

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

Volume 39 Issue 17

December 29, 2020

Dennis' Bowl Game of the Year Record is 27-11 71%

DJ's Bowl Game of the Year Record is 18-9 67%

Sammy's Bowl Game of the Year Record is 24-14 63%

PRES BOWL GAME OF THE YEAR CLICK NOW TO BEAT LINE MOVES	DJ BOWL GAME OF THE YEAR CLICK NOW TO BEAT LINE MOVES
 Gridiron Gold NCAA Bowl Game Of The Year Pick Guaranteed Pick If You Don't Win, You Don't Pay Click Here	 Gridiron Gold NCAA Bowl Game Of The Year Pick Guaranteed Pick If You Don't Win, You Don't Pay Click Here

Sammy's Bowl Game of the Year Goes Off Dec. 31st

Dennis' Bowl Game of the Year Goes Off January 1st

DJ's Bowl Game of the Year Goes Off January 2nd

THREE BOWL GAME OF THE YEAR PICKS SELECTED FROM THESE 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. 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. 14 Northwestern vs. Auburn (Citrus Bowl) | 1 p.m. Friday, Jan. 1 | ABC
- 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

[Bowl Game of Year Picks](#) | [All Bowl Game Picks](#)

[Gridiron Gold Sheet Bowl Game Newsletters](#)



Fitzmagic is back! Ryan Fitzpatrick's miracle throw helps Dolphins knock off Raiders in absurd ending

**Recap
Saints 52, Vikings 33**



The Saints were still alive for the No. 1 seed entering this game, but the chances of them landing the top spot are rather slim. Thus, the most important thing for them regarding this contest was simply bouncing back from a two-game losing streak and playing well with Drew Brees under center.

The Saints moved the chains extremely well against the Vikings, scoring into the 50s and generating 200-plus net yards of offense in the first quarter alone. However, it's not like they faced much resistance. They were battling an anemic Minnesota defense missing eight starters. The Vikings were helpless versus Mitchell Trubisky and David Montgomery last week, and they were even more banged

up in this contest. Thus, if the Saints didn't produce offensively despite missing Michael Thomas, it would be a massive upset.

That said, the Saints made some mistakes that'll cost them against better competition. Brees threw two interceptions, with the first being his fault when he telegraphed a throw toward Jared Cook. His second pick wasn't on him - Emmanuel Sanders dropped a ball, which deflected into the arms of a Minnesota defender - but Brees was lucky that another potential interception on an overthrow was dropped.

Despite this, Brees still looked much healthier than he did last week. It was a very easy opponent, but Brees didn't look too hindered by his rib injury. Brees completed 19-of-26 passes for 311 yards, but didn't throw a single touchdown amid the two picks. If you played Brees in DFS or fantasy, you were extremely unlucky because all seven of New Orleans' touchdowns came on the ground.

Six of those seven scores came via Alvin Kamara, who tied an NFL single-game record. The stud back was amazing in this game. He juiced countless defenders, blew through big holes and carried piles. The Vikings' injury-ravaged defense stood no chance against him. Kamara ended up rushing for 155 yards and the six

scores on just 22 carries. He also caught three passes for 17 receiving yards. Latavius Murray (12-72) ran well.

With Thomas sidelined, Sanders led the Saints with four grabs for 83 yards, so he was able to make amends for his interception. He also drew an interference flag in the end zone. Jared Cook (3-82) and Adam Trautman (2-45) were the only other Saints with more than 26 receiving yards.

If it wasn't for Kamara, the top fantasy producer from this game would have been Kirk Cousins, who went 27-of-41 for 291 yards and three touchdowns. All three scores came in the second half, so a bit of his production was the byproduct of garbage time. Still, Cousins played well against a usually solid defense. The Saints were a disappointment on that side of the ball this week, particularly Malcolm Jenkins, who was torched in coverage.

Two of Cousins' touchdowns went to Irv Smith Jr., who snatched six balls for 53 yards in addition to the two scores. Adam Thielen (8-97) caught Cousins' final touchdown, and he also drew an interference flag in the end zone. Justin Jefferson didn't find the end zone, but he hauled in six balls for 85 yards.

Dalvin Cook ran well, but the Vikings had to abandon their ground attack in the second half; otherwise, Cook's stats would've been much better. Cook gained 73 yards and a touchdown on 15 carries.

Buccaneers 47, Lions 7

If you ever wanted to see a team quit, this was your opportunity! I'm sure many Detroit players had every intention of playing hard heading into this game, but that changed when Matthew Stafford suffered an injury on the first drive of the afternoon. Stafford hopped into the locker room on one foot, prompting the Lions to give up. They whiffed on numerous tackles, left opposing receivers wide open, and failed to block.

This game was a bloodbath, and it could've been much worse. Tom Brady went 22-of-27 for 348 yards and four touchdowns - in the first half alone! He didn't even play the second half, giving way to Blaine Gabbert. It's a shame because Brady was on pace for record-setting numbers: 696 yards and eight touchdowns. The quitting Lions didn't cooperate by keeping this close.

The Tampa play-makers were on the field in the third quarter, allowing some of them to compile gargantuan stats. Mike Evans snatched 10 passes for 181 yards and two touchdowns, with 61 yards and a score coming from Gabbert. Rob Gronkowski also found the end zone twice, snatching both of those passes for 58 yards, as one came from Gabbert as well. Chris Godwin (5-84) and Antonio Brown (4-35) both scored once.

Leonard Fournette also found his way into the end zone. He didn't have a big workload because of the blowout, as he was given just nine carries, which he turned into 34 yards and a touchdown. He also caught three passes for 32 receiving yards. Ke'Shawn Vaughn (15-62) shouldered the workload in garbage time.

There's not much to say about the Lions beyond Stafford getting hurt. Their only touchdown came via a Jamal Agnew kickoff return. Chase Daniel (13-18, 86 yards) gave the team no hope of moving the chains. He didn't throw an interception, but Jason Pierre-Paul dropped a sure pick-six. Detroit had just 87 net yards in the opening half, compared to 410 for Tampa.

With Daniel limiting the aerial offense, Danny Amendola (5-37) paced the Lions in receiving. T.J. Hockenson (4-23) and Marvin Jones (3-19) contributed nothing for their fantasy owners.

D'Andre Swift made two ridiculous cuts on a 14-yard run in the first quarter. He finished with 45 yards on 10 attempts, and he also caught four passes for 25 receiving yards, but he lost a fumble in the third quarter.

49ers 20, Cardinals 12

The 49ers were missing 11 starters heading into this game - four on offense, seven on defense - while the Cardinals had everything to play for, given that they were in complete control of their playoff destiny. This, however, meant that they needed to overcome Aurora Snowmo, the NFL's version of the Lady of the Lake. Aurora Snowmo drags suspect and inexperienced teams to their wintry demise in late-season choke jobs, and

that's what happened in this contest.

The Cardinals gagged this victory away, making many mistakes in the process. Christian Kirk dropped an early touchdown. Dan Arnold dropped a deep pass. DeAndre Hopkins failed to reel in a touchdown he would normally snatch. Arnold lost a fumble to give the 49ers a short field. And with an opportunity to tie the game on the penultimate drive, Kyler Murray lofted an interception into the end zone on a horrible underthrow.

