

## **Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter**

**Only \$1.25  
Per Pick**

68 NFL Previews & Picks  
68 CFB Previews & Picks

**Since 1981**

**Best Value Football Newsletter in the Nation**



**Dennis Stagliano's Award Winning Football Newsletters**

**[Click Here](#)**

Volume 40 Issue 10

November 3, 2021



# **TOUGH WEEK FOR THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AS 3 OF THEIR TEAMS LOSE**

## **NCAA Landscape**

College football week 9 is in the books. After every week fans can take away things from what happened on the field. Here are 5 things learned from college football week 9.

### **1. Kenneth Walker III is Getting Invited to New York**

The Heisman Trophy race has been lackluster this season, with many of the preseason candidates (Spencer Rattler and D.J. Uiagalelei) falling off. Running back Kenneth Walker III has taken advantage of the situation and has now firmly put himself in the Heisman Trophy conversation. Against the number two defense in the country, Walker rushed for 197 yards and five touchdowns. The win gave Michigan State a win over their in-state rivals and kept them undefeated.

The game and comeback against Michigan gave Walker a Heisman moment, which is important for every candidate. On the season, he has rushed for 1,194 yards and 14 touchdowns. He has added eight catches for 36 yards and a score. With four games left in the regular season, the Spartans are undefeated and Walker still has plenty of time to add to his ridiculous stat line. It would take a lot from this point on for him not to be invited to the Heisman Trophy Ceremony in New York City.

### **2. The SEC West is Confusing**

Ole Miss losing to Auburn has created a weird dynamic in the SEC West. Alabama sits as the favorite of the SEC West with just a loss to Texas A&M. After that though, it becomes a little crazier. Auburn is the only other team in their division with just one conference loss. They will of course play Alabama in the final game of the regular season. After them, Mississippi State, Texas A&M and Ole Miss all have two losses. The unpredictability of this division will get more clarity after week 10.

The Crimson Tide are the frontrunners to win the SEC West. They lost to Texas A&M though, who has two losses. If Alabama slips up, Texas A&M has the tiebreaker with them for two losses. If Auburn goes into the last game of the season against Alabama with just one conference loss, they could win the division with a win. Ole Miss and Mississippi State are sitting and waiting for chaos, which given how things have gone this season, isn't out of the question.

### **3. Miami is Rolling With Tyler Van Dyke**

Miami got off to a rough start to the season. Just a few weeks ago they sat at 2-4 with games against ranked teams on the horizon. They have since gone on to win their last two games to get back to .500. They were able to defeat two of the current favorites in the ACC, NC State and Pitt, both by one possession to help get their season back on track.

After D'Eriq King went down with an injury, the rest of the season looked bleak for the Hurricanes. Whether they would make a bowl game was in question. Tyler Van Dyke has risen to the occasion. The freshman has passed for 1,448 yards, 12 touchdowns and four interceptions on 63.4 percent completion. With Van Dyke, the Hurricanes look like they'll make a bowl game and the next couple of seasons could be special.

#### 4. Dan Mullen has Put Himself Nearer to the Hot Seat

Dan Mullen has built himself a lot of job stability over his time at Florida. He helped them win National Championships as an assistant to Urban Meyer. Since getting the head coaching job in 2018, he has made three New Year's Six Bowl games. But the last two seasons have been worse than his first two seasons, which highlights the frustrations of Florida fans.

After losing to Georgia in week 9, Florida sits at 4-4 on the season. Four losses ties Mullen's career-high for losses at Florida with four, which happened in 2020. They have one win over a solid team, and that is only if Tennessee, who is 4-4 is considered to be solid. There is a real possibility Florida finishes 6-6 this season. That may not be enough to get Dan Mullen fired, but the program certainly isn't heading in the right direction.

#### 5. Baylor and Oklahoma State are Still Threats in the Big 12

Oklahoma sits atop the Big 12 with an undefeated record. They blew out Texas Tech this weekend, but have looked shaky this year. Plenty of their games have been too close for comfort and on top of that, they still have some big games left. Two of the teams that could give them problems are Baylor and Oklahoma State.

Baylor defeated Texas this weekend to extend their record to 7-1. Dave Aranda has done a good job getting the program back in a position to compete for the Big 12. They play Oklahoma in two weeks, and will be tough for the Sooners because they boast a good rushing attack and defense. Oklahoma State destroyed Kansas a week after Oklahoma struggled against them. They too are 7-1. Their rushing attack and defense could also create problems for the Sooners. While Oklahoma has found some life with Caleb Williams at quarterback, they aren't out of the woods just yet.

#### **Last Week's Top Performers**

Tyler Allgeier (BYU vs. UVA): 29 rush, 266 yds, 5 TD

Kenneth Walker III (MSU vs. MICH): 23 rush, 197 yds, 5 TD

Sam Hartman (WAKE vs. DUKE): 24/37, 402 yds, 3 TD; 6 rush, 61 yds, 2 TD

Brennan Armstrong (UVA vs. BYU): 22/34, 337 yds, 4 TD; 11 rush, 94 yds, 2 TD

Caleb Williams (OKLA vs. TTU): 23/30, 402 yds, 6 TD

Tavion Thomas (UTAH vs. UCLA): 24 rush, 160 yds, 4 TD

Bailey Zappe (WKU vs. CHAR): 33/46, 393 yds, 4 TD; 1 rush TD

Jaren Hall (BYU vs. UVA): 22/37, 349 yds, 3 TD; 1 rush TD

#### **Last Week's Notable Team Numbers**

Most Yards: BYU vs. Virginia, 734 yards

Most Takeaways: Appalachian State vs. Louisiana-Monroe, 5 takeaways

Most Combined Yards: BYU (734) vs. Virginia (588), 1322 combined yards

Most Points: BYU vs. Virginia, 66 points

Biggest Margin of Victory: Oklahoma State (55) vs. Kansas (3), 52 points

Most Combined Points: BYU (66) vs. Virginia (49), 115 points

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### **Pittsburgh - 20 Over DUKE by 30**

The Pittsburgh Panthers and Duke Blue Devils meet Saturday in week 10 ACC college football action at Wallace Wade Stadium. The Pittsburgh Panthers look for a win after winning four of their last five games. The Duke Blue Devils need to snap a four-game losing streak.

The Pittsburgh Panthers are 3-0 on the road this season. Kenny Pickett is completing 69.2 percent of his passes for 2,755 yards, 26 touchdowns and three interceptions. Jordan Addison and Taysir Mack have combined for 1,276 receiving yards and 13 touchdowns while Jared Wayne has 29 receptions. The Pittsburgh Panthers ground game is averaging 160.4 yards per contest, and Israel Abanikanda leads the way with 431 yards and five touchdowns. Defensively, Pittsburgh is allowing 21.9 points and 341.3 yards per game. SirVocea Dennis leads the Pittsburgh Panthers with 45 tackles, Habakkuk Baldonado has 6.5 sacks and Damarri Mathis has two interceptions.

The Duke Blue Devils have won three of their last four home games. Gunnar Holmberg is completing 69.2 percent of his passes for 1,860 yards, six touchdowns and six interceptions. Jake Bobo and Jalon Calhoun have combined for 1,116 receiving yards and three touchdowns, while Mataeo Durant has 19 receptions. The Duke Blue Devils ground game is averaging 200.1 yards per contest, and Durant leads the way with 973 yards and nine touchdowns. Defensively, Duke is allowing 33.3 points and 473.8 yards per game. Shaka Heyward leads the Duke Blue Devils with 65 tackles, DeWayne Carter has 3.5 sacks and Leonard Johnson has two interceptions.

The Panthers are 4-0 ATS in their last 4 road games and 4-1 ATS in their last 5 games overall. The Blue Devils are 4-0 ATS in their last 4 home games and 1-8 ATS in their last 9 conference games. The over is 13-3 in Panthers last 16 games overall. The under is 4-0 in Blue Devils last 4 games overall..

This is a lot of points, but it's an indication of just how bad the Duke Blue Devils are. Duke has been held to 7 or fewer points in three of its last four weeks and has a defense that's ranked 122nd in total defense and 112th in scoring defense. The Panthers are 5-0 ATS in their last 5 meetings. The Pittsburgh Panthers have proven they can win on the road, and they're going to be motivated after slipping up against Miami last week. Kenny Pickett should have a field day against this Duke defense.

**Lay the big number with Pitt on the road**

**Projected Score: Pittsburgh 47, Duke 17**

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### **Wake Forest + 3 Over NORTH CAROLINA by 7**

The Wake Forest Demon Deacons and North Carolina Tar Heels meet Saturday in week 10 ACC college football action at Kenan Stadium. The Wake Forest Demon Deacons look for another win to build on their 8-0 record. The North Carolina Tar Heels look to get a game above a .500 record.

The Wake Forest Demon Deacons are 3-0 on the road this season. Sam Hartman is completing 65.2 percent of his passes for 2,475 yards, 22 touchdowns and three interceptions. Jaquarii Roberson and A.T. Perry have combined for 1,453 receiving yards and 14 touchdowns while Taylor Morin has 24 receptions. The Wake Forest Demon Deacons ground game is averaging 184 yards per contest, and Christian Beal-Smith leads the way with 492 yards and seven touchdowns. Defensively, Wake Forest is allowing 23.9 points and 422.1 yards per game. Ryan Smenda Jr. leads the Wake Forest Demon Deacons with 44 tackles, Rondell Bothroyd has five sacks and Traveon Redd has three interceptions.

