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Volume 41 Issue 18

December 28, 2022

Gridiron Gold Sheet Regular Season College Football Picks Has Expired

## **COLLEGE FOOTBALL BOWL GAMES**

A banner featuring a football player in a blue jersey with the number 21, wearing a white helmet and pointing forward. The background is a blurred image of a football stadium at night. On either side of the player is a 'Gridiron Gold' logo. Below the player is a small image of a football and the text 'Gridiron Gold College Football Bowl Game Packages'.

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# NFL FOOTBALL PICKS

## NFL Landscape

The Dallas Cowboys outlasted the Philadelphia Eagles at home. The Cincinnati Bengals narrowly escaped a loss on the road to the New England Patriots. The Kansas City Chiefs, Buffalo Bills and San Francisco 49ers took care of business. And the Minnesota Vikings continued to thrill their way to victory.

Even the Houston Texans – the Houston Texans! – won a game on Saturday.

The Christmas Eve slate of NFL games did not disappoint. Well, that depends on how your favorite team performed. Here are the winners and losers from Saturday's slate of games in Week 16:

## WINNERS:

### Dallas Cowboys

America's team rebounded from their disappointing overtime loss in Jacksonville last week with a thrilling, 40-34 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles at home.

Dak Prescott overcame an early pick-six to help the Cowboys tie the game at 34 with his second touchdown pass to CeeDee Lamb with 5:49 left. And while the Cowboys were unable to score a touchdown again, their two field goals in the final minutes were enough.

The Cowboys and Eagles split the season series, and coincidentally won while the other team's backup quarterback got the start.

Maybe a matchup with Prescott and Jalen Hurts, who is nursing a shoulder injury, could be in store for the playoffs. For now, the Eagles will have to wait to clinch the NFC East, a first-round bye and home-field advantage in the playoffs.

### Minnesota Vikings WR Justin Jefferson

Before this game, New York Giants defensive coordinator Don "Wink" Martindale told the defense that he's one of the top two receivers in this league, and he's not number two. Evidently, not even flattery can slow down Jefferson. He finished with 12 catches for 133 yards and a touchdown, his eighth of the season.

Jefferson broke the Vikings' single-season receiving record (set by Hall of Famer Randy Moss in 2003) and Cris Carter's single-season reception record, which the Hall of Famer set in 1994.

Jefferson, at 1,756 yards, needs 209 yards with two games left to surpass Calvin Johnson's single-season receiving record of 1,964 yards. These types of performances are becoming routine for the Offensive Player of the Year contender.

### Minnesota Vikings kicker Greg Joseph

A 61-yard, game-winning field goal? Joseph showed why he is a big reason the Vikings always seem to win games that rest on the knife's edge. He's just the dagger, nailing his kick to secure a win over the Giants.

### Buffalo Bills' run game

On a wintry Chicago day, the Bills relied on their run game to outlast the Bears after Chicago pulled within eight points early in the fourth quarter.

Devin Singletary rushed for 106 yards, James Cook rushed for 99 yards and quarterback Josh Allen had 41 yards. All three scored a rushing touchdown to help the Bills stay in first place in the AFC.

## **Baltimore Ravens**

No Lamar Jackson. No problem. For now. The Ravens won their second game with Jackson sidelined due to a knee injury, and clinched a playoff spot with their 17-9 win over the Atlanta Falcons.

Backup quarterback Tyler Huntley secured the win, and he delivered a touchdown pass to receiver Demarcus Robinson – Baltimore's first touchdown catch by a wide receiver since Week 3.

## **Houston Texans**

The worst team in the NFL broke through with a 19-14 win against the Tennessee Titans after flirting with victory after impressive performances against the Cowboys and Kansas City Chiefs in their previous two games.

The Texans won their second game of the year, but are still considered the favorite to land the No. 1 pick at 2-12-1. Another win could put them in jeopardy with the Bears sitting behind them at 3-12.

## **Carolina Panthers' run game**

Carolina bullied the Lions at the point of attack and Detroit's poor job of tackling led to a 37-23 victory that was closer on the scoreboard than it actually was.

Running back D'Onta Foreman rushed for a touchdown and 165 yards, while Chuba Hubbard had 125 yards on 12 carries (10.4 yards per carry). Quarterback Sam Darnold even had 19 yards on the ground (six attempts) and a rushing touchdown.

