

## **Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter**

**\$15**

**5 NCAA & 4 NFL BEST BETS + PICKS FOR ALL GAMES**  
**Award Winning Football Newsletter Since 1981**

**Dennis Stagliano's Best Bets Gridiron Gold Sheet Football Newsletter**

**Volume 44 Issue 3**

**NFL Week 3, 2025**

### **Strong defense leads Chargers over Raiders 20-9**

The Chargers' defense allowed just 218 yards of offense and intercepted Geno Smith three times. Linebacker Daiyan Henley had a breakout game, with ten tackles, one sack, and the game-sealing interception.

Justin Herbert was excellent, accounting for 273 yards (242 passing, 31 rushing), two touchdowns, and no interceptions. His favorite targets were Quentin Johnston (3-71-1), Keenan Allen (5-61-1), and Ladd McConkey (5-48).

Geno Smith had a game to forget, completing just 24 of 43 passes (56%) for 180 yards, no touchdowns, and the aforementioned three interceptions. Rookie running back Ashton Jeanty, selected to be an immediate star, plodded along for just 43 yards on 11 carries (3.9 ypc) — though poor run blocking deserves some of the blame.

### **Mayfield leads Buccaneers over Texans 20-19**

Baker Mayfield led an 11-play, 80-yard game-winning drive — capped by a Rachaad White touchdown run scored with six seconds left. Mayfield accounted for 248 yards (215 passing, 33 rushing), two touchdowns, and no interceptions.

The Buccaneers got key performances out of Bucky Irving (121 scrimmage yards), Mike Evans (5-56), and Emeka Egbuka (4-29-1).

CJ Stroud had another underwhelming game, completing 13 of 24 passes (54%) for 207 yards, one touchdown, and no interceptions. Nico Collins reeled in just three of nine targets for 52 yards and a touchdown.

### **JJ McCarthy (ankle) to miss 2-4 weeks**

McCarthy has a high ankle sprain and will be sidelined for two to four weeks. McCarthy suffered the injury in the third quarter of Minnesota's loss to Atlanta on Sunday night. He did not leave the game or seem noticeably impacted by the apparent sprain.

In two games this season, McCarthy has completed 59% of his passes for 301 yards, two touchdowns, and three interceptions. His average of 3.35 seconds per throw is the second-highest in the NFL and implies he is struggling to read defenses.

Carson Wentz will start in place of McCarthy. The 32-year-old has completed 67% of his passes for 281 yards, two touchdowns, and one interception in five game appearances (two starts) over the past two seasons (with Rams and Chiefs).

Minnesota is also preparing to be without running back Aaron Jones, who has a hamstring injury. Jordan Mason will take on the full-time job.

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### Jayden Daniels (knee) could miss Week 3

Daniels sprained his left knee last Thursday and is uncertain for Week 3. An MRI revealed “no major damage.” In two games,

Daniels has accounted for 518 yards (433 passing, 85 rushing) and three touchdowns. He’s completed just 60% of his passes (vs. 69% as a rookie).

Marcus Mariota will start if Daniels misses any time. He was effective in three game appearances with Washington last season, accounting for 456 yards (364 passing, 92 rushing), five touchdowns, and no interceptions.

Washington is set to feature rookie running back Bill Croskey-Merritt with Austin Ekeler out for the season, though Jeremy McNichols and Chris Rodriguez are also in line for snaps.

### Bengals “very confident” in QB Jake Browning

Zac Taylor told reporters he has “full confidence” in Browning’s ability to lead the team while Joe Burrow recovers from toe surgery. Burrow is expected to miss at least three months (about 12 games).

Browning led a 92-yard game-winning drive to beat the Jaguars on Sunday. He was effective across seven starts in place of Burrow in 2023 (4-3 record), completing 70% of his passes for 1,936 yards, 12 touchdowns, and seven interceptions. Browning displayed strong chemistry with Ja’Marr Chase on Sunday, connecting with the All-Pro on six of seven targets in the second half.

## PRO FOOTBALL BEST BETS

### Philadelphia Eagles at Los Angeles Rams

*Line: Eagles -3.5 • Total: 44.5*

The Eagles survived their Super Bowl rematch with Kansas City in Week 2, pulling out a 20–17 win that showed both resilience and flaws. Jalen Hurts wasn’t flawless, but he managed the game effectively, connecting on a crucial deep ball to DeVonta Smith and capping a late drive with his trademark tush push score. Saquon Barkley churned out tough yardage to keep the offense balanced, while the defense came up with the decisive play: a red-zone interception off a bobble to deny points. Despite shaky execution, Philadelphia came through in a high-pressure spot, moving to 2–0 and reminding the league they still know how to close.