The North Carolina Tar Heels have won four of their last five home games. Sam Howell is completing 63.2 percent of his passes for 2,192 yards, 19 touchdowns and seven interceptions. Josh Downs and Antoine Green have combined for 1,315 receiving yards and 10 touchdowns, while Emery Simmons has 11 receptions. The North Carolina Tar Heels ground game is averaging 202.1 yards per contest, and Ty Chandler leads the way with 671 yards and nine touchdowns. Defensively, North Carolina is allowing 30.8 points and 397.3 yards per game. Cedric Gray leads the North Carolina Tar Heels with 46 tackles, Myles Murphy has four sacks and Ja'Quirious Conley has two interceptions.

The Demon Deacons are 4-1 ATS in their last 5 games as an underdog and 2-5 ATS in their last 7 games on grass. The Tar Heels are 1-4 ATS in their last 5 games overall. The over is 5-1 in Demon Deacons last 6 road games. The over is 5-2 in Tar Heels last 7 games overall. The Demon Deacons are 1-4 ATS in their last 5 meetings in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Tar Heels have the offensive talent to win this game and are probably the more talented team on paper. However, UNC has underachieved all season long and doesn't play a lick of defense. In addition they're coming off a bruising battle from last week vs Notre Dame. The Wake Forest Demon Deacons have done nothing but win games this season, are competing for a playoff spot, and still gets disrespected by oddsmakers. This game should be a shootout. Wait till Wake Forest players see this disrespectful pointspread line, the motivation should be through the roof. Motivation should be sky high for the Deacons. **Give me Wake Forest and the free points.**

**Projected Score: Wake Forest 41, North Carolina 34**

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### FLORIDA ST + 3 Over NC State by 7

The NC State Wolfpack and Florida State Seminoles meet Saturday in week 10 ACC college football action at Doak Campbell Stadium. The NC State Wolfpack look for a win after winning five of their last six games. The Florida State Seminoles need a win after splitting their last six games.

The NC State Wolfpack have lost two of their last three road games. Devin Leary is completing 66.1 percent of his passes for 2,161 yards, 21 touchdowns and two interceptions. Emeka Emezie and Thayer Thomas have combined for 942 receiving yards and eight touchdowns, while Devin Carter has 23 receptions. The NC State Wolfpack ground game is averaging 143.8 yards per contest, and Zonovan Knight leads the way with 542 yards and three touchdowns. Defensively, NC State is allowing 16.3 points and 327.9 yards per game. Drake Thomas leads the NC State Wolfpack with 68 tackles, Davin Vann has 2.5 sacks and Cyrus Fagan has one interception.

The Florida State Seminoles have lost three of their last five home games. Jordan Travis is completing 62.9 percent of his passes for 812 yards, 11 touchdowns and five interceptions. Keyshawn Helton and Ontaria Wilson have combined for 440 receiving yards and four touchdowns, while Andrew Parchment has 12 receptions. The Florida State Seminoles ground game is averaging 209.3 yards per contest, and Jashaun Corbin leads the way with 714 yards and five touchdowns. Defensively, Florida State is allowing 26.9 points and 387.5 yards per game. Jammie Robinson leads the Florida State Seminoles with 54 tackles, Jermaine Johnson II has 7.5 sacks and Travis Jay has two interceptions.

The Seminoles are 4-9 ATS in their last 13 home games and 2-5 ATS in their last 7 games overall. The over is 7-3 in Wolfpack last 10 road games. The over is 5-2 in Seminoles last 7 home games.

The NC State Wolfpack are the better and more successful team, but they've struggled on the road this season, and their inability to run the ball consistently sells their offense short. The Florida State Seminoles just took Clemson down to the wire on the road last week, and they're a feisty team that is still playing hard and competing. Tough road game for NC State and the Wolfpack are 4-12 ATS in their last 16 road games. **Give me FSU and the free field goal.**

**Projected Score: Florida State 31, North Carolina St 24**

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Iowa - 11 Over NORTHWESTERN by 21

The Iowa Hawkeyes and the Northwestern Wildcats meet Saturday in Big Ten college football action from Ryan Field. Iowa played Wisconsin in their last outing. In that one, the Hawkeyes fell by 20 points. As for the Wildcats, they're coming off a game versus Minnesota. Northwestern ended up losing in a blowout there.

Iowa kicked off the 2021 season with six straight wins, taking out Indiana, Iowa State, Kent State, Colorado State, Maryland and Penn State in succession. The Hawkeyes couldn't keep it going against Purdue and fell 24-7 in a flat outing.

Last weekend versus Wisconsin, Iowa was flat from the beginning, taking a 20-0 deficit into the half on the way to a 27-7 defeat. QB Spencer Petras had just 93 yards, and Tyler Goodson led the tepid rushing attack with 27 yards from 13 carries.

Over on the Northwestern side, they went 3-3 over their first half-dozen games, losing to Michigan State, Duke and Nebraska while otherwise taking out Indiana State, Ohio and Rutgers. The Wildcats would then fall 33-7 to Michigan on October 23.

In the Minnesota game last weekend, Northwestern fell behind 20-7 at halftime and couldn't bridge the gap in a 41-14 blowout loss. QB Andrew Marty had 93 yards and two scores on 10-of-16 passing, and Evan Hull put up 107 yards on 15 carries.

The Hawkeyes are 5-1 ATS in their last six road games and 4-1 ATS in their last five on grass. Iowa is also 8-3-1 ATS in their last 12 conference games. Meanwhile, the Wildcats are 4-1 ATS in their last five in November and 7-3 ATS in their last 10 home games. Northwestern is 5-2 ATS in their last seven after a straight-up loss as well.

The Hawkeyes put up a dismal 156 total yards against Wisconsin, notching just nine first downs and 2.8 yards per play. The three fumbles and 2-of-13 line on third downs didn't help, either. It was an ugly, fluke effort from a team that really has no business playing so flatly. As for Northwestern, they did a few good things against Minnesota but overall had a poor game themselves with 442 yards, 29 first downs and 10-of-14 on third-down tries allowed. Iowa should bounce back strong, and I don't see the Wildcats staying in range here. **Lay the lumber is what will be a comfortable win and cover. Projected Score: Iowa 31, Northwestern 10**

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

### San Diego St. - 7 Over HAWAII by 17

The San Diego State Aztecs and Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors meet Saturday in week 10 MWC college football action at the Clarence T.C. Ching Athletics Complex. The San Diego State Aztecs look for a win to build on their 7-1 record. The Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors need a win here to get back to a .500 record.

The San Diego State Aztecs have won all three road games this season. Lucas Johnson is completing 58.1 percent of his passes for 526 yards, 5 touchdowns and 3 interceptions. Daniel Bellinger and Elijah Kothe have combined for 379 receiving yards and 2 touchdowns, while Jesse Matthews has 17 receptions. The San Diego State Aztecs ground game is averaging 200.1 yards per contest, and Greg Bell leads the way with 666 yards and 6 touchdowns. Defensively, San Diego State is allowing 17.5 points and 305.1 yards per game. Patrick McMorris leads the San Diego State Aztecs with 54 tackles, Cameron Thomas has 5.5 sacks and Tayler Hawkins has two interceptions.

The Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors have won three of their last four home games. Chevan Cordeiro is completing 55.4 percent of his passes for 1,706 yards, 10 touchdowns and 7 interceptions. Nick Mardner and Calvin Turner Jr. have combined for 1,239 receiving yards and 6 touchdowns, while Jared Smart has 21 receptions. The Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors ground game is averaging 157.7 yards per contest, and Dae Dae Hunter leads the way with 558 yards and 3 touchdowns. Defensively, Hawai'i is allowing 33.9 points and 461.6 yards per game. Darius Muasau leads the Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors with 71 tackles, Jonah Laulu has 4 sacks and Khoury Bethley has 3 interceptions.

The Hawaii Rainbow Warriors are usually thought of as a tough out at home, and they have enough decent offense to hang around. However the Rainbow Warriors are 14-31-1 ATS in their last 46 home games and 17-36 ATS in their last 53 conference games and the Aztecs are 6-2-1 ATS in their last 9 meetings.

The San Diego State Aztecs have been the class of the MWC this season, they're physical in the trenches and their quality defense is going to be the difference here. San Diego State also waxed Hawaii last year by a score of 34-10. Hawaii just can't get down and dirty with San Diego State.

**I'll gladly lay the touchdown and take the Aztecs.**

**Projected Score: San Diego St. 31, Hawaii 14**



## **JETS & COLTS IN A SHOOTOUT & NEW ENGLAND & BUFFALO FLEX MUSCLES**

### **NFL Landscape**

#### **Packers 24, Cardinals 21**

Much was made about the Packers missing Davante Adams, Allen Lazard and Marquez Valdes-Scantling heading into this Thursday night affair, but the Cardinals had dire injury issues as well. They were missing three offensive linemen and J.J. Watt. DeAndre Hopkins, meanwhile, was questionable after failing to practice all week. Hopkins started, but was knocked out of the game following his first catch. He eventually returned to action in the second half, but by the time he did, it was too late.

The Hopkins absence had a profound impact on Arizona's offense. His only first-half catch, a 55-yarder, set up an early touchdown. The Cardinals didn't score a single point when he was on the sideline, thanks to some poor blocking, and they began moving the ball successfully once again upon his return. However, the Cardinals were already trailing the Packers when he was cleared to play again.

