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Dennis Stagliano's Best Bets Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter

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NFL Week 18, 2025

THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE OF OUR GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET NEWSLETTER FOR THE 2025 SEASON. LET'S CHECK OUR HANDICAPPER NFL RECORDS AGAINST THE SPREAD NOW

- **Dennis NFL Guaranteed Picks: 44-20 69%**
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NFL LANDSCAPE:

Falcons beat Rams 27-24

Falcons (7-9) Bijan Robinson totaled 230 scrimmage yards (195 rushing, 35 receiving) and two touchdowns on 27 touches (8.5 ypt). A 93-yard touchdown run was one of his many highlights. Xavier Watts, a second-round safety out of Notre Dame, had two interceptions off Matthew Stafford. Kirk Cousins (13/20, 126, 1, 0) now has a 4-2 record as the Falcons' starter.

Rams (11-5) Rough night: Matthew Stafford had a rocky game, completing 22 of 38 (58%) passes for 269 yards, two touchdowns, and three interceptions. The Rams' vaunted defense failed to record a sack or turnover.

49ers beat Bears 42-38

San Francisco (12-4) - QB Brock Purdy was in top form, accounting for 331 yards (303 passing, 28 rushing), five touchdowns, and one interception. He completed 24/33 (73%). His top targets were WR Ricky Pearsall (5-85) and TE Jake Tonges (7-60-1). RB Christian McCaffrey had a monster night, totaling 181 scrimmage yards (140 rushing, 41 receiving) and a touchdown on 27 touches (6.7 ypt).

Chicago (11-5) - QB Caleb Williams (25/42, 330, 2, 0) played well and came very close to leading another game-winning drive. His top targets were WR Luther Burden (8-138-1) and TE Colston Loveland (6-94-1). RB D'Andre Swift totaled 79 scrimmage yards (54 rushing, 25 receiving) and two touchdowns on 11 touches (7.2 ypt).

Eagles beat Bills 13-12

Philadelphia (11-5) - QB Jalen Hurts, playing in very wet conditions, completed 13/27 (48%) for 110 yards, one touchdown, and no interceptions. RB Saquon Barkley rushed for 68 yards on 19 carries (3.6 ypc). DE Jalyx Hunt had two of the Eagles' five sacks.

Buffalo (11-5) - The Bills failed to convert what would've been a game-winning two-point conversion in the final seconds. The decision was questionable, considering the Eagles had just 17 yards of offense in the second half. QB Josh Allen accounted for 289 yards (262 passing, 27 rushing), two touchdowns, and one fumble. He completed 23/35 (71%). WR Brandin Cooks caught four of six targets for 101 yards.

Browns beat Steelers 13-6

Cleveland (4-12) - QB Shedeur Sanders accounted for 206 yards (186 passing, 20 rushing), one touchdown, and two turnovers. He completed 17/23 (74%). TE Harold Fannin caught two passes for 30 yards and a touchdown before aggravating his groin injury in the first quarter. The defense held the Steelers to 3/18 (17%) on third and fourth downs.

Pittsburgh (9-7) - QB Aaron Rodgers (21/39, 168, 0, 0) was ineffective. RB Jaylen Warren rushed for 64 yards on 12 carries (5.3 ypc).

Seahawks beat Panthers 27-10

Seattle (13-3) - QB Sam Darnold (18/27, 147, 1, 1) underwhelmed. His top targets were WR Jaxon-Smith-Njigba (9-72) and TE AJ Barner (3-43-1). RB Zach Charbonnet rushed for 110 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries (6.1 ypc).

Carolina (8-8) - QB Bryce Young was not good, accounting for just 81 yards (54 passing, 27 rushing), one touchdown, and one interception. He completed 14/24 (58%). Next week's Carolina at Tampa Bay game will determine the NFC South.

Jaguars beat Colts 23-17

Jacksonville (12-4) - QB Trevor Lawrence had another strong performance, accounting for 289 yards (263 passing, 26 rushing), two touchdowns, and one turnover. He completed 23/37 (62%). WR Parker Washington caught eight of ten targets for 115 yards. RB Travis Etienne totaled 92 scrimmage yards (76 rushing, 16 receiving) on 19 touches (4.8 ypt).

