



Volume 41 Issue 12

November 16, 2022

COLLEGE FOOTBALL NEWS & PICKS

NCAA Landscape

A pair of College Football Playoff hopefuls were tested in the evening window of Week 11. TCU rose to the challenge against Texas, and the Horned Frogs are now three wins away from clinching a CFB Playoff berth. The other, Oregon, blew a fourth-quarter lead to see its playoff hopes once again go up in flames late in the regular season.

There were far more storylines from a busy Week 11, including a new Heisman contender, a convoluted Big Ten West race and some feel-good stories in Nashville and Storrs.

Winner: TCU Horned Frogs

The most important win in TCU's history as a Power Five program came Saturday night in Austin, Texas. And, of course, Gary Patterson was on the sideline as a defensive analyst for Texas. It felt like some bizarro world with Patterson wearing burnt orange. Perhaps that's appropriate in what was frankly a strange 17-10 Horned Frog victory in Austin.

TCU is officially in a new era. Patterson defined the program for so long, but the 10-0 Horned Frogs have clearly turned the page to something altogether different under Sonny Dykes. Only a year ago, a very similar TCU roster went 5-7. That team didn't tackle well, it didn't score consistently and QB Max Duggan looked like a shadow of the player who's emerged this season.

Sometimes a change can unlock something for a program. That's happened in Fort Worth with the Horned Frogs 10-0 for the first time in their history as a Big 12 program. TCU controls its own destiny in the CFB Playoff race. TCU has clinched a Big 12 title spot. TCU looks like it's ready to take to the reins of the Big 12 with Texas and Oklahoma soon set to join the SEC.

Looking back on the chain of events, it seems appropriate that Patterson was there for one of the biggest moments in Horned Frog history. This is evidence their paths have fully diverged. It was a healthy breakup for TCU.

Loser: Oregon Ducks - Oregon's playoff hopes are over after a 37-34 loss to Washington

It's a bitter defeat for the Ducks. Not only did it come in "The Border War," but it came on a night in which Oregon blew a fourth quarter lead. The Ducks' defense has been an issue all year at 88th nationally in yards allowed per play, and it just couldn't manufacture stops in the second half. The Huskies scored every time they touched the ball in the second half except for a Michael Penix goal-line interception on a drive that had gone 98 yards before coming to a halt.

A team's fatal flaw will usually catch up to it at some point, and Washington simply exposed Oregon. Oregon will need to regroup emotionally before hosting Utah next weekend. The Ducks can still win

the Pac-12 Championship in Dan Lanning's first year, which would be quite an accomplishment. But that doesn't lessen the sting of another squandered CFB Playoff opportunity for the Ducks.

Loser: Illinois Illini

Illinois looked like it could walk to the Big Ten championship game a few weeks ago. That outlook is far more ominous entering mid-November. The Illini have now lost back to back one-possession home games with its most recent 31-24 defeat to Purdue proving to be a critical blow. As a result of their victory, the Boilermakers now hold the tiebreaker over Illinois in the Big Ten West. And if that wasn't bad enough, the Illini travel to play No. 3 Michigan next week.

But Illinois hasn't just lost control of the division, it has also let everyone back in the race. Purdue, Iowa, Minnesota and Illinois all sit at 4-3 overall with Wisconsin not too far behind at 3-4. This division was Illinois' to lose, and the Illini are slowly squandering their chance to reach the Big Ten title game.

Perhaps the worst news of all is Illinois running back Chase Brown, the nation's leading rusher, was hurt with less than a minute remaining against Purdue. Illini head coach Bret Bielema had no updates on Brown postgame. But Brown wasn't able to put any weight on his leg when he left the game.

Winner: Vanderbilt Commodores

Vanderbilt's 26-game SEC losing streak has finally come to an end! On Saturday, the Commodores pulled off a 24-21 upset over Kentucky.

Forgive the poor pun: It feels like the anchor has been lifted off Clark Lea's regime. There has been progress for Lea in Year 2, including three wins in September. But, it's been a slog since then. There were blowout losses to Alabama, Ole Miss and Georgia. There were heartbreaking losses to Missouri and South Carolina. And, finally, a victory over the No. 24 team in the country. This is Vanderbilt's first SEC win since 2019.

This victory represents progress and resilience. Vanderbilt hasn't had the best week. The Commodores lost starting QB AJ Swann to an injury against South Carolina. That came on the heels of a controversy that surrounded defensive backs coach Dan Jackson (Jackson was taken off the field this week after he defended Kanye West in a Facebook post).

But, still, Vanderbilt found a way to win and that's a credit to Lea. Earlier this year, Lea said he inherited a program that was "psychologically traumatized." Historically, the Commodores buckled when adversity hit. This road victory over Kentucky shows Vanderbilt is in a new era. The Commodores' rebuilding project is now above ground, and they'll only continue to get better.

Loser: Virginia Cavaliers

This time last year, Brennan Armstrong led the Power Five in passing yards per game. He led a Virginia offense that ranked fifth nationally in yards per play and consistently outperformed its talent. The Cavs weren't great (6-6), but they were fun and had promise for the 2022 season with Armstrong set to return.

What a difference a year can make. Virginia moved to 3-7 on Saturday with a 37-7 loss to Pittsburgh. Armstrong started the game with back-to-back pick-sixes, continuing a brutal season that's seen him throw more INTs (12) than touchdowns (7). His completion percentage has plummeted from last season's 65.2% to just 55.1% this year.

However, Armstrong isn't the issue for Virginia. He's merely emblematic of a program that's seen next to nothing go well since Bronco Mendenhall abruptly retired last December.

There's been a transfer portal exodus — with perhaps another one coming soon — a rash of injuries and, frankly, woefully underwhelming coaching results by Tony Elliott and his first year staff. The Cavs were not broken when Elliott took over. There was no need for a culture overhaul or roster transformation. But, now, they feel broken.

ACC Scores and Notes (+ Notre Dame)

Clemson bounced back from its loss to Notre Dame with a 31-16 victory over Louisville (6-4). DJ Uiagalelei had a good day on 19-for-27 passing with 185 yards and a touchdown. But it was the No. 10 Tigers' rushing attack that led the way with 248 yards and 3 scores. Louisville turned the ball over twice and also gave up the ball on downs twice, stalling four second half drives.

Clemson will face North Carolina in the ACC Championship Game in a few weeks. The No. 15 Tar Heels punched their ticket with a 36-34 win at Wake Forest, which was favored. It feels like a long time ago the Tar Heels were struggling to put away Appalachian State. Life's pretty good for Mack Brown, who's got another Heisman-level quarterback in his program.