Carolina controls its own destiny in the putrid NFC South, starting with a massive matchup next week against Tampa Bay. Panthers create NFC South chaos, put pressure on Tom Brady, Buccaneers

## **Jacksonville Jaguars**

They started the week in second place in the AFC South. Now they're in position to host a home playoff game.

The Jags dispatched the Jets with relative ease Thursday night, and they now hold the No. 4 seed in the AFC thanks to their head-to-head tiebreaker over the Titans, who they'll face in the season finale.

## **Trenton Irwin and Shane Zylstra**

The Bengals and Lions both relied on players low on their depth chart to provide a spark. But how about multiple touchdowns each for both Bengals receiver Trenton Irwin (two) and Lions tight end Shane Zylstra (three)?

Irwin took advantage of Tyler Boyd's time on the sideline with a finger injury to catch three passes for 45 yards and two of Joe Burrow's three touchdowns in the first half at New England.

As for Zylstra, he was a bright spot in an otherwise dull performance by the Lions, catching his touchdown passes from Jared Goff in the first, third and fourth quarters of a 37-20 loss in North Carolina.

## **San Francisco 49ers QB Brock Purdy**

Brock Purdy joined Dan Marino as just the second quarterback since 1950 to throw multiple touchdowns while posting a 100-plus QB rating in each of his first three starts.

Purdy threw two touchdowns to George Kittle and improved to 3-0 as the 49ers' starter with a 37-20 win over the Commanders.

And with the Eagles losing to the Cowboys, the 49ers gained a game toward Philadelphia for the No. 1 seed. San Francisco might not catch Philly, but Purdy has done his job to keep the 49ers afloat in Jimmy Garoppolo's absence.

## **Pittsburgh Steelers**

Call it an “immaculate” comeback or a gift from Franco up above.

Steelers quarterback Kenny Pickett led a late 76-yard touchdown drive, going 7-for-9 and throwing a TD to George Pickens with just 46 seconds to go, to lift Pittsburgh over the Las Vegas Raiders on Saturday night.

It was a fitting finish on a day meant to honor late Steelers great Franco Harris, who died earlier this week, as the team celebrated the 50th anniversary of his iconic play, "The Immaculate Reception."

## **LOSERS**

### **Cleveland Browns QB Deshaun Watson**

The Browns will finish Deshaun Watson's first season with a losing record.

Watson, who is 2-2 as starter, and the Browns failed to convert on fourth down twice in their freezing contest at home against the Saints, falling to 6-9 and out of the playoff mix.

The Browns' season was hampered by Watson's 11-game suspension amid accusations by more than two dozen women of sexual misconduct, and they have nothing left to play for with two games remaining.

### **New England Patriots**

Down 22 points at the half, and needing receiver Scotty Washington to tip a deep pass from quarterback Mac Jones to receiver Jakobi Meyers for a 48-yard touchdown on third-and-29, the Patriots pulled within four points of an upset of the Bengals.

But their comeback effort was ripped away from them as Bengals safety Vonn Bell stripped running back Rhamondre Stevenson at the 5-yard line with 1:05 left to slam the door shut.

For the second straight week, the Patriots lost in dramatic fashion. Somehow, they're still mathematically in the playoff mix at 7-8.

### **Washington Commanders QB Taylor Heinicke**

Down 30-14 in the fourth quarter against the 49ers, Washington coach Ron Rivera decided to bench starting quarterback Taylor Heinicke for Carson Wentz.

On consecutive drives in the second half, Heinicke was sacked and fumbled and then threw an interception to put the game out of reach for Washington.

The 49ers kicked field goals on both ensuing drives, but the damage was already done as San Francisco increased a 10-point lead to 16 after the turnovers. The 49ers won 37-20.

Now, Heinicke's job may be in jeopardy heading into the final two games.

### **Tennessee Titans**

The Titans appeared primed to win another AFC South title during their 27-17 win on the road against the Packers on Nov. 17.

But since then? It hasn't been good. The Titans lost their fifth straight game, this time to the worst team in the NFL, 19-14 to the Texans.

Tennessee has fallen to 7-8, seeing the Jaguars leapfrog them in the division standings. The teams will play in the season finale to decide their division.

## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Miami vs NEW ENGLAND UNDER 43 by 10

The Miami Dolphins visit Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, Massachusetts on Sunday for an AFC East battle against the New England Patriots.

Miami dropped to 8-7 following its 26-20 loss to the Green Bay Packers on Christmas Day. The Dolphins have lost each of the last four and are at risk of falling out of playoff contention. Prior to losing four straight, the Dolphins had won five straight.