Indianapolis (8-8) - QB Philip Rivers completed 17/30 (57%) for 147 yards, one touchdown, and one interception. RB Jonathan Taylor rushed for 70 yards and a touchdown on 21 carries (3.3 ypc).

Dolphins beat Buccaneers 20-17

Miami (7-9) - QB Quinn Ewers was solid, completing 14/22 (64%) for 172 yards, two touchdowns, and no interceptions. TE Greg Dulcich caught five of six targets for 58 yards and a touchdown. RB De'Von Achane totaled 112 scrimmage yards (83 rushing, 29 receiving) on 21 touches (5.3 ypt).

Tampa Bay (7-9) - QB Baker Mayfield (33/44, 346, 2, 2) played far worse than his stat line. His top targets were WR Jalen McMillan (7-114) and WR Chris Godwin (7-108-1). RB Bucky Irving totaled just 33 yards on 14 touches (2.4 ypt).

Patriots beat Jets 42-10

New England (13-3) - QB Drake Maye was in MVP form, accounting for 278 yards (256 passing, 22

rushing), five touchdowns, and no turnovers. He completed 19/21 (90%). WR Stefon Diggs caught all six of his targets for 101 yards and a touchdown. RB Rhamondre Stevenson totaled 102 scrimmage yards (47 rushing, 55 receiving) and a touchdown on 13 touches (7.8 ypc).

New York (3-13) - QB Brady Cook (19/33, 152, 0, 1) struggled. RB Breece Hall rushed for 111 yards and a touchdown on 14 carries (7.9 ypc).

Giants beat Raiders 34-10

New York (3-13) - QB Jaxson Dart had a nice game, accounting for 255 yards (207 passing, 48 rushing), two touchdowns, and no turnovers. He completed 22/30 (73%). WR Wan'Dale Robinson caught 11 of 13 targets for 113 yards. RB Devin Singletary totaled 70 scrimmage yards (45 rushing, 25 receiving) and a touchdown on 12 touches (5.8 ypc).

Las Vegas (2-14) - QB Geno Smith (20/28, 176, 1, 2) played poorly. TE Michael Mayer caught nine of ten targets for 89 yards. The Raiders now hold the No. 1 pick in the 2026 draft — which they will likely use on Indiana QB Fernando Mendoza.

Saints beat Titans 34-26

New Orleans (6-10) - QB Tyler Shough was in elite form, completing 22/27 (81%) for 333 yards, two touchdowns, and no interceptions. His top targets were WR Chris Olave (8-119-1) and TE Juwan Johnson (4-95). RB Audric Esteime rushed for 94 yards and a touchdown on 14 carries (6.7 ypc).

Tennessee (3-13) - QB Cam Ward showed some promise, completing 21/40 (53%) for 251 yards, two touchdowns, and no interceptions. WR Elic Ayomanor caught four of seven targets for 37 yards and a touchdown. RB Tony Pollard rushed for 85 yards on 18 carries (4.7 ypc).

Bengals beat Cardinals 37-14

Cincinnati (6-10) - QB Joe Burrow was excellent, completing 24/31 (77%) for 305 yards, two touchdowns, and no interceptions. WR Ja'Marr Chase caught seven of nine targets for 60 yards and two touchdowns. RB Chase Brown totaled 141 scrimmage yards (101 rushing, 40 receiving) and two touchdowns on 25 touches (5.6 ypc).

Arizona (3-13) - QB Jacoby Brissett completed 21/37 (57%) for 212 yards, two touchdowns, and no interceptions. TE Trey McBride caught ten of 13 targets for 76 yards and a touchdown — and now owns the single-season catch record for a tight end with 119. WR Michael Wilson caught five of ten targets for 89 yards and a touchdown.