Notre Dame wide receiver Braden Lenzy made the catch of the year in a 35-32 win over Navy. Lenzy caught an underthrown ball by wrapping his arms around a Midshipman DB and catching it on his back. The No. 20 Irish (7-3) have now won four straight after a 3-3 start to the season.

Florida State won its third straight game by 35 points with a 38-3 road win over Syracuse. The No. 23 Seminoles (7-3) were led by a near flawless effort from Jordan Travis (21-for-23, 155 yards, 3 touchdowns) and a defense that limited the Orange to 160 total yards. Syracuse (6-4) has now lost four straight after a 6-0 start.

Miami earned a much-needed 35-14 win over Georgia Tech (4-6). The Hurricanes started true freshman Jacurri Brown, who finished 14-for-19 with 136 yards and 3 scores. Georgia Tech (4-6) turned the ball over four times, which led to 14 Miami points.

Boston College pulled the most surprising upset of the weekend, scoring with 14 seconds remaining to edge No. 16 NC State (7-3) for a 21-20 victory. Redshirt freshman QB Emmett Morehead (330 yards, 3 TDS) threw a 2-yard touchdown to true freshman Joseph Griffin to clinch the win. The victory snaps a four-game losing skid for the Eagles (2-5). NC State true freshman QB MJ Morris (12-for-24, 135 yards) came back to earth after a hot start to his career, turning the ball over four times (1 pick, 3 lost fumbles).

Mike Elko for the conference's coach of the year? It might be basketball season on Tobacco Road, but Duke's got a delightful football team — 7-3 after beating pitiful Virginia Tech, 24-7. Tale of two maiden years here: Brent Pry is 2-8 overall and 1-6 in conference play.

Big 12 Scores and Notes

It took an unexpected return from Spencer Sanders, but Oklahoma State rallied from a halftime deficit to beat Iowa State (4-6) for a 20-14 win. Gunnar Gundy, the son of Cowboys head coach Mike Gundy, got the start in favor of an injured Sanders. But Sanders actually returned late in the third quarter when Gundy pulled his son. Oklahoma State (7-3) scored a touchdown on Sanders' second drive and held on from there.

West Virginia seemed to have started the Garrett Greene era in a 23-20 win over Oklahoma (5-5). J.T. Daniels was benched (twice) during the game with Greene leading a 12-play touchdown drive in the fourth quarter to give the Mountaineers the win. Neal Brown's job status is one to watch coming out of this one. His seat is scorching hot, but this victory helps his case to stay. As for Oklahoma (5-5) this has been a brutal year and bowl eligibility isn't a lock with Oklahoma State and Texas Tech remaining.

Kansas State 31, Baylor 3. Give me a call if you can figure that one out. The final score is a total mystery to me, but I know a few things: Kansas State's a different team with Will Howard at quarterback (Howard again replaced the injured Adrian Martinez) and Baylor, the defending conference champs, has no excuse losing like this at home.

Big Ten Scores and Notes

C.J. Stroud threw for 5 touchdowns as No. 2 Ohio State rolled Indiana, 56-14, in Columbus. The most notable part of the day for the Buckeyes (10-0) is a first-half injury to running back Miyan Williams, which forced him to leave the game. Williams was taken off on a cart. Ohio State starting running back Treveyan Henderson missed the game with a lingering foot injury. The Hoosiers (3-7) have now lost six straight games after starting 3-1.

Michigan did what it does in a 34-3 win over Nebraska: Run the ball. The No. 3 Wolverines (10-0) ran for 264 yards as a team on 5.4 yards per carry with Blake Corum pacing them with 162 yards. This is the seventh straight game Corum has crossed the 100-yard barrier. Nebraska (3-7) was without starting QB Casey Thompson and managed just 147 total yards.

Penn State (8-2) overwhelmed Maryland's offensive line with pressure, totaling 7 sacks in a 30-0 win over the Terrapins. Nick Singleton led the way for No. 14 Penn State's offense with 122 yards and 2 touchdowns on just 11 carries. Maryland (6-4) was held to just 134 yards of total offense and averaged 2.2 yards per carry.

Iowa won a very Iowa game over Wisconsin, 24-10, with 3 turnovers forced and just 146 total yards. A Cooper Dejean pick-six in the second quarter turned the tide of the game and gave the Hawkeyes (6-4) an early 14-3 lead. That would prove to be enough points as the Badgers (5-5) failed to produce a drive of longer than 20 yards in the second half.

Payton Thorne threw for 256 yards and 2 touchdowns as Michigan State squeezed by Rutgers, 27-21, in East Lansing. The Spartans (5-5) have now won three of four games in Big Ten play since starting 0-3. Rutgers (4-6) has an uphill climb to potential bowl eligibility with games upcoming against Penn State and Maryland.

Mohamed Ibrahim ran for 178 yards and 3 touchdowns as Minnesota (7-3) easily dispatched Northwestern for a 31-3 win. The Wildcats (1-9) have now lost nine straight games.

Pac-12 Scores and Notes

Arizona shocked No. 12 UCLA early Sunday morning, if you're living on the East Coast, in a 34-28 upset. This game mostly came down to UCLA failing to convert its chances. The Bruins were just 2-for-5 on fourth down and also missed a field goal early in the third quarter. Arizona was paced by Jayden de Laura, who was lights out in a 22-for-28, 315-yard, 2-touchdown performance. UCLA is now a game behind USC, Oregon and Utah in the Pac-12 standings.

USC shook off a slow start to roll past Colorado, 55-17, on Friday night. Caleb Williams finished the night with 268 yards and five total touchdowns. The No. 8 Trojans (9-1) have a showdown with UCLA next weekend. The Buffaloes (1-9) are limping toward the finish as their head coaching search continues.

Washington State clinched bowl eligibility with a 28-18 victory over Arizona State. Nakia Watson led the Cougars (6-4) with 116 yards and 3 touchdowns. Arizona State (3-7) starting QB Trenton Bourguet was injured in the loss.

SEC Scores and Notes

Even in the games in which it brings its 'B' or 'C' effort, the No. 1 Georgia Bulldogs look pretty damn good. Kirby Smart's group jumped out to a big lead, messed around a little bit and then got back on track in a 45-19 win at Mississippi State. Mississippi State scored 10 points in the final minute of the first half, including a punt return with time expiring. Georgia receiver Ladd McConkey scored two touchdowns, including a 70-yard rush.

Missouri (4-6) was down only four to No. 5 Tennessee early in the third quarter before scoring 38 straight to roll past the Tigers for a 66-24 victory. Hendon Hooker finished the game 25-for-35 with 355 yards and 3 touchdowns.