The Rams are also 2–0 after dispatching the Titans 33–19. Matthew Stafford played efficiently, and Los Angeles hit an early shot with Puka Nacua on a 45-yard end-around. The first half still revealed vulnerabilities — Stafford tossed a pick and the defense allowed Tennessee to hang around — before L.A. tightened up after the break, cashed two quick scoring drives, and closed it with a strip-sack that flipped the script. It was professional, but it wasn’t dominance wire to wire.

This matchup tilts toward Philadelphia because of its trench edge. The front that kept a lid on Kansas City’s passing game now gets to pin its ears back against a Rams line that showed cracks versus pressure looks. Stafford is operating well, but he’s far less mobile than Hurts, and Philly’s pressure packages should force faster decisions and test timing on intermediate routes. On offense, Hurts and Barkley face a run defense that gave up yardage before game script flipped; staying on schedule will widen the margin as the day goes on.

Situationally, Philadelphia is in a strong spot: they’ve handled adversity, beaten an elite opponent, and remain one of the most physical units in the league. The Rams are unbeaten, but their wins came against Houston and Tennessee — not heavyweight tests. With Hurts’ dual-threat ability, Barkley’s steady legs, and a defense that’s generated key takeaways in back-to-back weeks, the visitors own the higher ceiling and the better battle-tested profile. **TAKE: Eagles -3.5**

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## **Pittsburgh Steelers at New England Patriots**

*Line: Steelers -1.5 • Total: 44.5*

Pittsburgh's 31–17 loss to Seattle was a tale of two halves. The Steelers led 14–7 at the break after a clean red-zone finish and a takeaway set up short-field points, but the second half unraveled on self-inflicted wounds: a muffed kickoff that turned directly into a touchdown and two tipped interceptions that swung momentum. Even so, the offense produced multiple scoring drives and stayed within range until late; the defense generated early pressure before breakdowns in space showed up in the fourth quarter.

New England escaped Miami 33–27 with a blend of rookie poise and big plays in all three phases. Drake Maye threw two touchdowns, added a rushing score, and hit a 50+ yard strike that keyed a go-ahead drive; special teams answered a punt-return TD allowed with a kickoff-return TD of their own, and a late interception sealed it. That said, the defense gave up explosives and chunk gains throughout and missed chances to get off the field — the profile of a unit that can be stressed by veteran quarterbacking and disguised looks.

This sets up as experience versus volatility. Pittsburgh can win the line with its rush and muddy Maye's picture with changing fronts and late rotation; for all his promise, he's still getting his timing against NFL pressure. Offensively, the Steelers don't need fireworks — just a clean, turnover-averse script that leverages quick game, play-action, and field position to force New England to play from behind the chains. If Pittsburgh avoids special-teams landmines and cleans up the tipped-ball luck that bit them in Week 2, their defensive disruption and veteran QB edge should carry the day.

**TAKE: Steelers -1.5**

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## **New York Jets at Tampa Bay Buccaneers**

*Line: Buccaneers -6.5 • Total: 45.5*

The Buccaneers are 2–0 after stealing a 20–19 win in Houston, a game that showcased both their resilience and their flaws. Baker Mayfield engineered the late drive with a clutch scramble and sharp throws despite playing behind a patched-up offensive line that lost both starting tackles. Rachaad White finished the march with the game-winning touchdown, capping a balanced attack that leaned on quick passes to offset pressure. Tampa Bay's defense gave up a handful of chunk plays, but when it mattered, they got the stops to keep the game close and give Mayfield a chance to deliver.

The Jets, meanwhile, dropped to 0–2 with a 30–10 loss to Buffalo. Justin Fields was harassed all afternoon, turning the ball over and ultimately leaving with a concussion. Before his exit, the Jets had already been buried by mistakes: a roughing penalty on third-and-long, a fumble in their own territory, and repeated failures to stop James Cook on the ground. Their defense, already thin, showed the same old weakness against power running and couldn't prevent explosive plays. Offensively, without Fields, the Jets were toothless and lacked any rhythm.

