to get him to complete half of his passes. Brees went 15-of-34 for 234 yards, three touchdowns and an interception on an underthrown pass. He was lucky that he wasn't picked a second time when he overshot a target prior to halftime, and then on a third occasion when he heaved a pass into triple coverage to open the second half.

When asked if he was 100 percent following the game, Brees chuckled and said, "no." With that in mind, it's very obvious that Taysom Hill should have made another start. Payton cost his team a chance at the No. 1 seed with this horrible decision.

It didn't help Brees that he didn't have Michael Thomas. Tre'Quan Smith also got hurt, so Brees had to lean heavily on Emmanuel Sanders, who caught four passes for 76 yards. Brees' touchdowns went to someone named Lil'Jordan Humphrey (2-29) and Latavius Murray (2-26).

Given the diminished supporting cast, it's shocking that the Saints didn't feature Alvin Kamara more as a receiving threat out of the backfield. Kamara caught just three passes for 40 yards, but managed to score a TD. He also rushed for 54 yards on 11 carries. Failing to involve Kamara more was another blunder by Payton.

Andy Reid made sure to use his top play-makers. Travis Kelce caught eight passes for 68 yards and a touchdown, and he appeared to have a second score when he recovered a fumble and ran into the end zone, but replay review overturned the call. Tyreek Hill (6-53) also scored, but missed some time in the first half when trainers were working on his hamstring. Hill made a crazy juke to apparently get another touchdown at the end of the first quarter, but the official correctly ruled that his foot was barely out of bounds.

The dark cloud over this victory for the Chiefs was a serious injury to Clyde Edwards-Helaire (14-79), who couldn't put weight on his leg as he was escorted into the locker room. Luckily for Kansas City, Le'Veon Bell, who gained 62 yards and a touchdown (via an option) on 15 carries, is more than capable of replacing the rookie.

Browns 20, Giants 6

Down Daniel Jones, Saquon Barkley and offensive coordinator Jason Garrett, the Giants had to get creative in order to win this game. They tried a fake field goal on the opening drive and went for it on fourth down during another red zone trip in the opening half. They failed on both tries, as their first three trips inside the red zone resulted in three points in total.

The Giants would have been able to recover from this if their defense stepped up. Taking advantage of yet another big Giants' absence - James Bradberry - Baker Mayfield picked up where he left off in the second half against the Ravens. He was extremely accurate, completing 17-of-19 passes in the opening half.

Mayfield continued to shred the Giants after intermission. He ultimately finished 27-of-32 for 297 yards and two touchdowns. This was done against easier competition, but there's no doubt that Mayfield has improved his play. I suppose it helps that he's no longer playing in windy and rainy conditions every week.

Mayfield's touchdowns went to Jarvis Landry (7-61) and Austin Hooper (5-41), with the latter being the winning captain in DraftKings showdown lineups. Neither led the team in receiving, however. That distinction belonged to Rashard Higgins, who snatched four balls for 76 yards.

The Browns didn't get much from their running game, given that the Giants are stout against the rush. Nick Chubb mustered only 50 yards on 15 carries, though he saved his fantasy owners with a TD. He nearly scored a second time, but the TD was negated by a clipping penalty. Kareem Hunt (7-21) was a major bust. He didn't even do much as a receiver out of the backfield, catching three passes for only seven receiving yards.

The Giants had some nice runs, but they couldn't stick with the ground attack because of the constant deficit. Wayne Gallman was restricted to just 29 yards on nine carries, which includes the fourth-down stuff. Alfred Morris (7-39) even outgained him.

Colt McCoy was a lackluster 19-of-31 for 221 yards. He moved the chains well at times in between the 20s, but stalled way too often in the red zone for his team to have a real chance at an upset.

Only three Giants logged more than 14 receiving yards: Darius Slayton (4-74), Sterling Shepard (4-51) and Evan Engram (4-46). Both Slayton and Engram dropped passes in the second half.