It wasn't comfortable, but No. 7 LSU squeezed past Arkansas, 13-10, to clinch the SEC West. Tigers true freshman linebacker Harold Perkins was the star of the game (more on him later) with 8 tackles, 4 sacks and 2 forced fumbles. Arkansas starting QB KJ Jefferson didn't start due to injury. Malik Hornsby got the starting nod in his place but was pulled in favor of Cade Fortin early in the second half.

Alabama rallied from a 17-7 third quarter deficit against No. 11 Ole Miss (8-2) to pull out a 30-24 win. The No. 9 Tide (8-2) were led by Bryce Young -- what's new -- who threw for 209 yards and 3 touchdowns. Alabama scored on four consecutive drives between the second and third quarters to flip the game. Ole Miss had a chance to score in the red zone to win the game, but the Tide got the stop when it mattered. Ole Miss' loss allowed LSU to clinch the SEC West.

Cadillac! Kudos to Auburn (4-6) and interim coach Carnell 'Cadillac' Williams, who scored his first win in a 13-10 effort over Texas A&M (3-7). The Tigers had a nice group of quality recruits on campus for the game, and even if Williams won't be their head coach in 2023, it's cool seeing the legend helping his program put its best foot forward. Meanwhile, Texas A&M is mathematically eliminated from a bowl game. What's there left to say about the Aggies that we haven't already?

Five G-5 Things to Know

UCF picked up a massive 38-31 road win over No. 17 Tulane. The No. 22 Knights (8-2) were led by quarterback John Rhys Plumlee, who ran for 176 yards, passed for 132 and had 3 total touchdowns. The victory doesn't clinch an AAC title berth for the Knights, but it assures them a championship bid if they win out. Tulane (8-2) will likely see its championship game chances come down to its regular season finale against Cincinnati.

UConn is bowl eligible! Yes, that UConn. The laughingstock of the FBS UConn. The UConn program that hasn't won more than 3 games since 2016 UConn. But, the Huskies are finally in the mix after a 36-33 win over Liberty (8-2). It's a huge blow to the Flames and potentially Hugh Freeze's chances of getting another job. But, it's hard to understate the job Jim Mora has done in Year 1 for the Huskies. They're relevant once again.

Fresno State picked up a huge 37-30 road win over UNLV on Friday. The victory maintains the Bulldogs' status atop the West division of the Mountain West. Fresno State's divisional chances will rely heavily in a showdown against Wyoming. UNLV (4-6) has now lost five straight conference games after a 4-1 start. Marcus Arroyo really needs some wins down the stretch or things could get very warm for him in Las Vegas.

Cincinnati kept its AAC hopes alive with a 27-25 win over East Carolina (6-4) on Friday night. The Bearcats (8-2) control their own destiny in the AAC with a home showdown with Tulane upcoming in two weeks.

It's your mid-week MAC update! Toledo took firm control of the West division with a 28-21 win over Ball State. The Rockets put together a 50-yard touchdown drive late in the fourth quarter to win the game. The East division is a bit more complicated. Ohio (5-1) is in control of its own destiny. But, Buffalo (4-2) and Bowling Green (4-2) are still in the mix. Buffalo beat the Falcons and Ohio beat the Bulls. So, there could be a fun three-way tiebreaker scenario if Bowling Green manages to beat Ohio to end the regular season.

players of the week

Offense

Drake Maye, QB, North Carolina: The Tar Heels needed points, and Maye provided them in bunches. The redshirt freshman signal caller threw for 448 yards and 3 touchdowns on 31-for-49 passing. He also ran 19 yards for 71 yards and a score. Maye is only the third ACC QB since 2000 to pass for at least 425 yards and run for 75 yards in a single game joining Tajh Boyd (Clemson) and D'Eriq King (Miami).

Defense

Harold Perkins, LB, LSU: The Tigers clinched the SEC West because of Perkins. That's how impactful he was in LSU's win over Arkansas. Perkins finished the day with 8 tackles, 4 sacks, 4 TFLs and 2 forced fumbles. He also came up big in the clutch. The Razorbacks looked like they'd have a chance to tie or win the game on the final drive, but then Perkins sacked Cade Fortin and forced a fumble to end the game. Perkins is the first SEC player since 2000 to post 4 sacks and multiple forced fumbles in the same game.

Heisman-level

1. Hendon Hooker, QB, Tennessee (25-of-35, 355 yards, 3 TD | 8 carries for 50 yards, 1 TD) in a win over Missouri
2. Blake Corum, RB, Michigan (28 carries for 162 yards, 1 TD) in a win over Nebraska
3. Drake Maye, QB, North Carolina (31-for-49, 448 yards, 3 TDs | 19 carries, 71 yards, 1 TD) in win over Wake Forest
3. Bryce Young, QB, Alabama (21-of-33, 209 yards, 3 TD) in a win over Ole Miss
4. C.J. Stroud, QB, Ohio State (17-of-28, 297 yards, 5 TD) in win over Indiana

My Top 10

1. Georgia
2. Ohio State
3. Michigan
4. Tennessee
5. TCU
6. LSU
7. Alabama
8. USC
9. Clemson
10. Oregon

Spinning it forward to Week 12

Week 12 is sort of the calm before the storm in Week 13.

But, there are still plenty of marquee games to follow. If you want a fun midweek game, I'd recommend SMU at Tulane on Thursday night (7:30 p.m. E.T, ESPN).

The majority of the important games on Saturday don't have a kickoff time yet at the time of this writing. So, excuse the barrage of incomplete information.

But, the most important games of the weekend both take place in the Pac-12 where Utah travels to Oregon and UCLA hosts USC.

Those two games will all but determine the Pac-12 conference championship game.

TCU at Baylor is a critical game in the Big 12, while Illinois at Michigan will be the game to watch in the Big Ten.

However, the entire Big Ten West is clustered together. So, Iowa at Minnesota is also of great game with Big Ten implications.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

ARIZONA + 4½ Over Washington St by 8

The Washington State Cougars and the Arizona Wildcats meet Saturday in college football action from Arizona Stadium.

Washington State is fresh off a matchup versus Arizona State. The Cougars won that game by 10 points.

As for Arizona, they played UCLA in their last game. The Wildcats went on to pull off a six-point upset win.

Washington State won their first three games versus Idaho, Wisconsin and Colorado State before a loss to Oregon. The Cougars went 2-3 over the next five games, losing to USC, Oregon State and Utah between wins over California and Stanford.