With Arizona's offense doing nothing for two quarters, the defense needed to clamp down on the Adams-less Packer offense. This wouldn't have been an issue the prior week, but the Cardinals' defense has fundamentally changed without Watt. They were terrific against the run with Watt, but that wasn't the case in this contest. Aaron Jones and A.J. Dillon combined for 137 rushing yards on 31 carries.

Jones (15-59) appeared to score his second touchdown of the evening with less than three minutes remaining to extend Green Bay's lead to 10, but replay review overturned it. Aaron Rodgers' fourth-down pass at the goal line was tipped by Devon Kennard, so Arizona, down three, had new life.

Kyler Murray made the most of it. He hit A.J. Green and Christian Kirk for gains of 23 and 29 yards, respectively, to move over midfield. Following a 23-yard completion to Chase Edmonds, the Cardinals were suddenly in the red zone. However, Murray fired a pass on second-and-goal at the 5-yard line toward Green in the end zone. Green, inexplicably, was not looking for the ball. This allowed

cornerback Rasul Douglas to snatch the decisive interception.

It was a shame Murray's evening ended so miserably because he was able to have a gutsy performance, given that Hopkins was missing half the game, while three offensive linemen were absent. Murray was also limping around at the end because he landed awkwardly on a scramble during the final offensive drive. Murray finished 22-of-33 for 274 yards and two interceptions to go along with underwhelming rushing yards (6-21). Murray's first interception bounced off the fingertips of Rondale Moore, who was also responsible for giving the Packers three points on a muffed punt.

Murray's fantasy owners have to feel frustrated. Not only did they miss out on a touchdown at the end; they had to watch as the Arizona running backs vultured all the scores. Edmonds ran into the end zone once, gaining 30 yards on seven carries. James Conner notched two touchdowns to go with his stat line of five attempts and 22 yards.

Despite missing half the game, Hopkins still led the Cardinals in receiving with two catches for 66 yards. He appeared to score a touchdown on his 55-yard reception, but that was negated by his own face mask penalty. Green snatched five balls for 50 yards, but let his team down at the very end. Kirk (4-46) didn't do much outside of his long reception on the final possession, while Zach Ertz (4-42) made a key fourth-down conversion.

The Packers, meanwhile, didn't get much out of their receiving corps. With Adams, Lazard and Valdes-Scantling sidelined, the backup receivers struggled. Juwann Winfree led the group with four catches for 30 yards, but made some mental mistakes. Randall Cobb scored twice, but caught just three passes for 15 yards. Neither Equanimeous St. Brown (2-12) and Amari Rodgers (1-7) accomplished much. Malik Taylor, the best of the bunch, didn't play on offense for some reason.

Two Packers outgained all of these wideouts in receiving yards. Aaron Jones paced the team with seven catches for 51 yards, while Robert Tonyan (3-49) was having a fine performance until he left the game with a knee injury.

As a result of a meager receiving corps, Aaron Rodgers' passing stats weren't nearly as impressive as they usually are. He went 22-of-37 for just 184 yards, but he managed to throw two touchdowns.

### **Jets 34, Bengals 31**

The Jets have a good, young quarterback on their roster, and it's not Zach Wilson. Perhaps it'll be Wilson one day, but the former BYU product has gotten off to a poor start in his career. He was replaced by Mike White in last week's loss, but the Jets didn't think much of their alternative choice, opting to trade for Joe Flacco.

White, however, made that deal look even more unnecessary than it already was. He completed his first 11 passes in this game for 93 yards, but luck ran out when he tossed an interception on a deflection. White was then picked again when a pass of his bounced off the hands of Michael Carter. It appeared as though Cinderella's carriage turned into a pumpkin early, as the Bengals were likely to establish complete control of the game.

White, however, kept the Jets hanging around, even after appearing to suffer an injury in the third quarter. He engineered a touchdown drive when the Bengals were up 11, and when the defense forced a Joe Burrow interception on a Shaq Lawson deflection, White took advantage by hitting former Bengal tight end Tyler Kroft for the decisive score.

White finished 37-of-45 for 405 yards, three touchdowns and the two interceptions that weren't his fault. I'd like to emphasize how impressed I was with White. His accuracy was off the charts. Nearly every pass he fired was right at the numbers. Even his two picks were right on the money, but happened to be deflected. White tossed lots of passes to his running backs, but he also fired some darts on slants and fit passes into tight windows. His touchdown pass to Braxton Berrios was a thing of beauty, as he heaved the ball while drifting backward while under pressure. He later made a terrific 15-yard pass after doing a play-action fake and rolling left.

White had some negative moments, however. He could've tossed a legitimate interception, but the potential pick was dropped on a third-and-5. He also made an Alex Smith-type checkdown, hurling the ball just three yards on a third-and-9. White took a bad sack rather than throwing the ball away. He also missed Elijah Moore a deep touchdown, which was one of his rare inaccurate passes on the day. Still, these were the only plays in which White didn't excel. He was exceptional in his first NFL start. He's only 26, so perhaps he's the Jets' future. We'll get a better idea of his potential on Thursday when the Jets battle the Colts.

White passed the most to Carter, who had a huge game. He rushed for 77 yards and a touchdown on 15 carries, but did most of his work as a receiver out of the backfield. He caught nine passes for 95 receiving yards, though he was responsible for one of White's interceptions. Still, Carter had an amazing performance. He broke countless tackles. He also showed off an awesome stiff-arm on a 7-yard gain while the Jets were running out the clock.

Aside from White, Jamison Crowder paced the Jets in receiving with eight catches for 84 yards. However, Crowder lost a fumble at the end of his 26-yard reception. Ty Johnson (5-71) also had a big receiving game, and he also caught a touchdown. Moore (6-67) contributed as well. He should've scored a touchdown, but as mentioned, White missed him.

The Bengals, meanwhile, have to be disappointed after coming off such an impressive victory at Baltimore. They have only themselves to blame. They made plenty of mistakes in this contest, beyond Burrow's interception while up four. Ja'Marr Chase dropped two passes in the first quarter, one of which occurred in the end zone. Burrow took a bad sack on a fourth down, negating a field goal try. Burrow also fumbled on a strip-sack because he held on to the ball for an eternity, and then he missed Tyler Boyd for a touchdown. Of course, the biggest mistake of all was the interception Burrow threw while up four points with four minutes remaining.

Burrow had some bright moments as well, however, going 21-of-34 for 259 yards, three touchdowns and the game-losing interception. He would've tossed a fourth score had Chase not dropped the ball in the end zone.

Speaking of Chase, he eventually caught a touchdown, but had a disappointing game overall, snatching just three of his nine targets for 32 yards. Tee Higgins (4-97) and Boyd (5-69) had better performances, with the latter also scoring. Higgins nearly found the end zone, but was tackled at the 2-yard line on one of his catches.

Joe Mixon was the Bengals' top fantasy performer. He was limited to just 33 yards on 14 carries, but scored a touchdown. He also caught four passes for 58 receiving yards and a second touchdown.

## **49ers 33, Bears 22**

One of the greatest criticisms of Matt Nagy's development of Justin Fields (or lack thereof) has been that he hasn't designed rushing plays for Fields. It's no coincidence that in Nagy's illness-related absence, Fields ran more than ever. Fields had some terrific scrambles in this game, including one rush where he danced around several 49er defenders to score a touchdown on a fourth-and-1 during the final quarter. The Bears, who led 16-9 in this contest, appeared as though they would tie the game at 23, but a missed extra point put them down one point.

All the Bears needed was a stop from their defense, but they didn't get it. Chicago's pathetic defense, which didn't force a single punt throughout the entire afternoon, gave up long runs, with Elijah Mitchell picking up big chunks of yardage at will. Akiem Hicks' return to the lineup was supposed to help the rush defense, but that was hardly the case.

The 49ers scored 10 points on two fourth-quarter drives while nursing a lead, and Fields couldn't keep up. He took a sack on third down on his first possession, then fired an interception on the next drive to end the game. The pick wasn't Fields' fault at all; he heaved a deep bomb toward Darnell Mooney. The young receiver leapt for the ball and appeared to have it in his hands, but the ball

bounced off his fingers and went into the arms of Josh Norman to end the game.

Despite the failed fourth-quarter drives, Fields still had a solid performance, going 19-of-27 for 175 yards, one touchdown and the pick. He also scrambled 10 times for 103 rushing yards and another score. Fields looked tremendous at times, even as a passer. Fields made an incredible 22-yard throw to Marquise Goodwin through a tight window on a third-and-13 in the third quarter, for instance. Fields should have thrown a second score, but Cole Kmet dropped a pass in the end zone. That said, Fields made a few bad misfires, including a horrible overthrow of Allen Robinson in the third quarter.

Fields failed to connect with Robinson yet again, with Robinson catching only three passes for 21 yards. Robinson also had a fumble, but a teammate recovered. Mooney (6-64) paced the Bears in receiving. Fields' lone aerial score went to Jesse James (3-38).

While Fields compiled some great rushing figures, the same can't be said of Khalil Herbert, who rushed for only 72 yards on 23 carries. The 49ers have struggled against the run, so this result was surprising at first glance. However, Herbert made some nice runs in this game. He had an early gain of nine to pick up a first down, and he appeared to convert a third-and-14 with a reception in the opening quarter, but the play was negated by an ineligible player downfield. However, he made a blunder in the third quarter when he fumbled a pitch. He recovered the ball, but the loss of five ruined a drive.