Adding injury to insult, Murray took a huge hit on the final play of the game. He was down for a while and then had to be helped to his sideline. It's unclear if he'll be able to play next week, but it may not matter. If the Bears beat the Jaguars, the Cardinals will be eliminated from the playoffs.

Murray had a very disappointing game, going 31-of-50 for only 247 yards and the interception. He did this versus a defense that, again, was missing seven starters. He was hurt by the several aforementioned drops, but his accuracy was off the mark, and he dinked and dunked too much otherwise. His offensive line didn't do him any favors, as Murray took three sacks against a pass rush missing its primary players. Murray was forced into scrambling eight times for 75 rushing yards.

Speaking of disappointments, Hopkins caught eight passes for only 48 yards. He drew an interference flag in the end zone, so his stat line could have been better. He trailed Kirk (7-76) on the stat sheet. Kirk opened the game with a 38-yard reception.

Arizona's lone touchdown came via Kenyan Drake, who gained 45 yards on 18 carries otherwise. Drake handled the majority of the workload because Chase Edmonds left the game with an injury in the first half.

The 49ers ran much better than the Cardinals, as Jeff Wilson Jr. trampled Arizona for 183 yards on 22 carries. He also caught a 21-yard touchdown. It was unclear if Wilson would handle the majority of the workload despite Raheem Mostert being sidelined, but he did, and he did not disappoint Kyle Shanahan.

Wilson's great running opened up nice play-action opportunities for C.J. Beathard. The former Iowa signal-caller went 13-of-22 for 182 yards and three touchdowns. Beathard avoided mistakes outside of a strip-sack, though he was close to an interception, as Jordan Hicks dropped a potential pick-six.

Beathard's primary receiver was George Kittle, who led the Cardinals in receiving with 4 catches for 92 yards. He would have eclipsed the century mark had he not dropped a pass. The next-leading receiver was Jerrick McKinnon (3-28). Kyle Juszczyk (2-10) and Wilson caught Beathard's TD's with the former scoring twice.

Dolphins 26, Raiders 25

Sometimes, the most mundane of football games turn into unexpected thrillers in the final minutes. That certainly was the case regarding this contest, as the Dolphins and Raiders traded punts and field goals for the first three quarters of the evening. The Raiders couldn't convert a third down to save their lives, while Tua Tagovailoa put the audience to sleep with his 2-yard dinks and dunks.

Everything changed when Brian Flores correctly benched his struggling rookie quarterback in favor of Ryan Fitzpatrick. The bearded relic immediately responded with what should have been a touchdown drive had Mack Hollins not dropped the go-ahead touchdown. Still, the Dolphins salvaged a field goal to tie the game at 16. With another failed third-down conversion, the Dolphins would be able to take the lead. However, Derek Carr had other plans, heaving an 85-yard touchdown bomb to Nelson Agholor, who ran circles around a poor Miami safety. A missed extra point made it a 22-16, which ended up being the difference.

Fitzpatrick responded with a touchdown drive, as Myles Gaskin caught a pass and broke free of a Raekwon McMillan tackle to sprint into the end zone for a 59-yard score. The Dolphins' 23-22 lead wouldn't last very long, however, as another Carr-to-Agholor bomb drew an interference flag. The Raiders drained the clock down to 19 seconds, and the short kick connected this time. With a 25-23 advantage with just 19 seconds remaining, the win was in the bag for the home team.

All Fitzpatrick could do was heave a Hail Mary from his own 25-yard line, and he did so while his helmet was being ripped off his face by a defender. And yet, his long pass was complete to Hollins, who found an open spot in the Raiders' terrible zone defense. Hollins held on to the ball this time, and with the penalty taken into account, the Dolphins were set up at the Las Vegas 26. Jason Sanders hit the ensuing 44-yard FG for the win.

This kick saved the Dolphins' season, as they would have lost all control to the Ravens with a loss. They're now 10-5, and they'll make the playoffs with a win next week against the Bills, who might rest their starters on a short week. Meanwhile, the Raiders have been officially eliminated at 7-8.

Fitzpatrick saved the day from Tagovailoa and has to be named the starter in Week 17. Fitzpatrick went 9-of-13 for 182 yards and a touchdown, while Tagovailoa finished 17-of-22 for just 94 yards and a score. The rookie dinked and dunked too much, and he held on to the ball too long on too many occasions. He also had two potential interceptions that were dropped. Tagovailoa will be much better in the future, but he's not ready to lead a team into a deep playoff run just yet.

Hollins, who went from goat to hero, caught two passes for 42 yards. He trailed Mike Gesicki (4-54) and Jakeem Grant (5-43) on the stat sheet, as they were the second- and third-leading receivers on Miami's roster.

The leader in receiving yardage? That would be Myles Gaskin, who was incredible in his return from injury. Gaskin caught five passes for 82 receiving yards and two touchdowns to go along with his impressive rushing numbers (14-87). The Dolphins tried to mix the workload with Salvon Ahmed at the beginning of the game, but it was clear that this was a losing strategy when Ahmed's six carries went for just two yards.

The Raiders had success running with Josh Jacobs, which makes you wonder why he was given just 13 carries. Jacobs gained 69 yards in the process. He would have broken the century mark with a normal workload, so it's possible that the medical staff told the coaches that the young runner had to be limited.

Carr finished with a huge yardage total because of the 85-yard bomb. Carr was 21-of-34 for 336 yards and a TD. The interference flag on the next drive would've brought him closer to 400 if the pass was complete.

As for the recipient of those two passes, Agholor hauled in five balls for 155 yards and a touchdown. He has become a star in Las Vegas despite being an utter bust in Philadelphia. Another star, Darren Waller, made some breathtaking catches when he logged five receptions for 112 yards.

Jets 23, Browns 16

Baker Mayfield was one of the hottest quarterbacks in the NFL heading into this game, having won five of his previous six games, with the lone exception being a last-second defeat against the Ravens. Mayfield was gifted an easy matchup against the Jets, but unexpected news derailed what seemed like a sure victory. All of his top receivers - Jarvis Landry, Rashard Higgins, Donovan Peoples-Jones, Kha'Darel Hodge - were all ruled out due to their proximity to a mild illness. They were required to sit out for some reason, leaving Mayfield with inconsistent deep threat Marvin Hall as his sole non-practice squad player at the position. Even worse, Mayfield would be missing two offensive linemen, as Jedrick Wills and Wyatt Teller were also ruled out.

Even still, the Browns were favored by a TD. After all, they were battling the lowly Jets, whose sole victory this year came last week against the Rams, who were looking ahead to battling the Seahawks. Mayfield, playing behind a battered offensive line, while throwing to no one but tight ends and running backs, would surely be able to defeat the Jets to set up a potential showdown against the Steelers next week for the divisional title.

Except, it didn't exactly happen that way. The Browns had a pathetic showing offensively, averaging just four yards per play, with the Jets generating 4.9 yards per play in comparison. The Browns couldn't maintain drives, as no one could get open for Mayfield.