In the Arizona State game, the Cougars jumped out to a 28-0 lead by halftime. Washington State failed to score in the second half but still won 28-18.

Cameron Ward threw for 219 yards and a TD, while Nakia Watson rushed 20 times for 116 yards and three scores.

Over on the Arizona side, they hit a 3-2 run over their first five games, beating San Diego State, North Dakota State and Colorado alongside losses to Mississippi State and California.

The Wildcats then lost to Oregon, Washington, USC and Utah in succession.

Matched up against UCLA last weekend, the Wildcats held a 21-14 lead by halftime. Arizona was outscored in the second half but still held on for the win 34-28.

QB Jayden De Laura finished with 315 yards and two scores. Michael Wiley added 97 rush yards with one TD.

The Cougars are 4-0 ATS in their last four in November and 7-2 ATS in their last nine overall.

Washington State is 20-6 ATS versus a team with a losing record.

Meanwhile, Arizona is 4-1 ATS in their last five on grass and 17-37-1 ATS in the last 55 after an ATS win. The Wildcats are 6-2 ATS in their last eight at home.

The Wildcats did a great job against a talented UCLA team in their last outing, finishing with 436 total yards (312 passing), 6.7 yards per play and 22 first downs.

Defensively Arizona gave up a good bit of yardage (465) but they held the Bruins to just 4-of-12 on third-down tries.

As for Washington State, they cooled off significantly after their hot start versus Arizona State but still got the win.

The Cougars managed 356 total yards with 20 first downs in that one. Arizona will serve as a bigger challenge. Cats QB Jayden De Laura finished with 315 yards last week and the Cats can score quickly.

If the Wildcats don't have a big head this week, they're very capable of pulling off another upset. Give me the Arizona Wildcats + 4.5 as a home dog straight-up winner.

Projected Score: Arizona 35, Washington St 27

[FOR GUARANTEED COLLEGE FOOTBALL PICKS CLICK HERE](#)

COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

Coastal Carolina + 3½ Over VIRGINIA by 7

The Coastal Carolina Chanticleers and the Virginia Cavaliers meet Saturday in college football action from Scott Stadium.

Coastal Carolina played Southern Miss over the weekend. The Chanticleers ended up with a three-point victory.

As for Virginia, they're coming off a matchup versus Pittsburgh. In that game the Cavaliers fell in blowout fashion.

Coastal Carolina hit a six-game winning streak out of the gate this year, beating Army, Gardner-Webb, Buffalo, Georgia State, Georgia Southern and LA-Monroe. After a loss to Old Dominion the Chanticleers beat Marshall and Appalachian State.

In the Southern Miss game, the Chanticleers jumped out to a 17-0 lead but quickly gave it up. After a back-and-forth game Coastal emerged with a win 26-23. Jarrett Guest managed 163 yards with two picks. CJ Beasley rushed four times for 68 yards.

Over on the Virginia side, they went 2-4 over the first six games, beating Richmond and Old Dominion with losses otherwise to Illinois, Syracuse, Duke and Louisville. The Cavaliers then beat Georgia Tech before losses to Miami-FL and North Carolina.

Matched up against Pitt, the Cavaliers coughed up 28 points in the first quarter alone. Virginia scored once in the third quarter but that was it in a 37-7 blowout loss. Brennan Armstrong put up 152 yards with one TD and two picks during the defeat.

Coastal is 20-9 ATS in their last 29 road games and 1-4 ATS in their last five in November. The Chanticleers are 1-5-1 ATS in their last seven on grass.

Meanwhile, the Cavs are 25-12 versus a team with a winning record and 2-5 ATS in their last seven after a straight-up loss. Virginia is 2-6 ATS in their last eight at home.

The Chanticleers didn't exactly impress in their close win versus an average Southern Miss squad.

Coastal Carolina posted just 18 first downs and a 4-of-12 run on third-down tries in that one but they did a good enough job on defense to get the victory.

As for Virginia, they were buried quickly by Pitt in their last game. The Cavaliers have lost their luster over this three-game losing streak, even though two of the defeats were very close.

All the same, I don't think Virginia is in a good place right now.

As mentioned above, Coastal is 20-9 ATS in their last 29 road games and Virginia is 2-6 ATS in their last eight at home.

Give the road warrior Chanticleers with the free points in a straight-up win and cover.

Projected Score: Coastal Carolina 27, Virginia 20



COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

FAU - 4 Over MID TENN ST by 14

The Florida Atlantic Owls and the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders meet Saturday in college football action from Floyd Stadium.

Florida Atlantic is coming off a matchup versus FIU. In that one the Owls took a blowout victory.

As for Middle Tennessee, they played Charlotte over the weekend. The Blue Raiders ended up with a 10-point victory there.

Florida Atlantic went 2-1 over their first three games this year with wins over Charlotte and SE Louisiana. The Owls hit a losing streak to UCF, Purdue and North Texas before a win over Rice. FAU would then lose to UTEP and beat UAB.

In their last game versus FIU, the Owls didn't have any trouble. Florida Atlantic went into the break with a 31-7 lead and cruised to the 52-7 blowout victory.

N'Kosi Perry posted 104 yards with two scores, and Larry McCammon rushed 26 times for 104 yards.

Over on the Middle Tennessee side, they were 3-1 over their first quartet with wins versus Colorado State, Tennessee State and Miami-FL. The Raiders went 1-4 over the next five games with losses to UTSA, UAB, Western Kentucky and LA Tech.

Matched up against Charlotte, the Raiders were down 14-7 going into the break. Middle Tennessee hit a 17-0 run in the second half for the 24-14 comeback win.

Nicholas Vattiato put up 203 yards and an INT, while Frank Peasant had 84 rush yards with two scores.

The Owls are 2-5 ATS in their last seven road games and 3-8 ATS in the last 11 conference games. FAU is 1-9-1 ATS in their last 11 after a straight-up win.

Meanwhile, the Raiders are 1-3-1 ATS in their last five at home and 1-4-1 ATS in the last six overall. MTSU is 1-4-1 ATS in the last six conference games.

The Owls are coming off a very impressive game versus FIU, notching 385 total yards (281 rushing), 26 first downs and zero turnovers. FAU held the Panthers to just 74 passing yards and four turnovers on the other side.

As for Middle Tennessee, they get credit for a nice second half in their comeback win over Charlotte.

FAU offense is firing on all cylinders, and this should be a tough matchup for the Raiders to keep pace. FAU wins going away, so lay the reasonable 4 points.