Mitchell, conversely, gashed the Bears mercilessly. He gained 137 yards and a touchdown on just 18 attempts. Unfortunately for Mitchell owners, they missed out on a much greater afternoon because Jimmy Garoppolo vultured two touchdowns via scrambles.

Speaking of Garoppolo, he enjoyed an incredible passing day, as he went 17-of-28 for 322 yards. Eighty-three of the yards came on a Deebo Samuel slip screen on a third-and-20, which the Bears inexplicably surrendered. Samuel appeared to score, but replay review ruled him just shy of the goal line.

Samuel, who missed out on the touchdown, caught six passes for 171 yards. He hurt his team with two drops on the opening drive, but more than made up for it with some amazing catches. Brandon Aiyuk (4-45), meanwhile, didn't have a completely negative game for once.

### **Panthers 19, Falcons 13**

The Falcons received some shocking news prior to kickoff, and that was Calvin Ridley's decision to sit for personal reasons. Things got even more surprising as the day progressed, as Ridley penned a letter, declaring his retirement. The Falcons played as though they were deflated by the Ridley news, losing this game by multiple scores until a last-second kick.

This was a sloppy contest where both teams were guilty of blunders. The Panthers began the game with a Chuba Hubbard lost fumble on the very first play, setting up an Atlanta field goal. D.J. Moore then dropped a touchdown, forcing a field goal try. The Panthers then allowed a touchdown to Cordarrelle Patterson on a miserable tackling attempt by linebacker Jermaine Carter, giving the Falcons a 10-3 lead.

Things seemed dire for the Panthers at the time, but Atlanta wouldn't end up scoring for the rest of the afternoon until the final seconds. Things turned when a Carolina player stepped on Matt Ryan's non-throwing hand. There was blood gushing everywhere, but Ryan remained in the game. However, he threw an interception on the very next play, as he apparently didn't see Shaq Thompson. This began the Falcons' misery, with Kyle Pitts dropping a third-down pass and then Younghoe Koo missing from 45, his first errant kick of the year. The Panthers moved the chains well enough amid Atlanta's errors to win the game.

Despite the victory, Darnold won't be feeling great because he was knocked out of the game with a concussion late in the fourth quarter. He went 13-of-24 for only 129 yards, doing most of his damage as a scrambler. He rushed eight times for 66 yards.

Moore was Carolina's leading receiver with four catches for 59 yards, but hurt his fantasy owners with the dropped touchdown. Aside from Ameer Abdullah, he was the only Panther with more than 18 receiving yards. Robby Anderson didn't catch a single pass, and he even dropped his sole target. He took a crushing, legal hit on the play, but missed only a bit of time.

The good news for Chuba Hubbard was that he rushed for 82 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries. The bad news is that he lost his receiving role. He caught just one pass for nine receiving yards, while Abdullah (3-35) handled most of the pass-catching duties.

As for the Falcons, Ryan completed most of his passes - he went 20-of-27 - but threw for just 146 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions. With limited weaponry, Ryan simply couldn't produce anything, especially after his non-throwing hand got crushed. The Carolina pass rush also overwhelmed the Atlanta offensive line.

With Ridley gone, Tajae Sharpe led the Falcons in receiving with five grabs for 58 yards. Pitts (2-13) was a huge disappointment, especially with his big drop.

Mike Davis and Patterson each rushed the ball nine times for 44 and 35 yards, respectively. Patterson caught all five of his targets for 37 receiving yards and the aforementioned touchdown.

### **Steelers 15, Browns 10**

The Browns had extra time to prepare for this game in the wake of their Thursday night victory over the Broncos, and they were set to get some players back from injury, including Baker Mayfield and Nick Chubb. They didn't play that way, however, as they suffered a disappointing loss to the Steelers in which they committed numerous mistakes.

The errors began innocently enough, as Nick Chubb was stuffed on a fourth-and-1 on the Pittsburgh 40-yard line, and D'Ernest Johnson dropped a third-down pass in the opening half. Baker Mayfield, meanwhile, held the ball too long in the pocket and had trouble connecting with his receivers at times with some poor accuracy in the opening half; he overshot Austin Hooper for a potential touchdown and then fired behind two of his receivers. Mayfield appeared to get very engaged in this game when he took a big hit out of bounds and pumped up the crowd after he got back on his feet in the middle of the fourth quarter. Down 15-10, the Browns appeared to be in great shape with what appeared to be the game-winning drive.

Instead, the mistakes continued, with Jarvis Landry making every error after that. Landry lost a fumble in Pittsburgh territory, ending a 5-minute possession. The Browns had one more chance after that, but Landry dropped two passes, with one happening on fourth down.

The Steelers, meanwhile, had their own adventures. They made a curious decision to try a fake field goal in a 3-3 tie in the second quarter, but kicker Chris Boswell suffered an injury on the throw. He wasn't available to kick in the second half, so the Steelers had to go for two following each of their touchdowns. They also couldn't try a field goal at the end to make it an 18-10 game, but they were able to run out the clock so the Browns wouldn't have another chance.

Cleveland could have gotten the ball back earlier, but Diontae Johnson made a 50-yard catch to seal the victory. Johnson caught six passes for 98 yards, as he was the only Steeler with more than 50 receiving yards. Pat Freiermuth (4-44) caught Roethlisberger's sole touchdown, which was an acrobatic reception in the end zone, while Chase Claypool finished just ahead of him with four grabs for 45 yards.

Roethlisberger finished 22-of-34 for 266 yards and a touchdown. He should have thrown a pick in the third quarter when he fired a ball right to a pair of Cleveland players, but they combined for a drop by getting in each other's way. The Browns put some pressure on Roethlisberger, but he had more time in the pocket than usual. It's possible that the Browns' defense believed they didn't have to play as hard with Mayfield back in the lineup.

The Browns' front had trouble bringing down Najee Harris, who rumbled for 91 yards and a touchdown on 26 carries. He caught three passes for 29 receiving yards. He was excellent in short-yardage situations.

Cleveland's running game wasn't nearly as effective. Chubb was limited to 61 yards on 16 carries, and to make matters worse for his fantasy owners, D'Ernest Johnson (4-22) vultured a touchdown.

Mayfield didn't look quite right coming back from his injury, going 20-of-31 for 225 yards. As mentioned earlier, he held the ball way too long in the pocket sometimes, and he fired some inaccurate passes. Protection was a problem with right tackle Jack Conklin getting knocked out of the game with an elbow injury in the first half.

That said, the Browns likely would have prevailed had Landry not made all of those errors late in the game. Landry actually led the team with five catches for 65 yards, but he was awful down the stretch. And speaking of awful, Odell Beckham Jr. caught only one pass for six yards. Beckham nearly came up with a deep reception in the fourth quarter to set up the Browns with a first-and-goal, but Mayfield's pass was off the mark once again.

### **Titans 34, Colts 31**

The Colts appeared as though they would run away with a blowout victory. They were up 14-0, thanks to some clutch fourth-down conversions on the opening drive and a Ryan Tannehill interception. Indianapolis even possessed the ball with the two-touchdown lead, but the Colts had their first miscue on fourth down for once, as Carson Wentz horribly overthrew Michael Pittman. The Titans, suddenly with life, scored a touchdown on a short field.

While the failed fourth down helped the Titans stay alive, the game really turned when Tannehill tossed his second pick. He once again failed to see a player in coverage, and this time, it was Tyquan Lewis who snatched the pick and made a return into Tennessee territory. However, Lewis suffered a non-contact injury and collapsed without being touched. He fumbled the ball, and the Titans recovered. One play later, Tannehill found A.J. Brown for a 57-yard touchdown that featured one of the worst tackling efforts you'll ever see from Xavier Rhodes.

The Colts entered halftime with a 17-14 lead, but it felt like a failure of a half because they outplayed the Titans and yet they led by just three. That slim lead quickly vanished when Tennessee scored a touchdown on the opening drive of the second half, as Tannehill scrambled for a first down on a scramble, and Brown made some big plays and even served as a distraction on Tannehill's touchdown pass to Nick Westbrook.

The teams exchanged scores, and the Colts took over in a 24 tie at their own 8-yard line. Wentz tried to throw a screen, but pressure disallowed him to release the pass. He held on to the ball for too long and eventually heaved it when he was being tackled in his own end zone. The pass was picked for six, giving the Titans a 31-24 lead.

It seemed as though the Colts were finished, but Wentz engineered a tying drive with a deep throw to Michael Pittman and long pass interference. Indianapolis even won the coin toss in overtime, but an uncalled pass interference forced the punt. The Colts retained possession after forcing the Titans into a punt, but Wentz inexplicably heaved the ball into double coverage on a first down. There was no reason for Wentz to hurl a desperation toss like that, yet he did, and the Titans took advantage, as a pass to Brown set up the Titans for the decisive field goal.

Wentz finished 27-of-51 for 231 yards, three touchdowns and two interceptions. It appears as though the Colts have wasted their first-round pick in the trade for Wentz, who killed his team with the two picks in this crucial game. Wentz was hurt by T.Y. Hilton leaving the game with an injury, but that doesn't excuse his decision-making in the fourth quarter and overtime.

Wentz's preferred receiver was Pittman, who caught 10 of his 15 targets for 86 yards and two touchdowns. Pittman, who dropped a deep pass, did much of this even when Hilton was in the game.