Despite this, Mayfield still attempted 53 passes, thanks to him being in a huge deficit for most of the afternoon. He completed 28 of those throws for 285 yards. He didn't throw an interception, but lost a fumble on a strip-sack in the opening half. Mayfield also fumbled at the very end of the game when he tried a sneak on fourth-

and-inches. Kareem Hunt scooped up the ball and moved it past the first-down marker, but a fumble can't be advanced near the end of regulation. That failure ended the game.

With all of the absent offensive players, the Cleveland defense needed to come up with some big stops. The Browns couldn't do that, however, as they had immense issues dealing with Jamison Crowder. The Jet receiver did a little bit of everything. He threw a touchdown on a trick play, heaving a 43-yard bomb to Braxton Berrios. He had a nice gain on a 14-yard run. And best of all, he dominated the Cleveland secondary. He caught seven of his nine targets for 92 yards and a touchdown.

In addition to Crowder and Berrios, Chris Herndon (4-34) also scored a receiving touchdown. They were the only Jets with more than 14 receiving yards.

Sam Darnold didn't have to throw very much, and the Jets are lucky that was the case. He completed just half of his passes, going 16-of-32 for 175 yards and two touchdowns. He was guilty of a lost fumble on a strip-sack, but the officials incorrectly ruled it an incompletion. He was also fortunate that Cleveland defenders dropped a couple of potential interceptions.

Frank Gore didn't have a great game - 14 carries, 48 yards - but he reached an important milestone, becoming the third running back in NFL history to eclipse 16,000 rushing yards. He's somehow behind only Emmitt Smith and Walter Payton.

Amazingly, Gore was the leading rusher in this game. Nick Chubb and Hunt both were stymied by a New York defensive line missing Quinnen Williams. Chubb mustered only 28 yards on 11 carries, while Hunt gained just 11 yards on four tries. Both, however, scored touchdowns to save their fantasy owners.

I expected the Browns to use Hunt heavily as a receiver, but the talented back caught just three passes for 41 yards. Sadly, this was good enough for third on the team in that category. Austin Hooper (7-71) paced the team, followed by former practice squad player Ja'Marcus Bradley (5-60).

Chiefs 17, Falcons 14

It's amazing how many times the Chiefs could have lost this game. They were double-digit favorites heading into this affair, but they were locked up in a 7-7 draw for most of the afternoon. Atlanta's secondary did a phenomenal job of limiting the Kansas City play-makers, while Patrick Mahomes was constantly under siege behind his injury-ravaged offensive line.

Despite his struggles, Mahomes put together a game-winning drive near the end of regulation, finding Demarcus Robinson in the end zone. However, this pass almost never happened because Mahomes lofted an underthrown ball into the end zone on the previous play. The Atlanta defender appeared to snatch the interception, but the ball dislodged as soon as he hit the ground. It was a close call, with Raheem Morris even challenging the play. The incompletion stood, allowing Mahomes to take the lead.

The Falcons, however, had time for one more drive, and they moved into Kansas City territory very easily. They had a chance to score on one play, but Matt Ryan's pass toward Calvin Ridley into the end zone fell incomplete. This was just fine because the usually reliable Youngblood Koloski had a 39-yard chip-shot field goal to send this game into overtime. Koloski, however, sliced the kick, resulting in a win for the Chiefs, who clinched the No. 1 seed in the AFC.

This was a truly ugly game for Mahomes. His final stat line doesn't even look that bad - he was 24-of-44, 278 yards, two touchdowns, one interception - but the numbers don't tell the whole story. Mahomes had a whopping three potential picks that were dropped, including the aforementioned near-interception in the end zone. He was rattled by the Atlanta pass rush and didn't read the Falcons' defense very well. Despite his decent stats, Mahomes had one of the worst games of his career, despite the victory.

If you're wondering if there should be some concern for the Chiefs heading into the playoffs, I wouldn't worry too much. Mitchell Schwartz will return from injury soon, and it's not like the Chiefs were fully focused for this

contest. Kansas City will be much better in the postseason.

Robinson, who snatched the game-winning touchdown, was third on the team in receiving with two grabs for 29 yards. He was behind the two expected players, Travis Kelce (7-98) and Tyreek Hill (4-65). Kelce caught Mahomes' other touchdown. He appeared to suffer a leg injury in the second half, but he didn't miss any action.

Le'Veon Bell was expected to handle the workload for the Chiefs with Clyde Edwards-Helaire sidelined. Bell, however, was given just seven carries, which he turned into 30 yards. He also caught just one pass for nine yards. It was actually Darrel Williams (10-46) who handled the most carries.

The Falcons' most-known running back didn't get the most work either. Todd Gurley caught a nice 26-yard pass along the sideline on the opening drive, but didn't do much otherwise, logging just 16 yards on four carries. Ito Smith (10-46) and Brian Hill (7-36) were given more attempts.

Ryan was the superior quarterback in this matchup. He had a better completion percentage, threw for more yards, and he didn't commit any turnovers. He also didn't have as many potential picks that were dropped. This was not expected, but not just because Mahomes is the best player in the NFL. Ryan had a tough task in this game because he was missing Julio Jones and two offensive linemen, including Alex Mack.

Ryan went 27-of-35 for 300 yards and two touchdowns. Ryan has had some struggles this year, but he was terrific in this contest. He could have a big 2021 campaign if Jones and the offensive line can remain on the field.

Calvin Ridley, as expected, was Atlanta's leader in receiving with five catches for 130 yards. Hayden Hurst, who drew an interference flag on a third-and-long situation, caught one of Ryan's touchdowns while snatching five balls for 47 yards otherwise. Laquon Treadwell (2-11) had the other score.

Steelers 28, Colts 24

The Steelers had a great opportunity to bounce back from their three-game losing streak this week. Sure, they were playing against the Colts, but they were at home and were slated to battle an offense missing both of its tackles. Surely, the Steelers would be able to stymie the Indianapolis offense with its great edge rush, allowing Ben Roethlisberger enough opportunities to score enough points to get the team's 12th victory of the season.

Instead, the Colts ripped off 21 points in the first quarter-and-a-half, as Jonathan Taylor bounced off Pittsburgh defenders and scored twice to begin the game. Meanwhile, Philip Rivers had enough time in the pocket, thanks to Taylor's great blitz pick-up, which allowed him to hit Zach Pascal with a deep touchdown to put the Colts up 21-7 just before halftime.

All hope seemed to be lost for the Steelers when they failed to punch the ball into the end zone despite having five tries inside the Indianapolis 5-yard line in the third quarter. The Steelers failed on fourth down, so given the 24-7 deficit, it appears as though this game was over.

Amazingly, the Steelers somehow caught fire and began generating scoring drives. Meanwhile, the Colts became inept offensively like I thought they would be entering this contest. Rivers heaved an interception on an overthrow, while Taylor's running lanes suddenly closed. The Colts generated just 105 net yards of offense in the second half before their final drive, which ended at the Pittsburgh 33-yard line.