Ravens beat Packers 41-24

Baltimore (8-8) - QB Tyler Huntley accounted for 167 yards (107 passing, 60 rushing), one touchdown, and no turnovers. He completed 16/20 (80%). WR Zay Flowers caught four of five targets for 30 yards and a touchdown. RB Derrick Henry had a legendary performance, rushing for 216 yards and four touchdowns on 36 carries (6.0 ypc).

Green Bay (9-6-1) - QB Malik Willis impressed, accounting for 348 yards (288 passing, 60 rushing), three touchdowns, and one fumble before aggravating his shoulder injury in the fourth quarter. He completed 18/21 (86%). WR Christian Watson caught five of six targets for 113 yards and a touchdown.

Texans beat Chargers 20-16

Houston (11-5) - QB CJ Stroud completed 16/28 (57%) for 244 yards, two touchdowns, and two interceptions. WR Jayden Higgins caught two of four targets for 88 yards and a touchdown. The defense recorded five sacks.

Los Angeles (11-5) - QB Justin Herbert accounted for 237 yards (236 passing, 37 rushing), one touchdown, and one interception. He completed 21/32 (66%). His top targets were WR Quentin Johnston (5-98) and TE Oronde Gadsden (3-32-1). RB Omarion Hampton totaled 60 scrimmage yards (29 rushing, 31 receiving) and a touchdown on 22 touches (2.7 ypt).

Broncos beat Chiefs 20-13

Denver (13-3) - QB Bo Nix accounted for 224 yards (182 passing, 42 rushing), two touchdowns, and one interception. He completed 26/38 (68%). WR Courtland Sutton caught four of ten targets for 40 yards. RB RJ Harvey totaled 76 scrimmage yards (43 rushing, 33 receiving) and a touchdown on 19 touches (4.0 ypt).

Kansas City (6-10) - QB Chris Oladokun (13/22, 66, 1, 0) underwhelmed. TE Travis Kelce caught five of six targets for 36 yards in what was likely his last game at Arrowhead Stadium.

Vikings beat Lions 23-10

Minnesota (8-8) - QB Max Brosmer (9/16, 51, 0, 0) did little, but avoided major mistakes. WR Jordan Addison had a 65-yard touchdown run. The defense forced six turnovers (two interceptions, four fumbles).

Detroit (8-8) - QB Jared Goff had five turnovers. WR Isaac TeSlaa caught three of four targets for 49 yards and a touchdown. The running game produced just 68 yards on 30 carries (2.3 ypc).

Cowboys beat Commanders 30-23

Dallas (7-8-1) - QB Dak Prescott had a nice game, accounting for 331 yards (324 passing, 24 rushing), three touchdowns, and no turnovers. He completed 19/37 (51%). WR KaVontae Turpin had an 86-yard touchdown. RB Malik Davis rushed for 103 yards on 20 carries (5.2 ypc).

Washington (4-12) - QB Josh Johnson completed 15/23 (65%) for 198 yards, no touchdowns, and no interceptions. WR Deebo Samuel totaled 93 scrimmage yards (25 rushing, 68 receiving) on four touches (23.3 ypt). RB Bill Croskey-Merritt rushed for 105 yards and two touchdowns on 11 carries (9.5 ypc).

11 crazy stats from Week 17:

1. **Patriots pull off historical turn around.** The Patriots picked up their 13th win of the year on Sunday, which marks just the second time in NFL history that a team has won 13 games following a season where they lost 13 games. The only other team to pull off the feat was Peyton Manning's Colts in 1999.
2. **Drake Maye makes history.** The Patriots QB completed 90.1% of his passes for 254 yards and five touchdowns making him the first QB in NFL history to finish a game with at least 250 passing yards, at least five TD passes and a completion percentage above 90%. Not

even Tom Brady has ever done that.