PRO FOOTBALL BEST BETS

Baltimore - 10 Over NY Giants by 17

The New York Giants look for a win after splitting their last 10 games. The New York Giants have won their last three road games. Daniel Jones is completing 62.6 percent of his passes for 2,462 yards, eight touchdowns and nine interceptions. Jones has zero touchdown passes in his last three games. Darius Slayton and Evan Engram have combined for 1,275 receiving yards and four touchdowns while Sterling Shepard has 49 receptions. The New York Giants ground game is averaging 113.5 yards per contest, and Wayne Gallman leads the way with 590 yards and six touchdowns. Defensively, New York is allowing 22.2 points and 346.4 yards per game. Blake Martinez leads the New York Giants with 128 tackles, Leonard Williams has 8.5 sacks and James Bradberry has three interceptions.

The Baltimore Ravens look for a fourth straight win to pretty much lock up a playoff spot. The Baltimore Ravens have split their last six home games. Lamar Jackson is completing 64.8 percent of his passes for 2,461 yards, 21 touchdowns and eight interceptions. Jackson has one or less touchdown passes in five of his last 11 games. Marquise Brown and Mark Andrews have combined for 1,301 receiving yards and 12 touchdowns while Willie Snead IV has 31 receptions. The Baltimore Ravens ground game is averaging 172.7 yards per contest, and Jackson leads the way with 828 yards and seven touchdowns. Defensively, Baltimore is allowing 20.5 points and 343.7 yards per game. Patrick Queen leads the Baltimore Ravens with 98 tackles, Matthew Judon has five sacks and Marcus Peters has three interceptions.

The Giants are 22-8 ATS in their last 30 road games and 4-1 ATS vs. a team with a winning record. The Ravens are 7-3 ATS vs. a team with a losing record and 4-0 ATS in their last 4 games overall. The under is 6-0 in Giants last 6 games overall. The over is 4-1 in Ravens last 5 games overall. The home team is 4-0 ATS in their last 4 meetings.

The New York Giants compete and have been covering machines on the road over the last three years, but their offense has been downright awful since their bye week, which includes scoring a combined 13 points in their last two games. The Baltimore Ravens have scored a combined 121 points in their last three games and are easily playing their best football of the season. The Giants have a stout rush defense and it will be interesting to see how the Ravens super ground game performs against them. The Giants covering success makes them intriguing in the big underdog spot, but it's hard to trust their offense being able to do enough to hang here. The Ravens are entering playoff form and are starting to fire on all cylinders. I'll eat the chalk with the home team. **Ravens get a big win at home and cover the 10 spot.**

Projected Score: Baltimore 30, NY Giants 13

Chicago Over Jacksonville by 14

The Chicago Bears look for a third straight win to get a game above a .500 record. The Chicago Bears have split their last six road games. Mitchell Trubisky is completing 64.5 percent of his passes for 1,538 yards, 14 touchdowns and six interceptions. Nick Foles and Trubisky have combined for 24 touchdown passes and 14 interceptions this season. Allen Robinson II and Darnell Mooney have combined for 1,609 receiving yards and 10 touchdowns while Anthony Miller has 45 receptions. The Chicago Bears ground game is averaging 100.8 yards per contest, and David Montgomery leads the way with 906 yards and six touchdowns. Defensively, Chicago is allowing 22.7 points and 351.7 yards per game. Roquan Smith leads the Chicago Bears with 128 tackles, Khalil Mack has eight sacks and Tashaun Gipson Sr. has two interceptions.

The Jacksonville Jaguars could use a win to snap a 13-game losing streak. The Jacksonville Jaguars have lost six straight home games. Gardner Minshew II is completing 66.1 percent of his passes for 2,259 yards, 16 touchdowns and five interceptions. Minshew and Jake Luton have combined for 18 touchdown passes and 11 interceptions. DJ Chark Jr. and Keelan Cole Sr. have combined for 1,237 receiving yards and nine touchdowns while Laviska Shenault Jr. has 47 receptions. The Jacksonville Jaguars ground game is averaging 99.3 yards per contest, and James Robinson leads the way with 1,070 yards and seven touchdowns. Defensively, Jacksonville is allowing 30.2 points and 418.2 yards per game. Joe Schobert leads the Jacksonville Jaguars with 125 tackles, Dawuane Smoot has 5.5 sacks and Sidney Jones has two interceptions.