Hilton (2-16) got banged up twice and exited for good the second time. Jack Doyle (2-12) reeled in Wentz's third score.

Jonathan Taylor had some nice gains, especially on the opening drive when he caught a 37-yard pass. Taylor rushed for 70 yards and a touchdown on just 16 carries, and he also caught three balls for 52 receiving yards. He had a 20-yard rush negated by a Braden Smith hold.

Taylor, despite getting only 70 rushing yards, managed to outgain Derrick Henry, who mustered only 68 yards on 28 attempts. Henry appeared to get injured at one point in the first half, but remained in the game. The Colts' run defense was excellent.

Tannehill had a similar stat line compared to Wentz, going 23-of-33 for 265 yards, three touchdowns and two interceptions. Tannehill had issues seeing Indianapolis players dropping into coverage, but he made some big plays to put his team in position to win the game. Unlike Wentz, Tannehill didn't make any horrible mistakes at the end of the game. He appeared to suffer a concussion when his head slammed to the ground at the end of regulation, but he was able to remain on the field.

Brown was a monster in this contest, snatching 10 of his 11 targets for 155 yards and a touchdown. No other Titan logged more than 33 receiving yards.

### **Rams 38, Texans 22**

Sometimes NFL scores can be misleading. This is one of those instances. The Rams dominated this game from start to finish, eventually leading 38-0. In fact, they could have held a greater advantage if it weren't for two dropped passes in the red zone during the opening half. Still, Los Angeles had a 24-0 lead heading into intermission, outgaining Houston, 286-92, at that juncture of the game.

The Rams pulled their starters when they led 38-0. The Texans were able to engineer a couple of scoring drives and then recovered an onside kick and found the end zone a third time. They went for two, covering the spread in the process for a horrifying bad beat for those who bet the Rams at the closing number. It's just one of those years.

Matthew Stafford went 21-of-32 for 305 yards and three touchdowns. He could've enjoyed a better game if it weren't for the two red zone drops, or if the Texans managed to stay competitive.

Like Stafford, Darrell Henderson missed out on a big game because of the blowout. He rushed for 90 yards on only 14 carries, but he scored two touchdowns.

It should be no surprise that Cooper Kupp paced the Rams in receiving. He didn't have a monster performance for once, however, as he caught seven passes for 115 yards and a touchdown. Robert Woods, meanwhile, scored twice, with one touchdown coming on a running play. He caught three passes for 35 yards and also scored on a 16-yard rush. Van Jefferson (3-88) caught a 68-yard pass.

As for the Texans, they posted some misleading stats late in the game. Davis Mills finished 29-of-38 for 310 yards, two touchdowns and an interception, but he didn't hit 100 yards until the third quarter. The same can be said of Brandin Cooks; he snatched six balls for 83 yards and a touchdown, but logged just one reception in the opening half.

### **Bills 26, Dolphins 11**

The Bills continued to stack up wins to pull away in the AFC East, while Miami's losing streak was extended to seven straight. The Dolphins' offensive struggles could prompt them to be more aggressive at trying to acquire Deshaun Watson before the trade deadline on Wednesday.

To open the first quarter, the Dolphins had a good drive, with Tua Tagovailoa connecting with DeVante Parker for a few conversions, but Jason Sanders missed a chip-shot field goal. The Bills took advantage with Josh Allen taking off on a 34-yard run and Tyler Bass drilled a 57-yard field goal. Miami responded with a field goal drive that was keyed by a 22-yard completion to Myles Gaskin (12-36 rushing, 3-19 receiving). Throughout the first half, both teams struggled to sustain or finish drives, as both defenses came through with some clutch stops. Just before the half, Miami was inside the

Buffalo 20, but Mike Gesicki (3-48) fumbled the ball away to keep the score locked at 3-3 at intermission.

The Bills' offense finally put a drive together midway through the third quarter thanks to some good gains by Zack Moss and Devin Singletary. Allen then found Gabriel Davis all alone in busted coverage for an eight-yard touchdown. Cole Beasley was gave Miami fits, including making a 14-yard reception to convert a third-and-13. Early in the fourth quarter, Allen put the Dolphins in a big hole with a 19-yard touchdown pass to Stefon Diggs.

Miami finally got moving with Tagovailoa completing passes to Jaylen Waddle and Parker to approach midfield. A 40-yard completion to Gesicki set up a first-and-goal that Tagovailoa ran in for a touchdown. Tagovailoa hit Gesicki for a two-point conversion to make the score 17-11.

The Bills started working the clock after that, helped by Beasley came up with a clutch 20-yard reception for a third-down conversion, and Josh Allen bulled through a bunch of tackles on run of about 15 yards. Buffalo settled for a field goal to go up 20-11 with 3:29 remaining. A minute later, Jordan Poyer intercepted Tagovailoa and returned the ball inside the 20. Allen ran the ball into the end zone to clinch the win for Buffalo.

Allen was 29-of-42 for 249 yards and two touchdowns. He ran for 55 yards and a touchdown as well. Beasley (10-110) and Stefon Diggs (5-40-1) led Buffalo in receiving. Tagovailoa completed 21-of-39 passes for 205 yards and an interception. He also scored a rushing touchdown. Parker (8-85) was Miami's leading receiver.

### **Eagles 44, Lions 6**

The Eagles cruised over the hapless Lions, who were out-coached and outplayed. Jalen Hurts did not have to do much, thanks to Philadelphia's ground offense dominating Detroit. Josh Sweat led a suffocating pass rush that racked up six sacks. A rattled Jared Goff put up his typical poor play when under pressure. It was an ugly performance by the veteran quarterback. At least the Lions maintained their positioning for the No. 1 pick in the 2022 NFL Draft.

The Lions had some good field position early in the first quarter, but Austin Seibert missed a 47-yard field goal. Philadelphia took advantage with some good runs and a 16-yard completion to Quez Watkins to set up first-and-goal. Boston Scott then darted into the endzone for a 7-0 lead. Quickly, the Eagles tacked on a 43-yard field goal to go up by 10. Just before the half, Philadelphia opened a big lead thanks to a chunk run by Scott, a completion to Dallas Goedert, and a short touchdown run by Jordan Howard.

In the third quarter, Hurts used his legs to convert a third-and-12 when the Lions had terrible containment on the play. After a few more moderate gains, including a chunk pass to Goedert, Scott added another short touchdown run to expand Philadelphia's lead to 24-0.

The Lions got into Philadelphia territory with a completion Amon-Ra St. Brown for a gain of about 30 yards, but that drive ended when Jared Goff threw away another fourth-down pass despite having a receiver wide open at the 10-yard line. The Eagles added another short touchdown run from Jordan Howard, and they went over 200 yards on the ground on the day. On Detroit's next play on offense, Avonte Maddox stripped D'Andre Swift of the ball, and Darius Slay returned the fumble for a touchdown, giving the Eagles a commanding 38-0 lead.

Hurts threw only 14 passes, completing nine of them for 103 yards. He ran for 71 yards on seven carries.

Scott (12-60-2) and Howard (12-57-2) split the rushing load for the Eagles. Goedert (6-72) led the Eagles in receiving. Goff completed 25-of-34 passes for 222 yards. He played worse than the numbers suggest. Swift had 12 carries for 27 yards. T.J. Hockenson had 10 receptions for 89 yards.

### **Patriots 27, Chargers 24**

Bill Belichick obliterated Justin Herbert in their matchup last year, winning 45-0. It was much closer this time with Herbert having more experience and a better supporting cast, but the end result was the same, with the Patriots prevailing on the road

In fact, the decisive play was a Herbert blunder, as he tossed a pick-six while up 17-16. Jared Cook appeared to run the wrong route and didn't even look for the ball when Herbert sent it in his direction. Former Charger Adrian Phillips snatched the interception and ran it back to the house. This gave the Patriots a touchdown lead, and following a lengthy drive, they iced the victory with a field goal to give them a 10-point lead.

This was just part of Herbert's dreadful performance, continuing from his lackluster showing at Baltimore. Herbert barely completed half of his passes, going 18-of-35 for 223 yards, two touchdowns and a pair of interceptions. It should be noted that the first pick wasn't Herbert's fault because a pass of his bounced off Austin Ekeler's hands. However, that doesn't vindicate Herbert in any sort of fashion. He was woefully inaccurate throughout the entire afternoon. He constantly fired behind his intended receivers, and he looked skittish in the pocket.

Ekeler, despite the blunder, had a big performance. He rushed for 64 yards and a touchdown on just 11 carries, and he also caught six of his 10 targets for 60 receiving yards. Despite the rushing total, Justin Jackson led the team with 79 yards because of a 75-yard burst.

Only one Charger had more receiving yards than Ekeler. That was Keenan Allen, who hauled in six of his 11 targets for 77 yards and a touchdown. Bill Belichick completely erased Mike Williams (2-19), who dropped a pass on a third-and-6.

The announcers in this game said that the Chargers did some self-scouting during the week and were happy with what they saw. They must not have been looking at the run defense, which continued to be absolutely dreadful. Damien Harris (23-80), Brandon Bolden (4-26) and Rhamondre Stevenson (8-25) all had significant gains, as the Chargers couldn't get off the field in the fourth quarter when the Patriots were running down the clock. Harris, who scored a touchdown, had two significant runs called back because of penalties. One was a 23-yard burst, while the other was another touchdown at the end of a 27-yard gain. If these penalties never happened, Harris would've rushed for 130 yards and a touchdown on 25 attempts.