3. **Steelers can't beat bad teams.** With their loss to the Browns, the Steelers have now lost their last five games that they've played against teams that are at least eight games under .500. That's tied with the Buccaneers (1985-87) and Raiders (1993-2009) for the longest streak in NFL history.
4. **Raiders losing streak just won't end.** The Raiders lost their 10th straight game on Sunday and if you combine that with their 10-game losing streak from last season, they're now just the fifth team in NFL history to have a losing streak of at least 10 games in back-to-back seasons. The 2016-17 Browns are the only other team to pull off that ugly feat over the past 40 years.
5. **Texans join exclusive club.** The Texans clinched a playoff berth over the weekend after beating the Chargers, which makes them just the seventh team in NFL history to make the playoffs after an 0-3 start. Over the past 25 years, only two teams have made the postseason after an 0-3 start: The 2018 Texans and the 2025 Texans.
6. **Jets set unfortunate NFL record.** The Jets got outscored by 102 points during the month of December, which is the worst point differential ever by a team in December. The Jets played four games during the month and got blown out all four times with losses of 34-10 (to the Dolphins), 48-20 (to the Jaguars), 29-6 (to the Saints) and 42-10 (to the Patriots).
7. **Trey McBride was the one bright spot for Arizona.** With 10 catches against the Bengals, McBride now has 119 receptions on the year, which is the highest single-season total by a tight end in NFL history. McBride broke the old record of 116, which was set by Zach Ertz in 2018.
8. **Chimere Dike for rookie of the year?** From returning kickoffs to returning punts to playing receiver, the Titans rookie has been doing it all for the team this year. Dike had 102 all-purpose yards on Sunday against the Saints and now has 2,371 on the season, which is the new NFL record for most all-purpose yards by a rookie. Dike broke the old record of 2,317, which was set by Tim Brown in 1988.
9. **Ugly second half for Jalen Hurts.** The Eagles QB completed zero passes during the second half against the Bills marking the second time this season that he's had zero completions in the second half of a game. That makes the Eagles the first team since the 1987 Patriots to win multiple games in a single season without completing a pass in the second half.
10. **Sam Darnold makes history.** With the Seahawks' win over the Panthers, Sam Darnold now has 13 wins as a starter this season and if you combine that with his 14 wins in Minnesota last year, that makes him the first QB in NFL history to win at least 13 games in back-to-back seasons with different teams.
11. **Packers punt on winning.** The Packers didn't punt a single time during their 41-24 loss to the Ravens on Saturday, marking the THIRD time this season that they've lost a game where they didn't punt. That's the most losses ever in a single season since detailed records started being kept in 1950. The 2021 Chargers and 2024 Bengals are the only teams in that span that have even lost two games where they didn't punt.

DJ & DENNIS' BOWL GAME OF THE YEAR PICKS

DJ's BGOY is in the Miami vs Ohio State Game

Dennis' BGOY is in the Alabama vs Indiana Game

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PRO FOOTBALL BEST BETS

Cleveland at Cincinnati

Line: Bengals -7.5 | Total: 44

Cincinnati enters Week 18 needing a strong close, but the matchup and recent game flow suggest this is a dangerous spot to lay more than a touchdown. Cleveland's defensive profile has quietly stabilized over the second half of the season, and that showed again last week when they completely smothered Pittsburgh. The Browns held the Steelers to just six points, repeatedly winning at the line of scrimmage and forcing long-yardage situations that killed drives. That ability to control downs is critical when catching this many points.

The Bengals' offense is still capable of explosive stretches, but their recent wins have not consistently translated into margin. Against Arizona, they built an early lead and cruised, but that game was aided by short fields and early breakdowns. When Cincinnati has been forced to play longer, more methodical games, separation has been harder to sustain. That matters against a Cleveland team that is comfortable shortening the game and leaning on defensive pressure to keep things close.

Game script also favors the underdog. Cleveland does not need to win this game outright for the bet to cash — they only need to avoid the late collapse that turns a competitive fourth quarter into a double-digit loss. Their recent performance suggests they can do that. Even when their offense stalls, the defense has consistently kept them within striking distance, forcing opponents to earn each score.

Cincinnati's defense has also been vulnerable to long drives that chew clock without necessarily producing touchdowns. Those possessions are gold for an underdog, because they reduce total snaps and limit the favorite's ability to stretch the margin. A game that lives in the 24-20 or 27-21 range strongly favors Cleveland against this number.