Projected Score: FAU 34, MTSU 20



COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

AIR FORCE - 21 Over Colorado St by 32

The Colorado State Rams and Air Force Falcons meet Saturday in week 12 college football action at Falcon Stadium.

The Colorado State Rams look to snap a 3-game losing streak. The Air Force Falcons have won 5 of their last 7 games. The Colorado State Rams have lost 4 of their last 5 road games.

Colorado St quarterback Clay Millen is completing 70.4 percent of his passes for 1,517 yards, 6 touchdowns and 6 interceptions.

Tory Horton and Justus Ross-Simmons have combined for 1,283 receiving yards and 8 touchdowns, while Ty McCullouch has 13 receptions.

The Colorado State Rams ground game is averaging 92.8 yards per contest, and Avery Morrow leads the way with 730 yards and 4 touchdowns.

Defensively, Colorado State is allowing 29.9 points and 376.5 yards per game. Jack Howell leads the Colorado State Rams with 97 tackles, Mohamed Kamara has 7.5 sacks and Ayden Hector has 3 interceptions.

Air Force quarterback Haaziq Daniels is completing 48.6 percent of his passes for 719 yards, 6 touchdowns and 2 interceptions.

David Cormier and Amari Terry have combined for 489 receiving yards and 5 touchdowns, while Dane Kinamon has 2 receptions.

The Air Force Falcons ground game is averaging 339.4 yards per contest, and Brad Roberts leads the way with 1,241 yards and 13 touchdowns.

Defensively, Air Force is allowing 14.4 points and 263.4 yards per game. Trey Taylor leads the Air Force Falcons with 57 tackles, TD Blackmon has 3.5 sacks and Camby Goff has 3 interceptions.

The Rams are 2-6 ATS in their last 8 road games and 4-12 ATS in their last 16 games overall.

The Air Force Falcons have won 5 of their last 6 home games.

The Falcons are 5-2 ATS in their last 7 home games and 9-4 ATS in their last 13 conference games.

The under is 8-1-1 in Rams last 10 games overall. The over is 5-2 in Falcons last 7 home games.

The Colorado State Rams are one of the worst offensive teams in the country, and it's why they can't win or cover numbers.

The Air Force Falcons have the best rushing attack in college football, and they're ranked fourth in total defense, first in pass defense and sixth in scoring defense.

Air Force is one of the most balanced and disciplined teams in the game. Colorado State will have a hard time doing anything in this game. This game can get ugly. I'll lay the points as the Falcons fly over the spread.

Projected Score: Air Force 39, Colorado St 7

[FOR GUARANTEED COLLEGE FOOTBALL PICKS CLICK HERE](#)

COLLEGE FOOTBALL BEST BET

Utah at OREGON Over 58 by 17

Oregon has been racking up yardage lately, especially through the air. Utah has been gaining large chunks, too, especially on the ground. If it's available anywhere, a wise prop might be these two combining for more than 1,000 yards.

The Utes averaged 251 rushing yards in their past three tilts, which is top-10 in the country.

Tavion Thomas, a 6-foot-2, 240-pound junior bulldozer, is the main runner who averages 70 yards a game with seven touchdowns. Cameron Rising, the 6-2, 220-pound junior quarterback, has six running TDs.

Ja'Quinden Jackson, who began his career at Texas, broke out for a career-best 97 yards last weekend and highlights a roster stocked with tailbacks.

Utah has gashed its past two opponents for 585 rushing yards and seven TDs. And for the third time this season, Rising tossed four TD passes last week at home against the Cardinal.

Bo Nix, the Auburn transfer, had a rough début as a Duck against Georgia in a 49-3 drubbing in Atlanta. Then Oregon rattled off eight consecutive victories by never scoring fewer than 41 points — and then came Washington.

For the second time this season, the Ducks allowed a foe more than 500 yards of offense at home in a shocking 37-34 defeat to Washington, which tallied 522 yards. Georgia accumulated 571 yards.

Nix is connecting with his receivers at a 72.8% rate, the best in the country. He has run it in for 14 touchdowns (tops for quarterbacks) and his 24 passing TDs are tied for 15th in the game.

In total yards per play in college football, the No. 1 guy isn't Hendon Hooker of Tennessee, Stetson Bennett of Georgia, Drake Maye of North Carolina, Michael Penix Jr. of Washington, Caleb Williams of USC, or Frank Harris of UTSA.

It is Nix at 8.6 yards per play. It could be a lethal mix with a Utah defense that yields 7.7 yards per pass overall and 8.3 on the road, both in the bottom quarter of college football.

While 6-2 sophomore Troy Franklin (17.6 yard average on 44 catches and six touchdowns) is Nix's main target. 5-11 sophomore Kris Hutson and 6-3 senior Chase Cota have both gained more than 300 reception yardage. Plus, 6-6 sophomore tight end Terrance Ferguson has five TD catches.

Moreover, 5-10 sophomore tailback Mar'Keise Irving, the tip of the Ducks' ground spear with an average of 84 yards a game, has also caught 22 balls for 241 yards and three scores.

Nix will do well to avoid Utah sophomore cornerback Clark Phillips III, who is tied with a bunch with a top-10 five interceptions.

Oregon averages 552 yards of offense over its past three games (fourth-best in the nation) with a passing average over that span of 325 (10th in the nation). Seven times it has racked up more than 500 yards and twice more than 600.

In their past five games, the Ducks have a plus-seven turnover edge (10-3). The numbers are dizzying, which should produce one of the day's more entertaining games.

The combination of the Ducks playing at home, their once-stout rush defense springing leaks, and their outstanding quarterback Bo Nix, plus the fact that Utah could sting an Oregon rush defense that has allowed three of its past six opponents at least 300 yards on the ground — Stanford ran for 351 in Eugene, Arizona tallied 306 in Tucson, and the Huskies zapped Oregon for 318 last week. All of this convinces us to take the Over and enjoy the fireworks on the field.

Projected Score: Oregon 39, Utah 36

NFL FOOTBALL NEWS & PICKS

NFL Landscape

When the Miami Dolphins hired Mike McDaniel, they didn't know how good he was. McDaniel has been a fantastic hire, and the main reason is he's getting everything out of Tagovailoa. The Dolphins are 7-0 in games that Tagovailoa has started and finished, as they demolished the Cleveland Browns 39-17 on Sunday. Technically Tagovailoa didn't finish Sunday's game, but that's because he got a break with the Dolphins up by so many points. He watched Skylar Thompson mop up the final minutes of the blowout. Tagovailoa had 285 yards and three touchdowns.