New England's rushing attack made things easier for Mac Jones, who had the same completion rate as Herbert, going 18-of-35 for 218 yards. Jones, like Herbert, had severe accuracy problems, though he began with a terrific deep pass to Nelson Agholor. However, Jones entered a funk in which he was 2-of-13 for a stretch spanning the second to the third quarter. He was unlucky on one throw because he dropped a beautiful pass into the bucket to Jakobi Meyers along the sideline, but Meyers was able to get just one foot inbounds. Everything else for Jones, however, was way off the mark. Jones had numerous ugly overthrows. He overshot Agholor for a potential touchdown, and he heaved a pass over the head of Meyers on a third down.

Jones eventually made a clutch throw to Meyers on a third-and-8 to move his team into Charger territory, but this was not a good performance by the rookie. He really needed the running game and defense to bail him out of a potential defeat.

Meyers once again failed to score a touchdown, but reached the end zone on a two-point conversion. Meyers collected four catches for 37 yards. It was a frustrating game for Meyers, who was the target of some errant throws. However, Meyers failed to make a brilliant sideline catch after a rare, terrific Jones throw, and he also lost a fumble while in field goal range.

Elsewhere in the New England receiving corps, Agholor (3-60) paced the team in receiving despite being overthrown for a touchdown. Bourne (4-38) dropped a touchdown in the opening half.

**Seahawks 31, Jaguars 7**

Perhaps the worst thing that could have happened to the Jaguars this season, beyond a catastrophic injury to a key player, was winning against the Dolphins in London prior to the bye. This allowed Urban Meyer to keep his job, ultimately hurting Jacksonville in the long run. It's clear that Meyer is not an NFL-caliber coach, and we saw further evidence of that in this contest, as he completely failed to prepare his team to play following extra time.

The Jaguars were a complete mess on both sides of the ball. Offensively, they didn't score a single point until the very end of regulation. Down 24-6 after a late touchdown, the Jaguars didn't even try a two-point conversion even though the math made sense. Yet, they tried an onside kick right afterward. The onside kick was returned for six, making the score 31-7.

Trevor Lawrence struggled, as his final stats - 32-of-54, 238 yards, one touchdown, one interception - were enhanced by garbage time. Lawrence was just 9-of-15 for 75 yards and a pick at halftime. The interception wasn't completely his fault because there was a miscommunication with Tavon Austin. Lawrence had communication issues with his players for most of the afternoon. On one instance, he lost a chance for a big play when Jamal Agnew inexplicably stopped his route.

Lawrence's afternoon was ruined by heavy pressure and drops. His first possession crossed midfield, but a heavy pass rush disrupted the drive. Laviska Shenault dropped a pass on third down to end the second possession. The pick put an end to the third possession, as Lawrence spent some time talking to Austin on the sideline after the mistake. Agnew committed a drop on third down that would've moved Jacksonville into field goal range on the fourth drive. Lawrence was promptly sacked on the next play. The fifth possession ended with a Lawrence skipped pass to a receiver. The sixth and seventh drives were ruined by pressure, while the eighth featured a Marvin Jones drop.

Lawrence made a handful of bad throws in this contest, but it's clear that he doesn't have the proper supporting cast to succeed, even against a pedestrian Seattle defense. He has no protection, while his play-makers seemingly only drop passes.

Jones (5-35) and Shenault (2-13) both struggled, committing one drop each. Lawrence only looked comfortable throwing to Dan Arnold (9-32).

It didn't help Lawrence that he lost James Robinson to an injury in the opening half. Robinson rushed for 22 yards on four carries, which included a brilliant 15-yard scamper to begin the afternoon. However, Robinson was knocked out of the game with an ankle injury. Carlos Hyde (9-32) predictably struggled in his place. Curiously, Hyde was getting significant work prior to Robinson's injury; he had multiple touches on the opening drive for some reason. Meyer inexplicably has not learned that Robinson is a far superior player compared to Hyde.

Defensively, the Jaguars had an embarrassing showing by being unable to stop Geno Smith. Just six days prior to this contest, Smith struggled to complete basic passes. In this contest, Smith misfired on just four occasions, going 20-of-24 for 195 yards and two touchdowns. He was incredibly accurate.

Smith, with much better pass protection, was able to connect with Tyler Lockett on some deep passes. Lockett caught 12 of his 13 targets for 142 yards. However, it was D.K. Metcalf (6-43) who caught both of Smith's touchdowns. Lockett was tackled just shy of the end zone in the first quarter, so he was close to scoring at least.

There was some DFS hype with Rashaad Penny entering this contest, but he mustered only seven yards on as many carries, which includes a couple of failed attempts at the goal line. Alex Collins (10-44) was the primary ball-carrier.

### **Broncos 17, Redskins 10**

This was a defensive struggle that was locked at no score and 10-10 for a large chunk of regulation. The Broncos, however, were able to come away with a win because they made some clutch plays in opposing territory in the fourth quarter, while the Redskins failed on their attempts.

Washington gave Denver a short field in the fourth quarter following a blocked 47-yard field goal. This was the second Redskin kick that was blocked in this contest, and this one set up Denver's touchdown. Teddy Bridgewater found Jerry Jeudy to convert an ensuing third-and-8, ultimately allowing Melvin Gordon to run into the end zone. The Redskins, aiming to go ahead with their kick, were suddenly staring down a touchdown deficit.

Taylor Heinicke moved the ball down the field with a third-down conversion to Dax Milne, but was sacked on a third-and-6 on Denver's 7-yard line. He was forced into attempting a Hail Mary, which was intercepted. The Broncos, who only needed to run out the clock, surrendered possession when Gordon lost a fumble. Following another sack, however, Heinicke was forced into yet another Hail Mary. This one sailed helplessly out of bounds, giving the Broncos the win.

Heinicke was sacked twice late in the game because of the team's dire offensive line injuries. Already down three blockers entering this game, things only got worse when center Chase Roullier was carted off the field. Guard Ereck Flowers also got hurt on the final drive.

Despite this, Heinicke was able to move the chains well in between the 20s. He went 24-of-39 for 270 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions, both of which were on Hail Mary attempts. That said, Heinicke made a bad mistake in the second quarter when he took a sack to move his team out of field goal range.

With the offensive line struggling, Heinicke targeted J.D. McKissic the most. McKissic caught all eight of his targets for 83 yards. Conversely, Terry McLaurin (3-23) barely did anything on his seven targets. DeAndre Carter (3-51) snatched Heinicke's sole touchdown.

Antonio Gibson didn't shoulder a full workload, rushing just eight times for 34 yards. He was outgained by Jaret Patterson (11-46).

Gordon barely won the rushing title in this contest, rushing for 47 yards and a touchdown on 10 carries, but was guilty of a crucial fumble. He also caught three passes for 15 receiving yards and a second score. Javonte Williams (9-35) had an underwhelming showing.

Bridgewater wasn't great, but happened to be efficient, going 19-of-26 for 213 yards and a touchdown. He didn't officially make any mistakes, but he was lucky that a potential interception of his on a high throw was dropped.

Jeudy made his return to action, but was just third on the receiving list with four catches for 39 yards. He finished behind Tim Patrick (3-64) and Courtland Sutton (2-40).

### **Saints 36, Buccaneers 27**

Tom Brady overcame his demons against the Saints in the playoffs last year, beating them in New Orleans after getting swept in the regular season. Those demons returned, however, as New Orleans pulled the upset over Tampa Bay despite Jameis Winston suffering a nasty knee injury that could knock him out for the year.

Winston wasn't needed because the Saints' defense dominated this game. They forced Brady into numerous, uncharacteristic blunders. It began innocently enough when Brady overshot Mike Evans for a potential touchdown. Brady then lost a fumble in field goal range and was later picked when throwing into double coverage. This set up a New Orleans touchdown that gave the team a 16-7 lead.

Brady led a comeback in the second half after trailing 23-7. Thanks to a 50-yard bomb to Cyril Grayson, who was wide open because of a blown coverage, the Buccaneers were able to come from behind to take a 27-26 lead. It seemed as though the Saints would fold, but Trevor Siemian, playing in place of the injured Winston, converted a third down with a 9-yard pass. Deonte Harris then picked up 22 yards on an end-around. Following a Siemian 16-yard strike to Marquez Callaway on a third-and-9, the Saints kicked a field goal to take a 29-27 lead.

The Saints gave Brady too much time, however. It was all but certain that Brady would lead a last-

second drive to win 30-29, but Brady made another error, inexplicably launching a pick-six to end the game.

Brady still posted a great stat line - he went 28-of-40 for 375 yards and four touchdowns - but he committed three turnovers in the process, which killed his team's chances of prevailing in this crucial divisional battle.

Brady wasn't the only Buccaneer making mistakes. Chris Godwin caught eight passes for 140 yards and a touchdown, with a chunk of his yardage coming on a 45-yard reception that featured a broken tackle. However, he dropped a pass on third down in the opening quarter. Leonard Fournette, who had a disappointing 26 yards on eight carries, dropped a touchdown that was nearly ruled a lost fumble.

Evans, meanwhile, didn't get much of a chance to commit any errors. He was locked up by Marshon Lattimore, who limited Evans to two catches for 48 yards and a touchdown. As mentioned earlier, he had a shot at a second score, but Brady missed him. Brady also missed Rob Gronkowski in another sense; Gronkowski was knocked out of this game with back spasms.