Just as it was a tale of two halves for the Steeler defense, the same could be said of Roethlisberger, who was just 11-of-20 for 100 yards in the opening half. He was great after intermission, going 23-of-29 for 242 yards and three scores. He would've thrown a fourth second-half touchdown had Chase Claypool not dropped a ball in the end zone on that five-play sequence I referenced earlier.

Roethlisberger's final numbers, if you didn't feel like doing the math, were 34-of-49 for 342 yards and three touchdowns. In addition to the Claypool dropped touchdown, JuJu Smith-Schuster also dropped a ball in the

end zone. Roethlisberger should have thrown five scores despite the sluggish start.

Despite Smith-Schuster's drop, he came up big in crunch time when he hauled in the decisive score. He was also the team's leader in receiving with nine receptions for 96 yards and a touchdown. Diontae Johnson (8-75) and Eric Ebron (5-47) also scored. Claypool didn't find the end zone, logging four catches for 54 yards in the process.

The Steelers once again struggled to run the ball, which was not a surprise. Benny Snell couldn't gain a single yard on his six carries. James Conner was slightly better with 20 yards on five carries, but he also scored a touchdown.

Taylor, as referenced earlier, had lots of success early, but none late. He rushed for 49 yards and two touchdowns on 13 carries in the opening half, but mustered only 25 yards following intermission. His final 18 carries went for 74 yards and the two scores.

Rivers also cooled off in the second half. He was a red-hot 9-of-12 for 153 yards and a touchdown prior to intermission and 13-of-23 for 117 yards and a pick after it. His final numbers were 22-of-35 for 270 yards, one touchdown and a pick. Rivers easily could have thrown two other interceptions. One was dropped in the end zone early in the game, while another was negated by a ticky-tack pass interference call.

Thanks to the long touchdown, Pascal led the team in receiving with three grabs for 64 yards and a touchdown. T.Y. Hilton (3-60) was next. He drew an interference flag on the final drive, but that ultimately didn't matter.

Ravens 27, Giants 13

New York's defense had played well during its recent winning streak. It even clamped down on Russell Wilson in an upset victory in Seattle. The Giants had a bad showing defensively last week versus the Browns, but they were missing James Bradberry. They had their top cornerback returning for this game, so there was some hope that they would be able to limit the Ravens enough to give an injured Daniel Jones a chance for a victory.

Except, that didn't quite happen, as the Giants had no answer for Lamar Jackson or Baltimore's rushing attack. New York couldn't get off the field at all, with Baltimore converting 8-of-11 third downs. The Ravens generated 432 net yards of offense and won the time-of-possession battle by 11 minutes.

Jackson's passing stats won't pop off the stat sheet, but he didn't make mistakes as a thrower and kept the chains moving. Jackson went 17-of-26 for 183 yards and two touchdowns. He also had a potential third score that was dropped, and he scrambled 13 times for 80 rushing yards. His only error was losing a fumble near the goal line, but this occurred in the second half when the game was already decided.

Jackson was part of a Baltimore ground attack that generated 249 rushing yards. This was a surprising result, given that the Giants usually excel against the run. In addition to Jackson, Baltimore's primary rushers were Gus Edwards (15-85) and J.K. Dobbins (11-77), with the latter scoring a touchdown.

The Giants obviously didn't run the ball nearly as well, and not just because they were in a huge deficit for most of the afternoon. Wayne Gallman managed 27 yards on six attempts, while Alfred Morris (3-4) offered nothing. The Giants will be counting the days until Saquon Barkley lines up in their backfield once again.

Daniel Jones didn't look healthy, though he didn't stand much of a chance behind his poor offensive line. It would've helped if he could scramble, but his multiple leg injuries prevented him from doing so.

Jones was just 24-of-41 for 252 yards and a touchdown. He didn't commit any turnovers, but played mostly safe and didn't challenge the Ravens downfield even though Baltimore was down multiple cornerbacks.

Sterling Shepard led everyone in receiving in this game, catching nine passes for 77 yards. He didn't play as well as those numbers indicate, as most of his production occurred late in garbage time. The same could be

said of Evan Engram (7-65). Darius Slayton (2-26) did nothing despite seeing eight targets.

Despite Mark Andrews falling shy of Shepard's yardage, he was the best skill player in this game with six catches for 76 yards. He made an amazing catch along the sideline. He didn't score, but only because he dropped a ball in the end zone. Marquise Brown (4-25) and Dez Bryant (1-8) reeled in Jackson's touchdowns.

Bengals 37, Texans 31

The Bengals are on fire! They were 2-10-1 just two weeks ago, but thanks to victories against the Steelers and Texans, they've moved out of the No. 3 overall pick. This means they are no longer the favorite to land Penei Sewell, which will hurt Joe Burrow's development in the future. Hopefully these December wins were worth it.

Cincinnati had no issue moving the chains throughout the afternoon. This wasn't too much of a surprise despite the Bengals' dubious personnel, however, given that the Texans were missing eight defensive starters in this contest. That would explain why Cincinnati generated a ridiculous 540 net yards of offense, averaged 7.6 yards per play, and won the time-of-possession battle by about 13 minutes.

Brandon Allen was excellent. I never thought I'd write that of Allen, but that's how bad Houston's defense is. The Texans, missing every single member of their secondary, had no chance against Allen, who completed almost all of his passes. He finished 29-of-37 for 371 yards and two touchdowns.

The Bengals also ran well, so with Allen being accurate and the running game being effective, Cincinnati held possession for 18 of the first 25 minutes of this game. Samaje Perine and Giovani Bernard combined for 160 rushing yards, as the two gained 95 and 65 yards on the ground, respectively. Perine scored twice, which had to aggravate those who used Bernard in fantasy (including yours truly.)

Bernard, however, was terrific as a receiver to make up for his lack of scoring. He caught seven passes for 66 yards, trailing only Tee Higgins (6-99) and Alex Erickson (6-88). Higgins and Drew Sample (1-8) caught touchdowns, with the former being cheated of a 31-yard reception that was negated by offensive pass interference. A.J. Green, meanwhile, was limited to four catches for 64 yards.

Deshaun Watson did what he could to engage in a shootout. It appeared as though he would be in position to throw the game-winning touchdown, or at least put his team in a spot to kick the tying field goal. However, he was strip-sacked on the penultimate offensive drive of the afternoon while down 34-31.

Watson finished 24-of-33 for 324 yards and three touchdowns. He played well, considering his diminished supporting cast, but the fumble at the end spoiled his afternoon.

Brandin Cooks had a monstrous outing, as he registered nearly half of Watson's yardage total. He caught seven passes for 141 yards and a touchdown. He nearly tripled up the next receiver, Keke Coutee, who had five catches for 54 yards.

David Johnson had a big game for the second week in a row. He rushed for 128 yards and a touchdown on only 12 carries. He also caught three passes for 11 receiving yards and another score. I expected him to do more as a receiver out of the backfield because of Duke Johnson's absence.