This matchup is defined by contrasting identities. Tampa Bay's defensive front thrives at collapsing the pocket and stopping the run, and here they face a Jets offense that hasn't been able to block consistently or protect the football. Even if Fields clears protocol, the offense lacks the polish and discipline to sustain drives against a unit that just held its ground on the road. Mayfield is not mistake-proof, but he has proven capable of executing situational football and finding his playmakers when it counts.

The Bucs' balance on both sides of the ball, paired with the Jets' instability at quarterback and leaky protection, tilts this heavily toward the home favorite. Tampa Bay doesn't need style points — just a clean game plan, defensive pressure, and another composed outing from Mayfield. With the Jets struggling to find answers and reeling from injuries, the edge is decisive.

**TAKE: Buccaneers -6.5**

## **Detroit Lions at Baltimore Ravens**

*Line: Ravens -5.5 • Total: 51*

Detroit comes into Week 3 off a rollercoaster start to the season. After demolishing Chicago in Week 2, 52–21, the Lions' offense is humming. Jared Goff spread the ball around with efficiency, hitting Brock Wright for a touchdown and leaning on Jahmyr Gibbs and Amon-Ra St. Brown to stretch the field. Caleb Williams' miscues on the other side gave Detroit short fields, but the Lions still piled up explosive plays and showed the same aggressive offensive rhythm that carried them last season. The defense, however, remains far from airtight, giving up big chunks before turnovers flipped momentum.

Baltimore, meanwhile, rebounded from a wild Week 1 with a 41–17 blowout of Cleveland. While the final score looked like an offensive eruption, the reality was the defense carrying the day. The Ravens forced three turnovers, including a strip sack and an interception that set up touchdowns. Lamar Jackson did enough through the air to complement Derrick Henry's power running, but Baltimore's offense still managed only 242 total yards. The defense made the difference, but even they bent at times before Cleveland collapsed.

This matchup projects as a shootout because Detroit can stress Baltimore's secondary with volume passing and tempo. The Lions have too many weapons to be held down for long, and Goff's rhythm passing against pressure is built to neutralize an aggressive front. On the other side, Jackson and Henry should find running lanes against a Lions defense that coughed up explosive plays and remains soft on the back end. Even if Baltimore's offense isn't as sharp as the score suggested in Week 2, Detroit's pace and scoring ability will force them into more possessions and more points.

The total is high, but both teams bring firepower and vulnerabilities that point toward points piling up. Detroit is built to play fast and score in bunches, while Baltimore has the quarterback and ground game to counterpunch. With both defenses prone to lapses and both offenses capable of capitalizing, this game has the makings of a track meet. **TAKE: Lions/Ravens Over 51**

## **PRO FOOTBALL QUICK PICKS**

### **Miami Dolphins at Buffalo Bills**

*Line: Bills -11.5 • Total: 49.5*

Buffalo is 2–0 after a comfortable 30–10 win over the Jets, where Josh Allen threw for multiple scores and James Cook gashed New York on the ground. The Bills built a 20–3 halftime lead and coasted, showing their ability to bury an opponent early. Miami nearly staged a comeback in Week 2, but they still allowed 33 points at home to the Patriots after giving up 33 to the Colts in Week 1. The defense has been shredded, and Tua Tagovailoa's turnovers continue to dig holes. Buffalo's balance on both sides is overwhelming, especially at home in Orchard Park.

**TAKE: Bills -11.5**

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### **Green Bay Packers at Cleveland Browns**

*Line: Packers -7.5 • Total: 42.5*

Green Bay dominated Washington 27–18 in Week 2 in a game that wasn't as close as the final score suggested. Jordan Love threw with precision, spreading the ball despite losing Jayden Reed early, while the defense suffocated Jayden Daniels and held Washington under 150 total yards into the fourth quarter. Cleveland, meanwhile, collapsed in a 41–17 loss to Baltimore, generating just 17 points while Joe Flacco threw multiple turnovers that flipped the game. The Browns' offensive line has struggled to protect, and the defense was on the field far too long. With Love in rhythm and the Packers' pass rush peaking, Cleveland is overmatched.

**TAKE: Packers -7.5**

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### **Cincinnati Bengals at Minnesota Vikings**

*Line: Vikings -3 • Total: 41.5*

Cincinnati stole a 31–27 win over Jacksonville despite Joe Burrow leaving with a toe injury, as backup Jake Browning led a late game-winning sneak. The Bengals were fortunate, however, as their offensive line gave up constant pressure and Jacksonville squandered chances with penalties and drops. Minnesota, on the other hand, was humbled 22–6 by Atlanta, with J.J. McCarthy under siege for five first-half sacks and turning the ball over in the second half. Still, Justin Jefferson flashed with a 50-yard grab, and the Vikings' defense forced repeated punts. With Burrow's health uncertain, Minnesota's defense and home crowd set the tone.