While the Buccaneers repeatedly shot themselves in the foot, the Saints played a clean game. Siemian was mostly excellent in relief of Winston, going 16-of-29 for 159 yards and a touchdown. The completion percentage wasn't great, but Siemian didn't hurt his team, and he also made some clutch throws, especially on the final offensive drive. Siemian appeared to make a mistake at one point when he threw an interception into the end zone, but an incredibly stupid roughing-the-passer penalty negated the turnover.

Alvin Kamara had a tough time running against Tampa's front, which is typical against that defense. He mustered just 61 yards on 19 carries, and he was stuffed on an early fourth-and-1 in his own territory. However, he scored a touchdown and also caught three passes for 15 receiving yards. He lost some touches to Mark Ingram, who rushed for 27 yards on six carries and caught two passes for 25 receiving yards. Ingram looked like his former self, breaking several tackles throughout the afternoon. Tackling was an issue for Tampa's defense throughout the game.

No Saint collected more than 38 receiving yards, with Kevin White leading the way in that department with just one reception, hauling in a deep ball to open the second half. Deonte Harris (3-35) made a difference with his 22-yard end-around and earlier fourth-down conversion, while Callaway (3-30) posted a similar stat line.

### **Cowboys 20, Vikings 16**

Many didn't give the Cowboys much of a chance when Dak Prescott was ruled out of this game despite looking healthy in his pre-game warmups. Minnesota was made a 4.5-point favorite, and that line seemed validated when the Vikings marched down the field on the opening drive to take a touchdown lead. Meanwhile, things looked bleak for the Cowboys. Backup quarterback Cooper Rush nearly tossed an early pick, and then kicker Greg Zuerlein whiffed from 43. Rush then was intercepted by heaving a pass into double coverage. The Vikings, who took advantage of the Cowboys being offside on an ensuing fourth-and-5 punt, kicked a field goal to up 10-3.

Things completely changed coming out of intermission. The Cowboys began converting third downs at a high rate, scoring twice in the third quarter, including once on a Rush 73-yard bomb to Cedrick Wilson. It wasn't all positive for Rush, however, as he lost a fumble on a strip-sack because he didn't see a blitz on the right side. Another failed attempt by Dallas' offense involved a horrible third-down drop by CeeDee Lamb, setting up a Minnesota field goal to break a 13-13 tie. These points were aided by three Dallas personal foul penalties, though two were completely bogus. Still, the Vikings had a 16-13 lead with only three minutes remaining.

The Cowboys' offense, however, came up big in the clutch. Rush found Cooper for 33- and 18-yard gains to move into the red zone. It appeared as though a tying field goal was in the cards, but Ezekiel

Elliott converted a third-and-11, pummeling through two defenders for the first down. On the very next play, Rush found Cooper in the end zone for the decisive score.

Rush went 24-of-40 for 325 yards, two touchdowns, and an interception and a lost fumble. He began the game slowly with several mistakes, but he settled in and played very well in the second half, save for the lost fumble on the strip-sack.

Rush threw to Lamb mostly in the first half, as the young wideout caught six passes for 112 yards. However, Cooper was the preferred option late in the game. He reeled in eight passes for 122 yards and the game-winning touchdown. He appeared to get hurt on the final offensive drive, but was able to remain on the field.

Elliott didn't have a great game overall - 16 carries, 50 yards; four catches, 23 receiving yards - but made a huge play to put Dallas in position to win, rather than tie. Tony Pollard (7-26) continued to pick up nice yardage after contact.

Dalvin Cook was the leading rusher in this game, though he was given only 18 carries for some reason. He picked up 78 yards in the process. The Cowboys never led by more than four, so there's no excuse for giving Cook only 18 attempts, especially when Kirk Cousins had to sling the ball 35 times.

Speaking of Cousins, he got off to a great start with his touchdown drive, but fizzled as this game progressed. Cousins was especially anemic in the 2-minute drills at the end of each half. The Vikings had miserable clock management in both instances. Cousins ended up going 23-of-35 for only 184 yards and a touchdown.

Cousins' sole score went to Adam Thielen, who caught six passes for 78 yards and a touchdown. Justin Jefferson, conversely, did nothing with just two grabs for 21 yards. Cousins didn't trust his pass protection against Dallas' front for good reason, which is why he seldom went downfield toward Jefferson.

## **Chiefs 20, Giants 17**

The Chiefs entered this game coming off an embarrassing loss, so it was reasonable to expect them to play a clean game, especially against a weaker opponent. This would require them not to have any sloppy turnovers, which has been a recurring problem for them this year.

Kansas City looked great to begin its opening drive, moving right downfield in the blink of an eye. However, the team was up to its old tricks when Patrick Mahomes attempted a jump pass on a third-and-goal that was tipped into the air and picked. Mahomes was nearly intercepted again on an ensuing drive when he fired a pass right to James Bradberry, who dropped the potential turnover. It took until the third quarter, but Mahomes finally wasn't the only Kansas City skill player who was charged with a give-away. This changed when Travis Kelce caught a pass on second-and-long and then fumbled while trying to elude two defenders. This was in field goal range, so the Chiefs cost themselves more points due to their sheer stupidity.

Despite all of these blunders, the Chiefs still somehow led 14-10 at that juncture. They had a chance at their own turnover on the ensuing possession when Daniel Jones threw blindly as a result of heavy pressure. Murphy's Law struck again for the Chiefs, as the defender fell down, allowing Kadarius Toney to snatch the ball and move into the red zone. The Giants scored a touchdown several plays later when Jones found Evan Engram in the end zone, giving the Giants their first lead of the game.

The Chiefs engineered a field goal drive to tie the game, though those three points almost never materialized because Mahomes fumbled in the red zone, but was lucky to have a teammate recover. Kansas City then moved down the field once more despite a Kelce drop and the 12th penalty of the contest. An infraction on the Giants, however, decided this game, as a phantom face mask on Kelce helped the Chiefs move into kicking range once more. Harrison Butker drilled yet another field goal, giving the Chiefs an undeserved victory.

Mahomes went 29-of-48 for 275 yards, one touchdown and an interception. He was worse than the numbers indicate, appearing skittish in the pocket, failing to scramble and throwing the ball inaccurately too frequently. As mentioned, a potential second pick of his was dropped, while a fumble of his was recovered by his teammate. Pass protection is a big issue, but something looks wrong with Mahomes. In fact, Kansas City's entire offense is seemingly broken. It would be one thing if these crazy turnover- and penalty-infested games happened once in a while to them, but this is every week.

Tyreek Hill was Mahomes' sole consistent threat because Kelce struggled in this contest. Hill caught 12 of his 18 targets for 94 yards and a touchdown. Kelce, conversely, snatched just four balls for 27 yards and lost a fumble. Kelce looks like a shell of his former self.

The lone bright spot for the Chiefs in this game was undrafted rookie Derrick Gore, who ran extremely well. He gained 48 yards and a touchdown on 11 carries, while Darrel Williams (13-49) served more as a receiving threat out of the backfield. Williams caught six passes for 61 receiving yards.

The leading rusher in this contest was Devontae Booker, who handled the entire workload for the Giants. He tallied 60 yards on 15 carries, but was a greater threat as a receiver out of the backfield. He caught five passes for 65 receiving yards.

Thanks to numerous injuries to the Giants' wideouts, Booker was second on the team on the receiving, finishing behind only John Ross (2-72), who reeled in a 50-yard bomb. Sterling Shepard (4-25) was knocked out of the game in the second quarter, while Toney (4-26) got hurt in the third frame.

Considering the limited receiving threats, Daniel Jones didn't fare too poorly. He went 22-of-32 for 222 yards, two touchdowns and an early interception in which he stared down his receiver and didn't see the linebacker. Jones' two touchdowns went to his tight ends: Engram (3-15) and Kyle Rudolph (2-12).



## MLB WORLD SERIES PICKS TUESDAY NIGHT GUARANTEED

ATLANTA at HOUSTON 8:08 ET  
SIDE PICK & OVER/UNDER PICK

BUY BOTH PICKS AND IF ONE IS  
A LOSER WE WILL REFUND YOU  
FOR BOTH PICKS GUARANTEED

[BUY THEM NOW CLICK HERE](#)

## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### NY Jets at INDIANAPOLIS Over 46 by 10

The New York Jets look for a win after splitting their last four games. The Indianapolis Colts look for a win after splitting their last six games.

The New York Jets have lost all three road games this season. Mike White is completing 74 percent of his passes for 607 yards, 4 touchdowns and 4 interceptions. Corey Davis and Michael Carter have combined for 575 receiving yards and 4 touchdowns, while Jamison Crowder has 23 receptions. The New York Jets ground game is averaging 75.6 yards per contest, and Carter leads the way with 279 yards and 3 touchdowns. Defensively, New York is allowing 29.4 points and 390.4 yards per game. C.J. Mosley leads the New York Jets with 55 tackles, Quinnen Williams has 4.5 sacks and Shaq Lawson has 1 interception.

The Indianapolis Colts have lost three of their last four home games. Carson Wentz is completing 62.2 percent of his passes for 1,926 yards, 14 touchdowns and 3 interceptions. Michael Pittman Jr. and Jonathan Taylor have combined for 859 receiving yards and 5 touchdowns, while Zach Pascal has 26 receptions. The Indianapolis Colts ground game is averaging 122 yards per contest, and Taylor leads the way with 649 yards and 6 touchdowns. Defensively, Indianapolis is allowing 22.9 points and 352.4 yards per game. Bobby Okereke leads the Indianapolis Colts with 67 tackles, DeForest Buckner has 4 sacks and Darius Leonard has 2 interceptions.