The Bears are 4-9 ATS in their last 13 road games and 0-5 ATS in their last 5 games as a favorite. The Jaguars are 2-5 ATS in their last 7 games following a ATS loss. The over is 19-7 in Bears last 26 games as a road

favorite. The under is 5-2 in Jaguars last 7 games on grass. The favorite is 4-1 ATS in their last 5 meetings.

The Chicago Bears have looked like a better team with Trubisky at quarterback, and they've won back to back games, giving themselves somewhat of a playoff hope with two weeks left. The Jacksonville Jaguars have been outscored 24-71 in their last two games and now are the front runners to end up with the No. 1 overall pick to select Trevor Lawrence. The Jaguars have no reason to even come close to a victory, and if their last couple of games are any indication, they won't. If the Jags don't lay down in this spot, then their even dumber than the NY Jets. Based on that, **I'm backing the Bears - 7.**

Projected Score: Chicago 30, Jacksonville 16

Cleveland - 11 Over NY Jets by 4

The Cleveland Browns look to stay hot after winning five of their last six games. The Cleveland Browns have won four straight road games. Baker Mayfield is completing 64 percent of his passes for 3,082 yards, 25 touchdowns and eight interceptions. Mayfield has 10 touchdown passes in his last four games. Jarvis Landry and Rashard Higgins have combined for 1,333 receiving yards and seven touchdowns while Austin Hooper has 35 receptions. The Cleveland Browns ground game is averaging 152.6 yards per contest, and Nick Chubb leads the way with 931 yards and 10 touchdowns. Defensively, Cleveland is allowing 26.7 points and 357.7 yards per game. BJ Goodson leads the Cleveland Browns with 91 tackles, Myles Garrett has 11 sacks and Denzel Ward has two interceptions.

The New York Jets have a chance to win back-to-back games for the first time since December of last year. The New York Jets haven't won a home game since December 22 of last year. Sam Darnold is completing 59.7 percent of his passes for 1,767 yards, six touchdowns and nine interceptions. Darnold and Joe Flacco have combined for 12 touchdowns and 12 interceptions. Jamison Crowder and Breshad Perriman have combined for 997 receiving yards and eight touchdowns while Denzel Mims has 22 receptions. The New York Jets ground game is averaging 102.9 yards per contest, and Frank Gore leads the way with 605 yards and two touchdowns. Defensively, New York is allowing 29.5 points and 392.7 yards per game. Neville Hewitt leads the New York Jets with 122 tackles, Quinnen Williams has seven sacks and Pierre Desir has three interceptions.

The Cleveland Browns are winning games consistently for once and just won double-digit games for the first time since 2007, but they're still not covering the numbers we care about. The New York Jets pretty much played themselves out of the Trevor Lawrence sweepstakes (*as mentioned being dumb in Jags write up above*), with a victory over the Rams, and they've quietly covered five of their last eight games. The Browns are obviously the much better team here and could win big. But little has come easy for the Browns this season and the Jets have been a lot more competitive than a recent winless team would suggest. Note that The Browns are 3-10 ATS in their last 13 road games and 1-6 ATS in their last 7 vs. AFC. The Jets are 4-1 ATS in their last 5 games in December and 5-2 ATS in their last 7 games on fieldturf. The Browns are 2-5 ATS in their last 7 meetings. I'm not a trend handicapper, but in this spot, with a possible letdown and the Brownies coming off short rest, the trend may be our friend. The Jets proved last week that they're trying hard to win.

Give the the dumbass J E T S and the points.

Projected Score: Cleveland 24, NY Jets 20

LA Chargers - 2½ Over Denver by 10

The Denver Broncos will look to make some headway in the standings, sitting at 5-9 following a 48-19 loss to Buffalo on Saturday last time out. Drew Lock has thrown for 2,330 yards, 14 touchdowns and 13 interceptions on 57.7% passing while Melvin Gordon III has a team-high 814 rushing yards with 8 TDs and Phillip Lindsay has 502 rushing yards this season. Tim Patrick leads Denver's receiving group with 657 yards and 6 touchdowns while Jerry Jeudy has 655 receiving yards and Noah Fant has a team-high 52 catches for 560 yards and 3 scores. KJ Hamler also has 381 receiving yards for the Broncos. On defense, Alexander Johnson leads the Broncos with 110 solo tackles while Justin Simmons has a team-high 73 solo tackles along with 4 interceptions. Bradley Chubb leads the Broncos with 7.5 sacks while Malik Reed has 6.5 sacks and DeMarcus Walker has 4.5 sacks this season.