Bears 41, Jaguars 17

This was an important game in two aspects. First, the Bears were trying to land one of the NFC wild-card spots, and second, the Jaguars needed to lose to protect their hold on the No. 1 overall pick of the 2021 NFL Draft. The game was close for a lot of the first half, but the Bears dominated in the third quarter to put away the Jaguars. Minutes after this game ended, the New York Jets won at home against the Browns, which left Jacksonville clinching the first pick in the 2021 NFL Draft. The Jaguars win the "Tank for Trevor" sweepstakes to have shot at a true franchise quarterback in Clemson's Trevor Lawrence.

The Jaguars struck first, with Mike Glennon converting a third-and-long to D.J. Chark and Dare Ogunbowale

ripping off a 26-yard run, but the drive stalled inside the 15, so they had to settle for a field goal. Chicago responded with Allen Robinson making a fantastic play on a short catch that he turned into 21 yards. David Montgomery added a run of about 30 yards before Mitch Trubisky threw a laser to Jimmy Graham (4-69-2) for a 5-yard touchdown.

Graham got open for a gain over 20 yards on Chicago's next possession, and Trubisky then converted another third-and-long, but some terrible play calling blew a goal-to-go situation that ended in a Bears field goal. Jacksonville quickly tied the game at 10 when Glennon ripped the ball through the Bears' secondary before finding Chark for a 20-yard touchdown.

Just before halftime, Trubisky led a drive to inside the 15-yard line, but while scrambling, Trubisky tossed a ball into a huge crowd, and Joe Schobert intercepted it. The throw was a terrible decision, and one of the worst passes you could see from a NFL quarterback. CBS analyst Rich Gannon called it a high school-caliber interception.

A few plays later, however, Roquan Smith intercepted Glennon, getting the ball back for the Bears at the Jaguars' 32-yard line with eight seconds on the clock. Gannon called out the Jaguars for bad coaching, as they lined up all of their defensive backs in the end zone, which allowed the Bears to easily pick up a dozen yards to turn a field goal attempt from 50-plus yards to a 40-yarder for Cairo Santos. That kick gave Chicago a 13-10 halftime lead.

Trubisky opened the third quarter by moving the ball down the field via Robinson and Montgomery. Trubisky then closed out the drive with a 6-yard touchdown run. Robinson continued to have his way with his former team, moving the ball down the field to set up a short touchdown run from Montgomery. Danny Trevathan tipped a pass, and Roquan Smith snatched it for his second interception of the game to give the Chicago offense the ball at Jacksonville's 25-yard line. A few plays later, Trubisky found Graham wide open for a 22-yard touchdown. That gave the Bears a 34-10 lead entering the fourth quarter.

Trubisky completed 24-of-35 passes for 265 yards with two touchdowns and an interception. Montgomery ran for 95 yards and a touchdown on 23 carries with two receptions for 26 yards. Robinson had 10 receptions for 103 yards against his former team.

Glennon completed 24-of-37 passes for 211 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions. Ogunbowale ran for 71 yards on 14 carries, filling in for the injured James Robinson. Chark had four receptions for 62 yards with a touchdown.

Panthers 20, Redskins 13

The Redskins would have earned a postseason berth with a win over Carolina, but with Dwayne Haskins at quarterback, they didn't stand a chance. In what might be his final appearance for Washington, Haskins was dreadful, ultimately being benched for Taylor Heinicke in the second half. Meanwhile, it was a Pyrrhic victory for the Panthers, as this win hurts their slotting for the 2021 NFL Draft. Given that Cincinnati had won earlier in the day, if the Panthers had lost this game and then lost again next week, they would have had the third-overall pick of the 2021 NFL Draft. This meaningless victory, on the other hand, will drop them lower.

The Panthers scored late in the first quarter when the Redskins muffed a punt and the ball rolled into the end zone before Carolina fell on it for a gifted touchdown. Shortly later, Curtis Samuel ripped off a phenomenal 45-yard run to set up a goal-to-go situation, and on fourth-and-goal, Mike Davis powered into the end zone to put the Panthers up 13-0. Tahir Whitehead intercepted Haskins to set up the Carolina offense near midfield. A 44-yard pass to Samuel set up a short touchdown pass to Robby Anderson (7-39-1). After that, Carolina's offense was abysmal and incapable of scoring any points.

Washington responded with a field goal drive, and the Panthers moved into enemy territory, but Chase Young hit Teddy Bridgewater's arm as he threw and the errant pass was intercepted. A few plays later, Tre Boston intercepted Haskins, and that kept the Panthers up 20-3 at intermission.

Early in the third quarter, Carolina crossed midfield and Bridgewater converted a fourth-and-2, but Chase Young struck again with a strip-sack that Washington recovered. A few plays later, Haskins found Cam Sims wide open in busted coverage and Sims raced down the field for a 50-yard completion. After the drive stalled, the Redskins settled for another field goal.

Haskins was benched for Heinicke with 10 minutes remaining, and Heinicke was an upgrade. Heinicke hit Logan Thomas (7-63) for 19 yards and threw a few completions to Cam Sims, including a fourth-down conversion, but the Panthers' defense came up with a fourth-down stop to kill that drive. With less than two minutes remaining, Heinicke lofted a 29-yard touchdown pass to J.D. McKissic to keep Washington's hopes alive, but D.J. Moore (5-37) caught the onside kick to secure the victory for Carolina.

Bridgewater was 19-of-28 for 197 yards with a touchdown and an interception. He also fumbled twice, losing one. Davis notched 28 yards and a touchdown on 14 carries. Samuel led the Panthers in rushing and receiving, hauling in five passes for 106 yards and taking seven carries for 52 yards.

Haskins was 14-of-28 for 154 yards and two interceptions. He played even worse than the numbers suggest. Antonio Gibson had 61 yards on 10 carries. McKissic caught eight passes for 77 yards and a touchdown.

Chargers 19, Broncos 16

This game was played as if two young quarterbacks were battling superior defensive personnel. Both Justin Herbert and Drew Lock made several mistakes, as it seemed like the winner would be the team that made the fewest errors at the end of the afternoon.

Drew Lock kicked things off by missing Noah Fant for a touchdown and then throwing an interception on the very next play. The pass was a hideous one, as he heaved the ball late across his body into the end zone. The Chargers eventually got the lead, but that wouldn't have been the case if Justin Herbert hadn't gotten lucky. Herbert was strip-sacked, and a Denver player was in position to return the give-away for a touchdown. However, one of Herbert's teammates pounced on the loose ball, preserving the lead.

Herbert was better than Lock in the opening half, as Lock was 9-of-18 for 67 yards and an interception by the break. Things were so frustrating for the Broncos that Jerry Jeudy slammed his helmet on the sideline and yelled at teammates prior to intermission. He was likely disappointed in himself more than anything because he was in the process of dropping six passes in this game.

Lock played better after halftime, generating enough scoring drives to erase a 16-3 deficit. A field goal would seemingly send this game to overtime, but Herbert, who did nothing positive in the second half beside run for a first down on fourth-and-long, moved his team into field goal range. He took a horrible sack to make the kick longer, but Michael Badgley drilled the kick to give the Chargers a 19-16 lead. Lock had 45 seconds to either tie or win after that, but drops by Jerry Jeudy and Chris Harris (defensively, on a potential pick) ended things for Denver.