Miami quarterback Tua Tagovailoa has passed for 3,548 yards with 25 touchdowns and eight interceptions.

Raheem Mostert is the leading rusher with 791 yards and three touchdowns.

The leading receiver is Tyreek Hill with 1,632 yards and seven touchdown receptions.

On defense, linebacker Elandon Roberts is the leading tackler with 93. Miami has 37 quarterback sacks and eight interceptions.

New England looks to snap a two-game losing streak with a victory when hosting Miami on Sunday. The Patriots are 7-8 following a 22-18 loss to the Cincinnati Bengals on Saturday.

New England has lost two straight and four of the last five but the Patriots still have an opportunity to reach the postseason, but must win each of their last two and receive help from other teams.

Patriots quarterback Mac Jones has passed for 2,550 yards with nine touchdowns and eight interceptions.

Running back Rhamondre Stevenson is the leading rusher with 944 yards and five touchdowns.

The leading receiver is Jakobi Meyers with 723 yards and four touchdown receptions.

On defense, linebacker Ja'Whaun Bentley is the leading tackler with 109.

New England has 50 quarterback sacks and 16 interceptions.

The Dolphins are 2-5 ATS in their last 7 road games and 1-4 ATS in their last 5 games in January.

The Patriots are 2-5 ATS in their last 7 vs. AFC East and 1-4 ATS in their last 5 games overall. The over is 5-1 in Dolphins last 6 road games.

The under is 6-2 in Patriots last 8 games overall.

The Dolphins are 2-8 ATS in their last 10 meetings in New England and 4-0 ATS in their last 4 meetings.

The home team is 19-7 ATS in their last 26 meetings.

Miami and New England are struggling coming down the home stretch of the NFL regular season as the Dolphins have lost four straight and New England has lost two straight.

This game changes drastically if Tua Tagovailoa can't go and Teddy Bridgewater is forced to play quarterback. I'm not eager to lay chalk with a Patriots team that is dreadful offensively. The Dolphins may be down their starting quarterback, but the Pats still have Mac Jones and Matt Patricia.

The Patriots have scored 18 or fewer points in 4 of their last 9 games. The advantage here goes to the tick. The UNDER has cashed in each of the Patriots last 4 at home. We're going UNDER the posted total of 43.

**Projected Score: New England 17, Miami 16**

## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### Pittsburgh vs BALTIMORE UNDER 43 by 6

The Pittsburgh Steelers and the Baltimore Ravens meet in week 17 NFL Action from M&T Bank Stadium on Sunday night.

The Pittsburgh Steelers will look to build on their 13-10 win over Las Vegas in their last game.

Kenny Pickett has thrown for 2,041 yards, 5 touchdowns and 9 interceptions on 65.2% passing.

Najee Harris leads the Steelers in rushing with 843 rushing yards and 6 TDs this season.

Diontae Johnson leads Pittsburgh with 82 grabs for 809 receiving yards while Pat Freiermuth has 696 receiving yards and George Pickens has 700 receiving yards as well this season.

On defense, Myles Jack has a team-high 100 total tackles including 59 solo tackles while Alex Highsmith has a team-high 12 sacks and Minkah Fitzpatrick has 5 interceptions this season.

The Baltimore Ravens will try to build on their 17-9 win over Atlanta last time out.

Lamar Jackson has thrown for 2,242 yards, 17 touchdowns and 7 interceptions on 62.3% passing while also leading the Ravens on the ground with 764 rushing yards and 3 touchdowns this season.

Mark Andrews leads Baltimore with 64 grabs for 747 yards and 5 touchdowns while Demarcus Robinson has 425 receiving yards and Devin Duvernay has 407 receiving yards and 3 TDs as well on the year.

On defense, Patrick Queen has a team-high 106 total tackles including 71 solo tackles while Baltimore's defense as a whole has 44 sacks and 14 interceptions as well this season.

Pittsburgh is 1-6 ATS in their last 7 games against a team with a winning record and 1-6 ATS in their last 7 games after allowing 15 points or less in their previous game while the under is 6-1 in their last 7 games following a win.

Baltimore is 1-5 ATS in their last 6 division games and 1-6-1 ATS in their last 8 home games while the under is 4-0 in their last 4 games overall.

The Ravens have locked up a playoff spot, and all they're fighting for over the last couple of weeks is positioning and the chance to play a team like Jacksonville or Tennessee in the wild card round as opposed to Cincinnati or Kansas City and I can get behind the want to avoid those teams.