The Los Angeles Chargers also sit at 5-9 after pulling off a 30-27 overtime win over the Las Vegas Raiders last time out. Justin Herbert has thrown for 3,781 yards, 27 touchdowns and 10 interceptions on 66.5% passing while Austin Ekeler leads the Chargers on the ground with 467 rushing yards and Joshua Kelley comes in 2nd with 354 rushing yards this season. Keenan Allen leads the Chargers receiving group with 100 receptions for

992 yards and 8 scores while Hunter Henry and Mike Williams each have 4 touchdown receptions with Henry logging 60 catches for 613 yards and Williams putting up 38 catches for 594 yards. Jalen Guyton has 468 receiving yards as well for Los Angeles this season. On defense, Kenneth Muttay Jr. leads the Chargers with 95 total tackles while Joey Bosa has a team-high 7.5 sacks and Michael Davis has 3 interceptions for Los Angeles this year.

Denver is 7-2 ATS in their last 9 games against a team with a losing record and 5-2 ATS in their last 7 games as a road underdog while the under is 15-5-1 in their last 21 division games. Los Angeles is 2-7-1 ATS in their last 10 division games and 2-6 ATS in their last 8 games overall while the under is 7-2 in their last 9 games as a home favorite. Denver is 4-1 ATS in the last 5 meetings between these two teams and 7-2 ATS in the last 9 meetings between these two teams in Los Angeles.

I'm in a bit of a pickle here, because the Chargers actually won last week and I'd think they'd want revenge after Denver rallied from a 24-3 deficit in the first meeting of the year to steal the game on the final play in the win. But, I bet them last week against the Raiders and got a nice win. What are the chances they win two in a row? Not good odds, right. I'm not fond of HC Anthony Lynn. Nevertheless, Justin Herbert is a gem of a QB. Chargers receiving corp should be much healthier this week, so I'm going to side with the Chargers to exact revenge on the Broncos. **Lay the small chalk with the more explosive Chargers.**

Projected Score: LA Chargers 30, Denver 20



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GRIDIRON GOLD NFL LINE SHEET

December 25-29, 2020

Date/time	Rot	Team	Line
12/25/20	451	Minnesota Vikings	52
4:30 ET	452	New Orleans Saints	-7.5
12/26/20	457	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	-7.5
1:00 ET	458	Detroit Lions	53.5
12/26/20	459	San Francisco 49ers	49.5
4:30 ET	460	Arizona Cardinals	-3.5
12/26/20	461	Miami Dolphins	-2.5
8:15 ET	462	Las Vegas Raiders	48
12/27/20	455	Cleveland Browns	- 11
1:00 ET	456	New York Jets	44.5
12/27/20	463	Cincinnati Bengals	45
1:00 ET	464	Houston Texans	-8.5
12/27/20	465	Indianapolis Colts	46
1:00 ET	466	Pittsburgh Steelers	-2.5
12/27/20	467	Chicago Bears	-7.5
1:00 ET	468	Jacksonville Jaguars	46
12/27/20	469	Carolina Panthers	45
1:00 ET	470	Washington Team	-2
12/27/20	471	New York Giants	
1:00 ET	472	Baltimore Ravens	-10
12/27/20	473	Atlanta Falcons	53.5
1:00 ET	474	Kansas City Chiefs	-10.5
12/27/20	453	Denver Broncos	49.5
4:05 ET	454	LA Chargers	-3.5
12/27/20	475	LA Rams	46.5
4:05 ET	476	Seattle Seahawks	-2.5
12/27/20	477	Philadelphia Eagles	-1.5
4:05 ET	478	Dallas Cowboys	49.5
12/27/20	479	Tennessee Titans	56
4:05 ET	480	Green Bay Packers	-3.5
12/28/20	481	Buffalo Bills	-6.5
8:15 ET	482	New England Patriots	45.5

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