Herbert was the better quarterback in this game. He went 21-of-33 for 253 yards, one touchdown and a lost fumble. He wasn't intercepted, but he was lucky he wasn't picked off a deflection in the fourth quarter. Lock, on the other hand, was 24-of-47 for 264 yards and two interceptions. Lock should have been picked on a couple of other occasions. Herbert has likely locked up Offensive Rookie of the Year, while the jury is still out on Lock, though he'll likely get one more season to prove himself.

There were numerous disappointing skill-position players in this game. I mentioned Jeudy, who was very frustrated even before his late drop. He caught six passes for 61 yards, but saw a whopping 15 targets in the process. His six drops killed his team, as two of them came on consecutive plays in a failed 2-minute drill to close out the opening half. Another one occurred in the end zone in the third quarter, and the worst one was a drop deep downfield on the final drive of regulation that would have set up a tying field goal. He trailed DaeSean Hamilton (5-77) and Fant (5-77) on the stat sheet.

Melvin Gordon also didn't produce as well as expected. He rushed for 79 yards on 16 carries, but didn't score

and wasn't a part of the passing game. In fact, he didn't even see a single target. I expected Gordon to have a big outing in the wake of Phillip Lindsay's injury, but he simply did not produce.

Austin Ekeler also didn't do as well as expected. He rushed for only 45 yards on 10 carries, and despite Keenan Allen's absence, he caught only three passes (on as many targets) for 23 receiving yards. Fortunately for his owners, Ekeler scored a touchdown to salvage his afternoon.

Mike Williams led the Chargers in receiving yardage and targets (10) with Allen sidelined. However, he caught four passes for only 54 yards, and he didn't score at all. He had multiple chances for touchdowns, but couldn't quite come down with those catches. Jalen Guyton (3-43) also struggled.

Seahawks 20, Rams 9

The winner of this game would seize control of the NFC West. This was a defensive struggle for a while - the teams were locked up in a 6-6 tie at halftime - but the better quarterback eventually prevailed.

Russell Wilson didn't have a great game, but he did well enough versus the NFL's top defense. Still, he was miles better than Jared Goff, who had a disastrous afternoon. Goff made numerous poor throws, beginning on the opening drive when his third-down pass to Josh Reynolds was way off the mark. Goff then had another bad third-down attempt when he fired way behind Van Jefferson. Goff lucked out with a dropped interception by Jamal Adams, but then was penalized after that by throwing an actual pick. He fired the ball way late across his body with no teammate in the area, prompting color analyst Troy Aikman to comment, "I have no idea what he saw, Joe."

Goff led some possessions into field goal range, but a potential touchdown drive in the third quarter was derailed when Malcom Brown, Goff, and then Brown again were stuffed at the goal line. This preserved the lead for the Seahawks, who avoided the same sort of blunders Goff committed to lock up the NFC West.

Goff, who was called out by Sean McVay recently, had another poor performance, going 24-of-43 for 234 yards and an interception. This wasn't even a difficult matchup for Goff, who continues to bewilder many with his inconsistency. Goff sometimes looks great, but he's capable of a stinker performance against anyone. We got one of those in this contest, as Goff was clueless against the Seahawks. It didn't help that he banged his hand on the helmet of a Seattle player late in the afternoon. It is feared that he broke his thumb.

Meanwhile, Wilson was a superior 20-of-32 for 225 yards and two touchdowns (one passing, one rushing). Wilson didn't have a completely clean game; he should've fired an interception in the first quarter that was dropped, and he missed a wide-open Jacob Hollister for a touchdown. These two events occurred prior to intermission, as Wilson was much better in the second half, beginning with a 45-yard bomb to David Moore while scrambling out of the pocket.

While Wilson missed Hollister for a score, his lone touchdown was to Hollister, who caught two balls for 17 yards. D.K. Metcalf didn't find the end zone, but snatched six of his team-leading eight targets for 59 yards. He was guilty of a drop. Meanwhile, Tyler Lockett (3-44) was a disappointment.

The leading receiver in this game was Cooper Kupp, who logged eight balls for 66 yards, barely edging out Reynolds (6-65). Robert Woods (4-48) wasn't as productive as many expected him to be.

Darrell Henderson got hurt near the goal line, rushing for 62 yards on 12 carries. His absence forced Brown on to the field for that aforementioned horrible sequence at the goal line. Brown mustered 27 yards on seven attempts.

Chris Carson paced everyone in rushing, gaining 69 yards on 16 carries. He caught three passes, but for only 10 receiving yards.

Cowboys 37, Eagles 17

With the Redskins trailing the Panthers throughout Sunday afternoon, the Eagles had a golden opportunity to give themselves a great chance to win the NFC East. They appeared to take advantage of the opportunity by jumping out to a double-digit lead in the early going. They engineered a great touchdown drive to open the game, and then Jalen Hurts hit DeSean Jackson with an 81-yard touchdown bomb. Up 14-3, the Eagles were in full control.

Then, everything changed. The primary catalyst was the injury to Fletcher Cox. The dominant defensive tackle was questionable heading into this game without practicing all week, but he made the trip to Dallas and was made active before kickoff. However, he suffered a stinger and was ruled out when the Eagles were up 14-3. The result was a complete inability to stop the Dallas offense. The Eagles couldn't generate any sort of pass rush, so they had to resort to ineffective blitzes, which Andy Dalton was able to beat easily. The result was Dallas outscoring Philadelphia 34-3 to close out the afternoon.

Hurts had some great moments early in this game. His bomb to Jackson was a thing of beauty, and he also made some other impressive strikes. He appeared to score a rushing touchdown as well, though that was negated by replay review when it was seen that he barely stepped out of bounds. Hurts, however, regressed after that. He threw two interceptions, both of which were mental blunders. He didn't see the defender on his first pick, while the second interception was telegraphed. Hurts also lost a fumble while scrambling. This was all part of a disastrous second half in which it seemed like the Eagles were in second-and-long on every possession because of sacks or penalties.

Hurts finished 21-of-39 for 342 yards, one touchdown and the three turnovers. It was a very uneasy performance in what was an easy matchup. The Cowboys were down several starters, including Leighton Vander Esch, so Hurts should have played better, despite his inexperience.

Hurts led the Eagles in rushing with 69 yards on nine scrambles. He finished slightly ahead of Miles Sanders (15-57), who scored right after Hurts' rushing touchdown was overturned. He also had a nice run in the second half negated by a hold. Like Hurts, Sanders disappointed in an easy matchup.

Thanks to his 81-yard bomb, Jackson's sole catch was good enough to place him atop Philadelphia's receiving list. Save for someone named Quez Watkins (2-57), no other Eagle was close. Both Dallas Goedert and Zach Ertz each caught three balls for 38 and 33 yards, respectively. Jalen Reagor (3-30) disappointed.

The Dallas passing stats were much prettier. Two receivers eclipsed the century mark: Michael Gallup and Amari Cooper, both of whom logged exactly 121 receiving yards on six and four catches, respectively. The difference was that Gallup scored two touchdowns, while Cooper was kept out of the end zone. Cooper had a chance, but dropped a potential touchdown in the third quarter. CeeDee Lamb (3-65) also scored, and he drew an interference flag deep downfield.