At 7-3, the Dolphins lead the AFC East. One of those seven wins was against the division favorite Buffalo Bills (6-3), who are now losers of two straight games.

It's amazing that the Dolphins wanted to give up on Tagovailoa. Ross isn't a good franchise owner, and he clearly didn't want Tagovailoa. Ross was so down on Tagovailoa he tampered with Brady and got a first-round draft pick taken away from the team for it. Smart. Tagovailoa's first head coach Brian Flores reportedly wasn't a big fan either. It's hard to succeed in that environment.

What Tagovailoa needed was support. He needed a better line. He benefited greatly from the team getting Tyreek Hill. And he really needed a coach who believed in him.

McDaniel has pushed all the right buttons. He's a forward-thinking coach who knows how to scheme up good looks for Hill and Jaylen Waddle. He plays to Tagovailoa's strengths and has gotten a brilliant season out of him so far. He said that he hoped the day he was hired was also "one of the best days" of Tagovailoa's career as well, and to this point that is accurate.

The Dolphins are having a really good season. They were a hot team early after beating the Bills, then the buzz completely died when they lost three games with backup quarterbacks. They lost to the Bengals, Jets and Vikings with Teddy Bridgewater and Thompson playing most of those games, and they were competitive for most of those contests. It made no sense why they were downgraded for that losing streak.

It's fine. Those who have watched the Dolphins all season know they're good. The rest of those who haven't paid enough attention will come around. Maybe that will get McDaniel in the Coach of the Year conversation, where he belongs.

WINNERS

Colts owner Jim Irsay and interim head coach Jeff Saturday:

Irsay was defiant when he had a media conference to discuss his weird interim coach choice of Saturday, who had never been a coach above the high school level. He challenged anyone to question him. On Sunday, Irsay was right.

Part of the Indianapolis Colts' 25-20 win on Sunday was going against the Las Vegas Raiders, who are coached by Josh McDaniels. That'll make any coach look good, even one who a week earlier had never coached on the college or pro level.

For now we have to credit Irsay, who was mocked this past week. Former players and coaches talked about what a disgraceful and disrespectful decision it was. But Saturday, who turned back to Matt Ryan at quarterback in a move that was revealed right before kickoff, is 1-0 as an NFL coach. We'll see if this experiment goes well over the long term but if it does, Irsay will be asking for plenty of apologies.

Justin Fields, again, even in another loss:

Quarterback play has been mostly down this season. That's why a story like Fields is so much fun to follow.

Fields had a huge game last week and continued that momentum Sunday against the Detroit Lions,

even though the Bears blew a fourth-quarter lead and lost 31-30.

Fields threw a terrible interception that was returned for a touchdown by Jeff Okudah, a play that would be enormous in the outcome. That tied the game in the fourth quarter. Fields came right back with a 67-yard touchdown run. It was the kind of bounce back you want to see from a young QB.

Fields still has to work on his late-game heroics. He had a chance to rally the Bears after the Lions took a 31-30 lead but couldn't get a drive going and was sacked on fourth down with just under a minute to go. Fields wasn't perfect and the fact that the Bears coughed up a 14-point lead in the fourth quarter wasn't great. But you can't blame Fields for the missed extra point in the fourth quarter or the defense not stopping anyone. Fields' play is a positive in an otherwise bad Bears season.

Fields is emerging as a star. He is electric running the ball. He isn't great as a passer yet but a lot of that has to do with the lack of talent around him. He's showing enough as a passer that it's easy to buy his development over the long term. The Bears lost Sunday and Fields played a part in that. But in the big picture, Bears fans should be very excited.

Patrick Mahomes

MVP case: Josh Allen, Jalen Hurts and maybe even Tua Tagovailoa and others are still in the race, but it's looking more like Mahomes' award to lose.

Mahomes was great again on Sunday in the Kansas City Chiefs' 27-17 win over the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Mahomes has been great as usual this season, even without Tyreek Hill. He led the NFL in passing yards and touchdowns before Week 10 started. He added 331 yards and four TDs on Sunday.

Mahomes has been the best player in the NFL this season. There's a long way to go, but it looks like he'll win another MVP.

Tom Brady and Julio Jones:

It has been a rough season for the older Tampa Bay Buccaneers. But they're likely going to win the NFC South, and a 21-16 win over the Seattle Seahawks in Germany showed they're still capable of getting on a run.

The biggest play in the win was a 31-yard touchdown from Brady to Jones, in which a miscommunication in coverage by the Seahawks' defense opened up a lane to the end zone for Jones. He has battled injuries most of the season. Brady, who threw for 258 yards Sunday, has been OK but not his usual great self. It's been a rough year for the Buccaneers. But a win in Germany sure helps.

LOSERS

Mike McCarthy:

When coaching decisions don't work, the decision gets criticized. That's unfair but it's how it goes.

McCarthy will have questions to answer after the Dallas Cowboys' 31-28 loss to the Green Bay Packers. In overtime, McCarthy passed on a 53-yard field-goal attempt to go for it on fourth-and-3. Dak Prescott was pressured, threw it incomplete, and the Packers drove downfield for the game-winning field goal.

It wasn't necessarily the wrong call by McCarthy to go for it, but it led to a loss. It had to sting more for McCarthy to lose to the Packers. He was pushed out in Green Bay after many good years there, and came back Sunday with the better team.

The Cowboys (6-3) had a 28-14 lead in the fourth quarter. They couldn't hold onto it. There were a lot of reasons for the loss. McCarthy's overtime decision will be the one that gets the most attention.

The Rams, maybe the worst reigning champ ever:

The 1999 Broncos set the record for most losses by a defending Super Bowl champ. They went 6-10. That season, John Elway retired and Terrell Davis missed most of it with a torn ACL. The Rams won't have all those excuses.

Los Angeles' season got worse Sunday. Without Matthew Stafford, who was out with a concussion, they lost 27-17 to the Arizona Cardinals, who didn't have Kyler Murray. Cooper Kupp went down with an ankle injury, to make things worse.

The Rams are 3-6. They might make a run at a playoff spot still but it seems unlikely. The offense is broken, even with Stafford and Kupp. The Rams need to get better to avoid matching the 99 Broncos.

Buffalo Bills: The Bills are blowing a shot at the Super Bowl.

They have given up pole position in the race for the AFC's No. 1 seed. A 33-30 overtime loss to the Minnesota Vikings — after the Bills had a 27-10 second-half lead — puts their record at 6-3. Given how good the Kansas City Chiefs are, the Bills can't afford many more losses. Maybe not any.