This is not a fade of Cincinnati's talent — it's a numbers play based on how these teams are currently winning games. Cleveland's ability to defend, slow tempo, and avoid blowout conditions makes the points valuable.

TAKE: Cleveland +7.5

Green Bay at Minnesota

Line: Vikings -6.5 | Total: 36

Minnesota is positioned to control this game from the opening kick, and the matchup strongly supports laying the points. The Vikings' defense is coming off one of its most dominant performances of the season, forcing six turnovers against Detroit and completely dismantling their offensive structure. That wasn't a fluke — it was the result of constant pressure, disguised looks, and an ability to force mistakes early in downs.

Green Bay, meanwhile, continues to struggle with ball security and consistency. Against Baltimore, the Packers fell behind quickly and were never able to recover after repeated breakdowns at the line of scrimmage. Turnovers, failed fourth-down attempts, and stalled drives put the defense in impossible positions. That's a bad recipe against a Minnesota team that thrives when playing from in front.

The low total actually strengthens the case for the favorite. In games projected to be tighter and more defensive, the team with the clearer edge in field position and takeaway potential often creates separation without needing offensive fireworks. Minnesota doesn't need to score 30 to cover this number — they simply need to force Green Bay into mistakes and capitalize with short fields.

Minnesota's offense has also shown it can be efficient without being reckless. They don't need explosive plays to move the ball, and that patience pairs well with a defense that can repeatedly get stops. If the Vikings jump ahead early, Green Bay is forced out of its comfort zone, increasing the likelihood of the very mistakes that widen margins late.

This sets up as a controlled home performance where Minnesota steadily pulls away rather than relying on volatility.

TAKE: Vikings -6.5

Washington at Philadelphia

Line: Eagles -7.5 | Total: 42

Philadelphia's defense is peaking at exactly the right time, and that unit is the driving force behind laying the points here. Against Buffalo, the Eagles held one of the league's most dangerous offenses to 12 points, repeatedly winning in the trenches and tightening in the red zone. That defensive effort wasn't just impressive — it was sustainable, built on pressure and discipline rather than turnover luck.

Washington has struggled mightily when facing defenses that can disrupt timing and force longer down-and-distance situations. When they fall behind schedule, drives stall quickly, and scoring opportunities become rare. That plays directly into Philadelphia's strengths, especially at home, where the Eagles are comfortable playing physical, clock-controlling football once they have a lead.

On the other side of the ball, Philadelphia doesn't need to force the issue. They've shown a willingness to take points when available and let their defense do the heavy lifting. That approach reduces backdoor risk and keeps games from spiraling into chaos late.

A game in the 24–13 or 27–14 range fits both teams' recent profiles and is more than enough to cover this number. With Washington unlikely to generate consistent offense, Philadelphia is positioned to methodically separate.

TAKE: Eagles -7.5

NY Jets at Buffalo

Line: Bills -7 | Total: 38

This is a spot where the number still undervalues Buffalo's control advantage. The Jets' offense has been unreliable, turnover-prone, and unable to sustain drives, which puts constant strain on their defense. Against New England, those issues were magnified, resulting in a lopsided loss where the game was effectively over by halftime.

Buffalo doesn't need to be explosive to cover here. They simply need to avoid mistakes and let the Jets' offense self-destruct. That's been the consistent pattern in New York losses — short fields, poor third-down execution, and missed opportunities that snowball into separation.

The low total again helps the favorite. In a game expected to be slower and more defensive, the team with the clearer offensive floor and home-field control is far more likely to create margin. Buffalo can win this game comfortably without ever pushing tempo.

As long as Buffalo plays a clean game, the Jets' limitations make it very difficult for them to stay within a touchdown.

TAKE: Bills -7

PRO FOOTBALL QUICK PICKS

Carolina at Tampa Bay

Line: Buccaneers -2.5 | Total: 44

Tampa Bay projects to control this game more than the line suggests, especially at home against a Carolina team that struggles to sustain offense. The Buccaneers don't need explosive plays to separate — field position and steady drives are enough. Carolina has had trouble protecting late in games, which creates margin risk as an underdog. This sets up as a game where Tampa Bay gradually pulls away.