Dalton posted a great stat line, going 22-of-30 for 377 yards, three touchdowns and an interception. With the Eagles unable to generate pressure without blitzing, Dalton shredded Philadelphia's secondary. Only Darius Slay was able to do something about it when he picked off an underthrown pass. The Eagles' other cornerbacks were abominations.

Ezekiel Elliott looked fat and out of shape for weeks after the Dak Prescott injury. He ran well for the first time in a long while in this contest, gaining 105 yards on just 19 carries. He also caught four passes for 34 receiving yards.





This Weeks Guaranteed Picks

Dallas at NY Giants
Pittsburgh at Cleveland
Baltimore at Cincinnati
San Francisco at Arizona
Miami at Buffalo
Green Bay at Chicago
Tennessee at Houston
New Orleans at Carolina
Seattle at San Francisco
Arizona at LA Rams
Washington at Philadelphia

[Click The Image To Go To NFL Guaranteed Picks](#)

Packers 40, Titans 14

This was a classic, snowy, windy game at Lambeau Field, so the team that could run the ball the best would have a big advantage in this matchup. Most would have assumed that the Titans would've held that distinction, but that was far from the case. Green Bay rammed the ball down the throat of Tennessee's defense despite the fact that Aaron Jones suffered an injury on the first drive of the evening.

With Jones hurt, a star was born. That was second-round rookie A.J. Dillon, who had done nothing this year ahead of this game. Dillon ran more like Derrick Henry than Henry did. He showed amazing power and burst. He moved piles and displayed enough shiftiness to avoid defenders in space. He wore down Tennessee's defense in the second half, as he and Jones tallied a combined 218 rushing yards.

Dillon finished with 124 yards and two touchdowns on 21 carries, while Jones gained 94 yards on just 10 attempts. Dillon was amazing all night, with his only blemish coming after his first touchdown when he failed to jump into the stands for the famous Lambeau Leap. He had to be helped on his second attempt, though the fans weren't in the stands to help him.

Aaron Rodgers fed off his prolific ground attack by torching Tennessee's beleaguered secondary, thanks to some great passing opportunities. Rodgers had all the time in the world, as he had his offensive line was healthy once again in the wake of Corey Linsley's return to action. That said, right tackle Ricky Wagner was carted into the locker room in the second half, so it remains to be seen if he'll be able to return for the playoffs.

Rodgers was a near-perfect 21-of-25 for 231 yards, four touchdowns and an interception. The pick was a head-scratcher, with Rodgers making a rookie mistake by throwing late across his body while scrambling out of the pocket. This was the only mistake of his on the night, however, as he strengthened his case to win MVP.

While Dillon performing well was a surprise to some, no one was shocked that Davante Adams dominated. Adams was awesome, catching 11 of his 12 targets for 142 yards and three touchdowns. He was unstoppable.

Besides Adams, no other Packer logged more than 21 receiving yards. Robert Tonyan (1-17) and Allen Lazard (2-14) didn't do much, though Tonyan should've drawn an interference flag in the end zone. Equanimeous St. Brown (1-21) caught Rodgers' other touchdown.

Tannehill didn't do well despite given opportunities to beat the Packer secondary. He failed to complete half of his passes, going 11-of-24 for 121 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions. He also scored on the ground via a 45-yard read-option scramble. The run was great, but Tannehill was abysmal as a passer. He didn't see Darnell Savage on his first pick, and he was hit as he threw on the second. He was lucky he wasn't intercepted four times, as Green Bay defenders dropped a pair of potential picks. He finished behind only A.J. Brown (4-43). Corey Davis didn't catch a single pass.

PRO FOOTBALL BEST BETS

ATLANTA + 7 Over Tampa Bay by 3

The Falcons enter this one at 4-11 on the year. Atlanta has lost their last four straight games to the Saints, Chargers, Buccaneers and Chiefs. As for Tampa Bay, they're 10-5 this season. The Buccaneers have won their last three straight versus the Vikings, Falcons and Lions.

Atlanta hasn't been able to gain much traction at all this year, and began the season with a five-game losing streak. After that it was an encouraging 3-1 run for the Falcons, but they've lost each of their last four games. Those defeats came 21-16 to the Saints, 20-17 to the Chargers, 31-27 to the Bucs and 17-14 to the Chiefs.

In the loss to Kansas City, Atlanta quarterback Matt Ryan managed 300 yards with two touchdowns. Ito Smith added 46 yards on 10 carries to lead the rush, and Calvin Ridley had a nice game on 130 yards from five catches as the top receiver.

Over on the Buccaneers' side, they kicked off the year at 7-2 but then ran into a 1-3 stretch with some tough matchups. Tampa Bay has looked good in their last three games though, winning 26-14 against the Vikings, 31-27 over the Falcons and 47-7 over the Lions in that trio.

In the win over Detroit, Tampa Bay quarterback Tom Brady managed 348 yards with four touchdowns on 22-of-27 passing. Mike Evans led the receivers with his 181 yards and two scores off 10 catches, and Ke'Shawn Vaughn was the top rusher on 62 yards from 15 carries.

Atlanta is 5-1 ATS in their last six games after a straight-up loss and 5-1 ATS in their last six games on grass. The Falcons are 11-5 ATS in their last 16 games as an underdog and 8-3 ATS in their last 11 road games.

Meanwhile, the Buccaneers are 4-9-2 ATS in their last 15 home games and 3-7 ATS in their last 10 versus the NFC South. Tampa Bay is 1-4 ATS in their last five after a straight-up win and 1-6 ATS in their last seven games in January.

The last time these teams met up wasn't that long ago: December 20, to be exact. Atlanta jumped out to a 17-0 lead at halftime before getting outscored 31-10 in the final two quarters to blow the game. Memories of that implosion will be fresh in the Falcons' minds here, and they'll more motivated than the Bucs. Falcons have revenge on their minds and the Bucs have no stake in this game as they prepare for the playoffs. Note that Atlanta held the Chiefs to just 17 points in their last game and that's impressive. I'm calling for an upset but I will not refuse the 7 points. **Give me the upset minded Falcons + 7.**

Projected Score: Atlanta 27, Tampa Bay 24

Indianapolis - 13½ Over Jacksonville by 24

The Jacksonville Jaguars look for a win to snap a 14-game losing streak. The Jacksonville Jaguars haven't won a road game since December of 2019. Gardner Minshew II is completing 66.1 percent of his passes for 2,259 yards, 16 touchdowns and five interceptions. Minshew and Mike Glennon have combined for 21 touchdown passes and 10 interceptions. DJ Chark Jr. and Keelan Cole Sr. have combined for 1,325 receiving yards and 10 touchdowns while Laviska Shenault Jr. has 52 receptions. The Jacksonville Jaguars ground game is averaging 97.7 yards per contest, and James Robinson leads the way with 1,070 yards and seven touchdowns. Defensively, Jacksonville is allowing 30.9 points and 416.4 yards per game. Joe Schobert leads the Jacksonville Jaguars with 132 tackles, Dawuane Smoot has 5.5 sacks and Sidney Jones has two interceptions.