The Jets are 2-6 ATS in their last 8 games as an underdog and 15-33-3 ATS in their last 51 road games. The Colts are 2-5 ATS in their last 7 home games and 4-1 ATS in their last 5 games overall. The over is 4-0 in Jets last 4 games overall. The over is 4-1 in Colts last 5 games overall. The over is 7-3 in the last 10 meetings.

The New York Jets are showing more signs of life with White at quarterback, and they just beat the Bengals outright as big underdogs last week. The Indianapolis Colts have played better football over the last month, but they're still hit or miss due to a limited passing attack and a defense that's average at best. The Colts have also played some of their worst ball at home this season. The Colts are the better team, but this is a ton of points on a quick turnaround. I will pass on the pointspread.

The Colts have had difficulty defending against opposing passing offenses, and off the back of the Jets' superb effort on Sunday I'm expecting them to have at least some success in putting points on the board. But Indianapolis' offense is what really makes this totals line seem low to me. The Colts have scored 30 points or more in each of their last three games, and Carson Wentz seems to have finally built some chemistry with this offense. The real x-factor though is running back Jonathan Taylor, who has six touchdowns in his last five games and has registered 100+ rushing yards on three of those occasions. The Jets have been decent against the run but they have allowed 12 rushing scores, which is the second-most in the NFL, and Taylor has a great opportunity to add to his tally here. The over is 4-0 in the Jets' last 4 games and 4-1 in the Colts' last 5 and the over is 7-3 in the last 10 meetings. **I expect a lot of points in this game so play OVER 46.**

**Projected Score: Indianapolis 33, NY Jets 23**

## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Buffalo at JACKSONVILLE Under 49 by 9

The Buffalo Bills will be out to build on their 26-11 win over the Miami Dolphins in their last game. Josh Allen has thrown for 1,972 yards, 17 touchdowns and 3 interceptions on 65.4% passing while Devin Singletary leads the Bills with 339 rushing yards this season. Stefon Diggs leads Buffalo's receiving group with 503 receiving yards along with 3 scores while Emmanuel Sanders and Cole Beasley each have 413 receiving yards with Sanders grabbing 4 touchdowns while Beasley has a

team-high 43 catches. Dawson Knox has 21 grabs for 286 yards and a team-high 5 touchdowns while two other Bills receivers have at least 100 receiving yards on the year. On defense, Tremaine Edmunds leads the Bills with 48 total tackles while Greg Rousseau has a team-high 3 sacks. Jordan Poyer and Micah Hyde each have a team-high 3 interceptions as well this season.

The Jacksonville Jaguars will look to bounce back from a 31-7 loss at the hands of the Seattle Seahawks in their last game. Trevor Lawrence has thrown for 1,703 yards, 8 touchdowns and 9 interceptions on 59.6% passing while James Robinson leads the Jaguars with 482 rushing yards and 5 touchdowns this season. Marvin Jones Jr. leads the Jaguars with 378 receiving yards and 3 TDs while Laviska Shenault Jr. has 319 receiving yards and another four Jaguars have at least 100 receiving yards this season. On defense, Damien Wilson leads the Jaguars with 54 total tackles while Josh Allen has a team-high 4.5 sacks.

Buffalo is 5-0-1 ATS in their last 6 games against a team with a losing record and 4-1-1 ATS in their last 6 games overall while the over is 6-2 in their last 8 road games. Jacksonville is 1-5 ATS in their last 6 home games and 3-8 ATS in their last 11 games overall while the under is 4-0 in their last 4 games against a team with a winning record.

I get the case that could be made for a home dog in certain instances, but the Jaguars have burned bridge after bridge with me and I'm over it. The Bills narrowly escaped with a cover last week, but do we really want to chance it again especially with the hook? Instead, I'm going to side with the under as a safer play because I see the Jaguars having trouble against this strong Bills defense and the Bills had trouble scoring last week and will probably run often to close out a win in the second half.

**Projected Score: Buffalo 27, Jacksonville 13**

## **PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET**

### **Las Vegas - 3 Over NY Giants by 10**

The Las Vegas Raiders and the New York Giants meet Sunday in NFL action from MetLife Stadium. Las Vegas is coming off a bye this past week. The Raiders last appeared in an 11-point win over the Eagles. As for the Giants, they played the Chiefs on Monday evening. In that one New York fell in a tough one by three points.

Las Vegas managed to win their first three games, dispatching Baltimore (OT), Pittsburgh and Miami (OT) in that trio. After consecutive losses to the Chargers and Bears, the Raiders won their next two over the Broncos and Eagles.

In the 33-22 win over Philadelphia, the Raiders had a nice 30-7 lead heading into the fourth quarter. QB Derek Carr put up 323 yards with two TDs and a pick, and Kenyan Drake led the rush on 69 yards and a score. Foster Moreau added 60 receiving yards with a touchdown on six grabs.

Over on the Giants' side, they lost their first three games this year to the Broncos, Washington and Atlanta. New York went 2-2 over their next four games, beating the Saints and Panthers while otherwise falling to the Cowboys and Rams.

In the Monday game versus the Chiefs, the Giants kept pace for most of the game during a tight 20-17 defeat. QB Daniel Jones finished on 222 yards with two scores on 22-of-32 passing. Devontae Booker led the rush with 60 yards from 15 carries.

The Raiders are 5-1-1 ATS in their last seven in Week 9 and 4-1 ATS in their last five in November. Las Vegas is 1-4 ATS versus a team with a losing record as well.

Meanwhile, the Giants are 3-7 ATS in their last 10 games on turf and 7-20-1 ATS in their last 28 at home. The under is 6-0-1 in New York's last seven games as a home underdog.

The Raiders are well-rested and coming off a solid performance against Philly. Las Vegas put up 442 total yards (323 pass yards) in that one, along with 23 first downs and 7.0 yards per play. The Raiders

held the Eagles to less than 50 percent (6-of-13) on third downs and forced two turnovers.

As for the Giants, they put up a good effort against the Chiefs but came up just short on the scoreboard in a sloppy game from both sides (22 total penalties). New York is coming off a short week while the Raiders had two weeks to prepare for this game. Scheduling dynamics favor the Raiders and so does their offense with Carr flinging it. **Raiders win and cover.**

**Projected Score: Las Vegas 27, NY Giants 17**

## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### **New England - 3½ & 42 Over CAROLINA By 10 & Under 42 Total By 9**

The New England Patriots and the Carolina Panthers meet in week 9 NFL action from Bank of America Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

The New England Patriots come into this game looking to build on their 27-24 win over the Chargers in their last matchup. Mac Jones has thrown for 1,997 yards, 9 touchdowns and 6 interceptions on 68.1% passing while Damien Harris leads the Patriots in rushing with 517 rushing yards and 6 scores. Jakobi Meyers leads New England's receivers with 45 catches for 427 yards while Kendrick Bourne and Nelson Agholor each have 300+ receiving yards and 2 touchdowns apiece this season. Hunter Henry has 297 receiving yards and 4 TDs and Jonnu Smith and Brandon Bolden each have 150+ receiving yards on the year. On defense, Kyle Dugger leads the Pats with 54 total tackles while Matthew Judon has a team-high 8 sacks and Adrian Phillips and J.C. Jackson each have 3 interceptions this season.

The Carolina Panthers will look to build off of a 19-13 road win over Atlanta last time out. Sam Darnold has thrown for 1,814 yards, 7 touchdowns and 8 interceptions on 60.8% passing while Chuba Hubbard leads the Panthers with 391 rushing yards this season. DJ Moore leads the Panthers in receiving with 50 grabs for 645 yards while Robby Anderson has 204 receiving yards while another five receivers have 100+ receiving yards this season. On defense, Jeremy Chinn leads the Panthers with 43 total tackles while Haason Reddick has a team-high 7.5 sacks and Brian Burns has 4.5 sacks this season. Shaq Thompson also has a pair of interceptions for Carolina's defense.

New England is 3-8 ATS in their last 11 games as a favorite and 1-4 ATS in their last 5 games following a win while the over is 4-0 in their last 4 games overall. Carolina is 10-4 ATS in their last 14 games overall and 1-4 ATS in their last 5 games while the under is 4-1 in their last 5 home games.

The Panthers win over the Falcons continued a trend, that the Panthers beat teams that aren't good. New England is coming off of back-to-back wins and have gone 3-0 on the road this season. Darnold scored 19 on Atlanta. Unlikely he does better against a Belichick defense.

**DOUBLE PLAY: Take New England - 3½ & Under 42.**

**Projected Score: New England 23, Carolina 10**

## THIS WEEKS GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET BEST BETS

|     | Best Bet        | Best Bet        | Best Bet       | Best Bet        | Best Bet       |
|-----|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| CFB | Pittsburgh - 20 | Wake Forest + 3 | Florida St + 3 | Iowa - 11       | S Diego St - 7 |
| NFL | NY Jets Ov 46   | Buffalo Un 49   | Las Vegas - 3  | New England -3½ | Carolina Un 42 |

[GUARANTEED COLLEGE FOOTBALL PICKS](#) - [GUARANTEED NFL FOOTBALL PICKS](#)