However, regaining health should be of importance to the Ravens as well, and most likely the Ravens will play it safe and keep QB Lamar Jackson out of the brutality of this rivalry game.

Pittsburgh Steelers simply need to win because nothing is guaranteed for Pittsburgh right now on the outside looking in. They will be the more motivated team.

Nevertheless, this is still a hated rivalry and QB Kenny Pickett will find the going tough against the Ravens stout defense and pass rush. A typical Ravens Steelers game is most likely. Without Lamar Jackson, the two quarterbacks will be hard pressed to put a lot of points on the board. Take the tick. Go under 43

**Projected Score: Baltimore 20, Pittsburgh 17**

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## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### TAMPA BAY - 3 Over Carolina by 11

The Carolina Panthers and Tampa Bay Buccaneers meet Sunday in week 17 NFL action at Raymond James Stadium.

The Carolina Panthers have split their last 10 games. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers have split their last 8 games.

The Carolina Panthers have lost 5 of their last 6 road games.

Sam Darnold is completing 61.4 percent of his passes for 759 yards, 4 touchdowns and 0 interceptions.

DJ Moore and Terrace Marshall Jr. have combined for 1,213 receiving yards and 7 touchdowns, while Laviska Shenault Jr. has 24 receptions.

The Carolina Panthers ground game is averaging 131 yards per contest, and D'Onta Foreman leads the way with 811 yards and 5 touchdowns.

Defensively, Carolina is allowing 22.5 points and 344.7 yards per game. Shaq Thompson leads the Carolina Panthers with 116 tackles, Brian Burns has 12.5 sacks and Jaycee Horn has 3 interceptions.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers have split their last 6 home games. Tom Brady is completing 66 percent of his passes for 4,178 yards, 21 touchdowns and 9 interceptions.

Mike Evans and Chris Godwin have combined for 1,765 receiving yards and 6 touchdowns, while Leonard Fournette has 68 receptions.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers ground game is averaging 77 yards per contest, and Fournette leads the way with 640 yards and 3 touchdowns.

Defensively, Tampa Bay is allowing 20.3 points and 315.4 yards per game. Devin White leads the Tampa Bay Buccaneers with 115 tackles, Vita Vea has 6.5 sacks and Jamel Dean has 2 interceptions.

The Panthers are 3-7 ATS in their last 10 road games and 5-1 ATS in their last 6 games overall. The Buccaneers are 1-7-1 ATS in their last 9 home games and 3-12-1 ATS in their last 16 games overall. The over is 7-3 in Panthers last 10 games in January. The under is 11-4 in Buccaneers last 15 games overall. The Panthers are 1-4 ATS in their last 5 meetings. The favorite is 5-1 ATS in their last 6 meetings.

The Carolina Panthers are probably playing the better ball entering this contest, but can we really trust them on the road in a playoff type atmosphere? I'm not sure.

Say what you want about the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, but they're still playing for a division title, and they have the most clutch quarterback in the history of the game.

This is pretty much a playoff game, and Tom Brady is under center. Over the last two decades, he finds a way more times than not. He's the easiest thing to trust in this game. Note that the Panthers are 3-7 ATS in their last 10 road games and 1-4 ATS in their last 5 meetings. In addition, the favorite is 5-1 ATS in their last 6 meetings. I'll lay the field goal with Brady's Bucs.

**Projected Score: Tampa Bay 27, Carolina 16**



## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### DETROIT - 5 Over Chicago by 17

The Chicago Bears and Detroit Lions meet Sunday in week 17 NFL action at Ford Field.

The Chicago Bears have lost 8 straight games. Chicago dropped to 3-12 following its 35-13 loss to the Buffalo Bills on Saturday. Chicago was held to 209 yards of total offense and committed two turnovers, while allowing Buffalo to gain 426 yards of total offense. Chicago has lost each of its last eight.

The Chicago Bears have lost 3 straight road games. Justin Fields is completing 62.3 percent of his passes for 2,167 yards, 16 touchdowns and 10 interceptions.

Darnell Mooney and Cole Kmet have combined for 953 receiving yards and 7 touchdowns, while David Montgomery has 32 receptions.

The Chicago Bears ground game is averaging 179.7 yards per contest, and Fields leads the way with 1,011 yards and 8 touchdowns.

Defensively, Chicago is allowing 26.2 points and 360.3 yards per game. Nicholas Morrow leads the Chicago Bears with 103 tackles, Jaquan Brisker has 4 sacks and Eddie Jackson has 4 interceptions.