The Indianapolis Colts have won five of their last seven home games. Philip Rivers is completing 68.3 percent of his passes for 4,005 yards, 23 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. Rivers has two or more touchdown passes in seven of his last 10 games. TY Hilton and Zach Pascal have combined for 1,323 receiving yards and nine touchdowns while Michael Pittman Jr. has 38 receptions. The Indianapolis Colts ground game is averaging 114.9 yards per contest, and Jonathan Taylor leads the way with 916 yards and nine touchdowns. Defensively, Indianapolis is allowing 23.2 points and 335.3 yards per game. Darius Leonard leads the Indianapolis Colts with 122 tackles, Justin Houston has 7.5 sacks and Kenny Moore II has four interceptions.

The Jaguars are 2-7 ATS in their last 9 vs. AFC and 4-9 ATS in their last 13 games overall. The Colts are 4-9 ATS in their last 13 vs. AFC and 1-4 ATS in their last 5 home games. The over is 11-5 in Jaguars last 16 vs.

AFC. The over is 8-3 in Colts last 11 games overall. The Jaguars are 3-1-1 ATS in their last 5 meetings in If I told you the following trend, would've you believed me? I think not, but the Jags are 9-1-1 ATS in their last 11 meetings. Trends are interesting but I've never been a trend handicapper win or lose. It's lazy handicapping.

So, based on that, what we have here is the Indianapolis Colts who need a win to give themselves a shot at the playoffs. Conversely, the Jacksonville Jaguars don't want to win and are happy to have the number one draft pick next year. The Jags aren't winning, aren't covering and have lost their last three games by an average of 23.6 points, round that up to 24 for my purposes.

The Indianapolis Colts will be well motivated after losing to the Steelers the way they did, and they need a win here to give themselves any shot at a playoff berth. Do you think Colts QB Rivers wants to be in the playoffs? OMG, he is one hungry veteran QB that will play his ass off in this game. This is a lot of chalk to lay, but the Jags give me no reason to look their direction after blowout loss after blowout loss. The Colts will not be letting up after last weeks come from behind loss. **Take the hungry Colts in a comfortable blowout win.**

Projected Score: Indianapolis 37, Jacksonville 13

Minnesota - 6½ Over Detroit by 17

The Vikings are sitting at 6-9 on the season. Minnesota has lost their last three straight games to the Buccaneers, Bears and Saints. As for Detroit, they're currently 5-10 on the year. The Lions have also lost three straight to the Packers, Titans and Buccaneers.

Minnesota opened up the season at a 1-5 pace, but got going toward the middle of the season with a 5-1 run that stretched into December. Since then however, it's been three consecutive losses for the Vikings. Those defeats came 26-14 to the Buccaneers, 33-27 to the Bears and 52-33 to the Saints.

In the loss to New Orleans, Minnesota quarterback Kirk Cousins posted 291 yards and three scores on 27-of-41 passing, while Dalvin Cook led the rush with 73 yards and a TD off 15 carries. Adam Thielen managed 97 yards and a score off eight receptions as well.

Over on the Detroit side, they opened the year on a 3-3 run but haven't had much luck since then. After one win in five games, the Lions took out Chicago on December 6. Since then it's been three straight losses to the Packers 31-24, the Titans 46-25 and the Buccaneers 47-7, though.

In the loss to Tampa Bay, Detroit quarterback Chase Daniel managed 86 yards on 13-of-18 passing. Danny Amendola led the receivers with his 37 yards from five catches, and D'Andre Swift topped a tepid rush with 10 carries for 45 yards.

The Vikings are 38-15 ATS in their last 53 after a straight-up loss and 0-6 ATS in their last six overall. Minnesota is 0-5 ATS in their last five after an ATS loss and 0-5 ATS in their last five versus the NFC.

Meanwhile, the Lions are 4-1 ATS in their last five games in Week 17 and 8-18 ATS in their last 26 overall. Detroit is 2-5 ATS in their last seven home games and 2-6 ATS in their last eight on turf.

However, it should end on a high note against a Lions squad that is coming off an embarrassing 47-7 loss against Tampa Bay. The Lions are giving up an average of 40 points over the past five games. They are a complete disaster on that side of the ball.

Detroit was massacred last Saturday and lost quarterback Matthew Stafford in the process. If the Lions are smart, they don't suit up Stafford to play a meaningless game, and the Vikings have the advantage of playing against Chase Daniel. The pointspread seems light, in my opinion. **Vikings win and cover rather handily.**

Projected Score: Minnesota 37, Detroit 20



Arizona + 5 Over LA Rams by 4

Arizona enters this one at 8-7 this year. The Cardinals had won consecutive games versus the Giants and Eagles before falling to the 49ers last weekend. As for the Rams, they're 9-6 this season. Los Angeles has lost consecutive games to the Jets and Seahawks in their last pair.

Arizona has had quite the rollercoaster season. The Cardinals opened up at 5-2 before winning just one of their next five games. Since then, it's been two wins over the Giants 26-7 and the Eagles 33-26, and then a 20-12 loss to San Francisco in Week 16.

In the loss to the 49ers, Arizona quarterback Kyler Murray posted 247 yards with one interception on 31-of-50 passing. Murray also led the rush with eight carries and 75 yards. Tops in receiving was Christian Kirk, who led the Cardinals on 76 yards from seven catches.

Over on the Rams' side, they came out of the gate at 7-3 over their first 10 games but have gone just 2-3 since. Two wins over the Cardinals and Patriots before LA gave the lowly Jets their first win 23-20. In Week 16, the Rams lost again to the Seahawks 20-9.

In the loss to Seattle, Los Angeles quarterback Jared Goff managed 234 yards with one interception on 24-of-43 passing. Darrell Henderson posted 12 carries for 62 yards, and Cooper Kupp was the top receiver with 66 yards off eight grabs.

Los Angeles has looked really ugly over the last two games, with just 29 combined points. The defense has been playing well over the last three games, but it's a lot to ask of them in holding down a Cardinals team that scores pretty well. Note that the Cardinals are 3-0-1 ATS in their last four games in Week 17 and 10-4-2 ATS in their last 16 road games. Furthermore, Los Angeles is 1-5-1 ATS in their last seven games in Week 17. I'm backing Arizona in what will be a hard fought game down to the wire. Arizona wins and trend is my friend.

Give me the hungry road warrior dog with points.

Projected Score: Arizona 21, LA Rams 17

THIS WEEKS GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET BEST BETS

NFL	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet
Regular season college football picks have ended. Order our popular bowl game newsletters below.				
NFL	Atlanta + 7	Indianapolis - 13½	Minnesota - 6½	Arizona + 5



Gridiron Gold Sheet Newsletters www.gridirongoldsheet.com

Gridiron Gold Football & MLB www.gridirongold.com

Gridiron Gold Basketball Picks www.guaranteedbasketballpicks.com

Horse Racing Tip Sheets www.horseracetipsheets.com

Customer Service support@gridirongold.com

Telephone: 702-623-9976