The Bills had a stressful week wondering if Josh Allen would play through an elbow injury. He did play, and threw for 330 yards. But his interception in overtime cost the Bills a chance to at least tie the game. It's the Bills' second straight loss. They're still a good team but like last season, they're having inexplicable close losses. It might end up meaning they go to Arrowhead Stadium again in the playoffs. They're capable of winning there, but they're making their road a lot harder than it should be.

Russell Wilson and Denver Broncos' momentum:

The Broncos won a game and then went on their bye. They had a chance to get something going this season with a win at the Tennessee Titans.

But again, the same old problems showed up. Denver's offense did very little in a 17-10 loss to the Titans. The only touchdown was a 66-yard pass to Jalen Virgil on his first career catch in the second quarter. Denver didn't get a TD in the 38 minutes after that. Wilson threw a fourth-down interception with 11 seconds left to end it.

Denver is in rough shape. Wilson has been bad all season. The offense, other than spurts, has been unwatchable. Head coach Nathaniel Hackett can't feel good about his future at 3-6. Had Denver scored once in the second half Sunday, it could have had a season-changing win. Wilson and the Broncos couldn't even manage that. Russell Wilson's stat line on Sunday: 21-of-42 for 286 yards, one touchdown and one interception. He was also sacked six times.

Brandin Cooks and the Houston Texans:

Cooks wasn't happy he wasn't traded at the deadline, then was ruled out last week due to "personal reasons." He came back this weekend. He probably was reminded why he was angry.

The Texans are a bad team going nowhere. They lost 24-16 to the New York Giants. They had some chances but two fourth-quarter turnovers deep in Giants territory ruined their shot. That's what bad teams do.

It's inexplicable the Texans didn't figure out a way to trade Cooks. His \$18 million salary next year reportedly was the biggest problem, but that's on the Texans for not doing more to facilitate a trade. It'll be a long rest of the season for Cooks.

Andy Dalton and the New Orleans Saints:

You have to wonder if the Saints turn back to Jameis Winston. It's not like Dalton is keeping them afloat. Dalton got little going on Sunday, with just 174 passing yards. The Saints scored only one touchdown in a 20-10 loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers. Dalton got the job when Winston was hurt, then kept it. But the Saints are 3-7 after the loss. There's no reason to keep trying with Dalton. There's no great reason to try Winston again either. Sean Peyton knew when to get out. How they miss Drew Brees!

PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

GREEN BAY - 1½ Over Tennessee by 8 Thursday Night Football

The Tennessee Titans and Green Bay Packers meet Thursday in week 11 NFL action at Lambeau Field.

The Tennessee Titans have won 6 of their last 7 games. The Green Bay Packers have lost 5 of their last 6 games.

The Tennessee Titans have won 3 of their last 4 road games.

Ryan Tannehill is completing 62.6 percent of his passes for 1,352 yards, 8 touchdowns and 3 interceptions.

Robert Woods and Nick Westbrook-Ikhine have combined for 523 receiving yards and 3 touchdowns, while Austin Hooper has 17 receptions.

The Tennessee Titans ground game is averaging 133.4 yards per contest, and Derrick Henry leads the way with 923 yards and 9 touchdowns.

Defensively, Tennessee is allowing 18.7 points and 357.7 yards per game. David Long Jr. leads the Tennessee Titans with 71 tackles, Denico Autry has 7 sacks and Amani Hooker has 1 interception.

The Green Bay Packers have won 3 of their last 4 home games.

Aaron Rodgers is completing 65 percent of his passes for 2,315 yards, 17 touchdowns and 7 interceptions.

Allen Lazard and Robert Tonyan have combined for 795 receiving yards and 6 touchdowns, while Romeo Doubs has 31 receptions.

The Green Bay Packers ground game is averaging 129.3 yards per contest, and Aaron Jones leads the way with 738 yards and 2 touchdowns.

Defensively, Green Bay is allowing 21.6 points and 320.3 yards per game. Quay Walker leads the Green Bay Packers with 70 tackles, Rashan Gary has 6 sacks and Jaire Alexander has 3 interceptions.

The Titans are 4-0 ATS in their last 4 road games and 7-0 ATS in their last 7 games overall.

The Packers are 6-1-1 ATS in their last 8 Thursday games and 2-5 ATS in their last 7 games overall.

The under is 6-0 in Titans last 6 games overall. The over is 4-1 in Packers last 5 games in Week 11. The over is 5-1 in the last 6 meetings.

The Tennessee Titans are a well coached team that finds ways to win games, but they don't do anything special, and the lack of consistent scoring has had them in hairy situations against bad teams.

The Green Bay Packers play their best ball at home, and last week's effort was encouraging. Rodgers looked like Rodgers for a change, and Christian Watson has arrived.

All of a sudden the Packers have life and a win here, they're in the thick of the wild card race.

The weather report is predicting 23 degrees. I'll lay the small chalk with the Packers on the below freezing tundra.

Projected Score: Green Bay 24, Tennessee 16

PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

Buffalo - 6 Over Cleveland by 14

The Cleveland Browns and Buffalo Bills meet Sunday in week 11 NFL action at Highmark Stadium.

The Cleveland Browns have lost 5 of their last 6 games.

The Buffalo Bills look to build on their 6-3 record.

The Cleveland Browns have lost 3 straight road games.

Cleveland quarterback Jacoby Brissett is completing 63.8 percent of his passes for 2,074 yards, 8 touchdowns and 5 interceptions.

Amari Cooper and Donovan Peoples-Jones have combined for 1,101 receiving yards and 5 touchdowns, while David Njoku has 34 receptions.

The Cleveland Browns ground game is averaging 158.8 yards per contest, and Nick Chubb leads the way with 904 yards and 11 touchdowns.

Defensively, Cleveland is allowing 26.4 points and 349.1 yards per game. Grant Delpit leads the Cleveland Browns with 58 tackles, Myles Garrett has 7.5 sacks and Denzel Ward has 1 interception.

The Buffalo Bills have won 3 of their last 4 home games.

Josh Allen is completing 64.5 percent of his passes for 2,733 yards, 20 touchdowns and 10 interceptions.

Stefon Diggs and Gabe Davis have combined for 1,529 receiving yards and 12 touchdowns, while Dawson Knox has 24 receptions.

The Buffalo Bills ground game is averaging 129.9 yards per contest, and Allen leads the way with 476 yards and 4 touchdowns.

Defensively, Buffalo is allowing 16.8 points and 319.8 yards per game. Tremaine Edmunds leads the Buffalo Bills with 65 tackles, Von Miller has 8 sacks and Jordan Poyer has 4 interceptions.