The Detroit Lions have split their last 8 home games. The Detroit Lions have won 6 of their last 8 games.

Jared Goff is completing 64.5 percent of his passes for 3,959 yards, 26 touchdowns and 7 interceptions.

Amon-Ra St. Brown and Kalif Raymond have combined for 1,560 receiving yards and 6 touchdowns, while Josh Reynolds has 36 receptions.

The Detroit Lions ground game is averaging 120.7 yards per contest, and Jamaal Williams leads the way with 850 yards and 14 touchdowns.

Defensively, Detroit is allowing 26.7 points and 409.9 yards per game. Alex Anzalone leads the Detroit Lions with 110 tackles, Aidan Hutchinson has 7 sacks and Kerby Joseph has 3 interceptions.

The Bears are 2-6 ATS in their last 8 road games and 1-5 ATS in their last 6 games overall.

The Lions are 4-0 ATS in their last 4 home games and 7-1 ATS in their last 8 games overall.

The over is 8-1 in Bears last 9 games overall. The over is 5-2 in Lions last 7 games overall.

The Chicago Bears have been competitive despite their losses, but their well below average defense against this Lions offense is a terrible matchup.

The Detroit Lions are back in their dome here they're comfy and cozy, and they're fourth in total offense and fifth in scoring offense.

A Bears defense that's 24th in total defense, 30th in rush defense and 31st in scoring defense will be pummeled in this match-up. The Bears are 2-6 ATS in their last 8 road games and 1-5 ATS in their last 6 games overall. The Lions are 4-0 ATS in their last 4 home games and 7-1 ATS in their last 8 games overall. I'll take the Lions by a more than a couple of touchdowns.

**Projected Score: Detroit 34, Chicago 17**



## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BET

### SEATTLE + 2½ OVER NY Jets by 6

The New York Jets and Seattle Seahawks meet Sunday in week 17 NFL action at Lumen Field.

The New York Jets have lost 4 straight games. The Seattle Seahawks have lost 5 of their last 6 games.

The New York Jets have lost 3 straight road games.

Mike White is completing 62 percent of his passes for 952 yards, 3 touchdowns and 2 interceptions.

Garrett Wilson and Corey Davis have combined for 1,470 receiving yards and 6 touchdowns, while Tyler Conklin has 50 receptions.

The New York Jets ground game is averaging 104.9 yards per contest, and Breece Hall leads the way with 463 yards and 4 touchdowns.

Defensively, New York is allowing 18.8 points and 309.3 yards per game. C.J. Mosley leads the New York Jets with 142 tackles, Quinnen Williams has 12 sacks and Lamarcus Joyner has 3 interceptions.

The Seattle Seahawks have lost 3 straight home games. Geno Smith is completing 70.7 percent of his passes for 3,886 yards, 27 touchdowns and 9 interceptions.

DK Metcalf and Tyler Lockett have combined for 1,969 receiving yards and 14 touchdowns, while Noah Fant has 44 receptions.

The Seattle Seahawks ground game is averaging 109.8 yards per contest, and Kenneth Walker III leads the way with 803 yards and 9 touchdowns.

Defensively, Seattle is allowing 25.3 points and 373.4 yards per game. Jordyn Brooks leads the Seattle Seahawks with 157 tackles, Uchenna Nwosu has 9 sacks and Tariq Woolen has 6 interceptions.

The Jets are 5-2 ATS in their last 7 road games and 2-5 ATS in their last 7 games in January.

The Seahawks are 0-4 ATS vs. a team with a losing record and 0-6 ATS in their last 6 games overall.

The under is 8-2 in Jets last 10 games overall. The over is 5-0 in Seahawks last 5 games in January.

The Jets are 0-4 ATS in their last 4 meetings. The home team is 5-1 ATS in their last 6 meetings. The favorite is 5-1 ATS in their last 6 meetings.

I'm not sure what the Jets did to be favored on the road, White playing quarterback or not. Wilson or White, the Jets' offense has been a mess all year and is 25th in scoring offense.

The Seattle Seahawks have their issues as well, and their defense has been a joke all year.

The differences in this game is the fact the Seahawks are at home, and that helps in a must win game for both sides in terms of the playoffs.

Also, this is a revenge game for Smith, as he spent his first 4 seasons with the Jets and was then kicked to the curb. I guarantee Smith had this game circled on his calendar. Give me the points with the Seahawks.

**Projected Score: Seattle 26, NY Jets 20**



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