TAKE: Buccaneers -2.5

Seattle at San Francisco

Line: Seahawks -1 | Total: 50

Despite the high total, this matchup leans toward longer drives and fewer explosive plays. San Francisco games often tighten defensively in the second half, especially when margins stay close. Seattle has struggled finishing drives when forced into methodical offense. At 50, stalled possessions matter more than highlight plays.

TAKE: Under 50

New Orleans at Atlanta

Line: Falcons -3 | Total: 44

Atlanta has been far more stable defensively at home, while New Orleans has been inconsistent sustaining offense outside of favorable game scripts. The Falcons don't need to dominate — they simply need to control tempo and avoid mistakes. That's been enough for them to separate in similar spots. A close game still favors the home favorite. **TAKE: Falcons -3**

Dallas at NY Giants

Line: Cowboys -5.5 | Total: 52

Dallas continues to push tempo even when leading, which keeps scoring opportunities alive across four quarters. The Giants' defense has struggled to limit extended drives, particularly against teams that stay aggressive. Even if New York can't score consistently, Dallas alone can do enough damage to threaten this number. Late-game points remain live.

TAKE: Over 52

Tennessee at Jacksonville

Line: Jaguars -11.5 | Total: 48

Jacksonville has consistently created margin against weaker opponents, especially when playing from ahead. Tennessee has struggled to respond once games tilt against them, leading to defensive fatigue and late separation. The Jaguars don't need perfection — steady pressure is enough to stretch this past double digits.

TAKE: Jaguars -11.5

Indianapolis at Houston

Line: Texans -10 | Total: 40

Houston has been efficient turning short fields into points, while Indianapolis can still contribute enough offense to keep totals alive. Neither team profiles as one that bleeds the clock excessively when ahead. With the number sitting low, a few sustained drives are enough to push this over.

TAKE: Over 40

Detroit at Chicago

Line: Bears -2.5 | Total: 50

Chicago has shown the ability to generate offense when facing turnover-prone teams, and Detroit's recent defensive performances have been volatile. Both teams are capable of quick scores when given short fields. With the total right at 50, consistent scoring is enough — no shootout required.

TAKE: Over 50

LA Chargers at Denver

Line: Broncos -12.5 | Total: 38

Denver has consistently created separation at home against teams that struggle offensively. The Chargers have had trouble protecting and sustaining drives, which often leads to short fields and snowball effects. Denver doesn't need to score often — defensive control alone creates margin.

TAKE: Broncos -12.5

Kansas City at Las Vegas

Line: Chiefs -5.5 | Total: 36

This matchup points toward a slower, field-position-driven game. Las Vegas struggles to generate explosive offense, and Kansas City has been content to win without pushing tempo. Long drives that end in field goals are more likely than quick strikes. Clock bleed favors the Under.

TAKE: Under 36

Arizona at LA Rams

Line: Rams -7.5 | Total: 46

Arizona has struggled to keep games close against disciplined teams, especially on the road. The Rams don't need pace — they win through efficiency and pressure. That style gradually creates separation without relying on late chaos.

TAKE: Rams -7.5

Miami at New England

Line: Patriots -11 | Total: 46

New England has shown the ability to dominate weaker opponents without forcing tempo. Miami's offense has been inconsistent and often shortens games rather than chasing points. That combination limits possessions and scoring chances. Even with efficiency, this profile leans Under.

TAKE: Under 46

Baltimore at Pittsburgh

Line: Ravens -3.5 | Total: 41

These matchups consistently turn into grind-it-out games decided by field position and defense. Pittsburgh struggles to generate offense when trailing, and Baltimore is comfortable leaning on control rather than speed. Sustained drives that drain clock are far more likely than explosive scoring.

TAKE: Under 41



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THIS WEEKS GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET BEST BETS

	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet	Best Bet
NFL	Browns + 7.5	Vikings – 6.5	Eagles – 7.5	Bills - 7

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