The Browns are 16-34-2 ATS in their last 52 games in November and 4-9 ATS in their last 13 vs. AFC.

The Bills are 5-2-1 ATS in their last 8 home games and 10-2-2 ATS vs. a team with a losing record.

The over is 6-2-1 in Browns last 9 games overall.

The under is 6-1 in Bills last 7 games overall.

The Browns are 1-4-1 ATS in their last 6 meetings.

The favorite is 5-0-1 ATS in their last 6 meetings.

The Buffalo Bills are the better team here and should be favored, but this is a lot of points.

Josh Allen has been a little careless with the ball lately, and he's still dealing with a banged up throwing arm.

Also, while the record isn't pretty, the Cleveland Browns are still one of the more talented rosters in the league.

The Browns have a lot of quality players, and it makes them a tricky matchup most weeks, despite the losses.

Lot of points, But this is another very cold game with weather predictions expecting a low of 22 degrees. There's no way I'm going against Josh Allen in cold weather. His scrambling ability will drive the Browns crazy. Give me the Bills at home in the cold.

Projected Score: Buffalo 30, Cleveland 16

PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

Washington - 2½ Over HOUSTON by 10

The Washington Commanders and the Houston Texans meet Sunday in NFL action from NRG Stadium.

The Commanders are coming off a Monday night game versus Philadelphia. In that one Washington pulled off an upset win to break the Eagles winning streak.

As for Houston, they're sitting at 1-7-1 overall and lost to the Giants in their last game.

Washington opened up the year with a 1-4 run, falling to the Lions, Eagles, Cowboys and Titans in that stretch. After consecutive wins over the Bears, Packers and Colts, Washington fell to the Vikings to kick off November.

In Monday night matchup versus the Eagles, Washington was down 14-7 early but quickly recovered and went into halftime up 20-14. The Commanders kept it going in the second half for a 32-21 win. Taylor Heinicke threw for 211 yards, and Brian Robinson rushed 26 times for 86 yards and a score.

Over on the Houston side, they notched a tie with the Colts in their opener then lost to the Broncos, Bears and Chargers. Following a win over the Jaguars, Houston then fell to the Raiders, Titans, Eagles and Giants in succession.

In the Giants matchup back on Sunday, the Texans were down 21-10 going into the final quarter. Houston couldn't catch up and lost 24-16. QB Davis Mills finished with 319 yards, one TD and one pick. Dameon Pierce led the rush on 94 yards from 17 carries.

Washington is 4-1-1 ATS versus a team with a losing record and 4-9-1 ATS in their last 14 after an ATS loss.

The Commanders are 5-1 ATS in their last six in Week 11.

Meanwhile, the Texans are 4-1 ATS in their last five after an ATS loss and 2-6 ATS versus a team with a losing record.

The under is 4-1 in Houston's last five in November.

As for Houston, they're in the middle of another lost season and can't really find much to build on.

The Texans went just 3-of-10 on third downs versus the Giants in their last game, coughing up two turnovers and committing seven penalties along the way. I don't think they'll have much success against the Commanders stout defense.

The Commanders played a nice all-around game in the upset over Philadelphia Monday, notching 25 first downs and 152 rush yards. Washington did a great job keeping the Eagles off the field (19:36 in time of possession) and came up with four turnovers in a very solid defensive effort.

The Commanders are flying high after the impressive win over Philadelphia. They're excited and since Taylor Heinicke took over the reins they've been awesome. Did you see the sidelines in the Monday night game. The entire team came together and their thrilled to be back in the race.

No way they let the Houston Texans break their mojo. Don't forget, Washington is 4-1-1 ATS versus a team with a losing record.

Give me the Washington Commanders as Taylor Heinicke commands another impressive performance with a road win and cover.

Projected Score: Washington 24, Houston 14

PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

SAN FRANCISCO - 5½ Over Arizona by 15

The San Francisco 49ers and the Arizona Cardinals meet Monday in NFL action from Estadio Azteca. San Francisco is 5-4 on the season so far and fresh off a win versus the Chargers.

As for Arizona, they're 4-6 on the year. The Cardinals beat the Rams in their most recent game.

San Francisco managed a 3-2 run over their first five games this year, taking wins over the Seahawks, Rams and Panthers. Since then the 49ers have gone 2-2 with losses to the Falcons and Chiefs before wins over the Rams and Chargers.

In the Chargers game on Sunday, San Francisco faced an 18-10 deficit at the break. The 49ers went on a 12-0 run from there and took the game 22-16. QB Jimmy Garoppolo finished with 240 yards, and Elijah Mitchell led the rush on 89 yards from 18 carries.

Over on the Arizona side, they were just 2-4 over their first six games, falling to the Chiefs, Rams, Eagles and Seahawks. The Cardinals have gone 2-2 in the four games since, beating the Saints and Rams with losses to the Vikings and Seahawks.

In last Sunday's matchup versus the Rams, Arizona jumped out to a 17-3 lead at halftime. The Cardinals scored 10 points in the fourth on the way to a 27-17 win. Colt McCoy put up 238 yards with one score, and James Conner rushed for 69 yards and two touchdowns.

Arizona did a good enough job in their win over LA on Sunday, notching 298 total yards (78 rushing) and 18 first downs. The Cardinals avoided turnovers, but they also went just 5-of-15 on third-down tries and had 10 penalties. Arizona has plenty to clean up if they want to stay close in this one.

As for San Francisco, they kept drives alive well in their win over the Chargers with a 9-of-17 run on third downs, just one turnover and five penalties.

The 49ers have scored pretty well lately with 22 points or more in each of the last three games.

The Cardinals are 2-6 ATS versus a team with a winning record and 2-9 ATS in their last 11 Monday games. Arizona is 1-6 ATS in their last seven versus the NFC West.

The 49ers are 5-0 ATS in their last five versus the NFC West and 15-4 in their last 19 Monday games. San Francisco is 9-2 ATS in their last 11 versus the NFC.

This is a game where the trend is your friend. I'm backing the Niners and laying the points in what should be a comfortable win and cover.

Projected Score: San Francisco 31, Arizona 16

Note:

There's three midweek college picks, plus the regular 5 weekly picks in the box below

THIS WEEKS GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET BEST BETS

	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet
CFB	Thu/Friday Picks	C Michigan - 4.5	SMU + 4.5	SMU Over 64	S Diego St -11.5
CFB	Arizona + 4.5	C Carolina + 3.5	FAU - 4.5	Air Force - 21	Utah Over 57.5
NFL	Packers - 1.5	Bills - 8	Commanders -2.5	Niners - 5.5	