**TAKE: Vikings -3**

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### **Las Vegas Raiders at Washington Commanders**

*Line: Commanders -3.5 • Total: 44.5*

The Raiders fell 20–9 to the Chargers in Week 2 as Geno Smith threw three interceptions and failed to capitalize on red-zone trips. Las Vegas' defense also struggled to contain Justin Herbert, who picked them apart with efficient passing and scrambling. Washington was beaten badly by Green Bay, with Jayden Daniels under pressure all afternoon and the offense held under 150 yards until late garbage time. The Commanders' defense, however, remains stout and should create turnovers against Smith if he continues his shaky play. With both teams flawed, the edge leans toward the home side finding stability.

**TAKE: Commanders -3.5**

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### **Houston Texans at Jacksonville Jaguars**

*Line: Jaguars -1.5 • Total: 43.5*

Houston fell to 0–2 after a 20–19 loss to Tampa Bay, undone by offensive line failures and red-zone miscues. C.J. Stroud was pressured all game and Nick Chubb was stuffed repeatedly, including on a crucial goal-line sequence. The Jaguars, meanwhile, let a win slip away in Cincinnati despite holding the lead most of the day. Trevor Lawrence threw a red-zone interception and missed a chance on fourth down to ice the game, and dropped passes cost them. Both defenses are vulnerable, but Houston's pass rush and Jacksonville's turnovers point to fireworks.

**TAKE: Over 43.5**

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### **Indianapolis Colts at Tennessee Titans**

*Line: Colts -3.5 • Total: 43.5*

The Colts are 2–0 after a thrilling 29–28 win over Denver, keyed by Jonathan Taylor's long burst late and a game-winning field goal following a penalty on the Broncos. Daniel Jones has been efficient, leaning on Pittman and the ground game while the defense forces turnovers. Tennessee, by contrast, collapsed in the second half of a 33–19 loss to the Rams. Rookie Cam Ward was strip-sacked and intercepted, and the Titans settled for field goals instead of finishing drives. With Indy steadier on both sides and Tennessee mistake-prone, the edge is clear.

**TAKE: Colts -3.5**

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## **Atlanta Falcons at Carolina Panthers**

*Line: Falcons -5.5 • Total: 43.5*

Atlanta bounced back in Week 2 with a 22–6 win over Minnesota, led by relentless pass rush that piled up five sacks in the first half. The Falcons controlled the clock with Bijan Robinson and their backs, keeping J.J. McCarthy on the sidelines. Carolina, meanwhile, trailed 27–3 to Arizona before a late rally made the score respectable. Bryce Young turned it over twice early, and although he flashed in garbage time, the Panthers couldn't sustain offense when it mattered. Atlanta's defensive front and balanced run game travel well, giving them the upper hand.

**TAKE: Falcons -5.5**

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## **Denver Broncos at Los Angeles Chargers**

*Line: Chargers -2.5 • Total: 45.5*

Denver dropped a heartbreaker in Indianapolis, 29–28, despite holding a late lead. Bo Nix threw an interception with a chance to extend the margin, and a missed field goal came back to haunt them. The Chargers, meanwhile, moved to 2–0 with a 20–9 win over the Raiders as Justin Herbert sliced up the secondary and used his legs to extend drives. Even with Khalil Mack leaving injured, the defense held Las Vegas out of the end zone. Denver has been mistake-prone, and on the road that's a recipe for trouble.

**TAKE: Chargers -2.5**

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## **New Orleans Saints at Seattle Seahawks**

*Line: Seahawks -7 • Total: 41.5*

New Orleans is 0–2 after a 26–21 loss to San Francisco, where Spencer Rattler dinked his way to just 214 yards on 46 attempts. The Saints' offense couldn't generate explosives and the run game produced only one big play. Seattle, meanwhile, rebounded with a 31–17 win over Pittsburgh, sparked by Sam Darnold's sharp second-half play and a flurry of takeaways. A muffed kickoff return that turned into a touchdown helped swing momentum, and the Seahawks never looked back. With Seattle's pass rush heating up and the Saints' offense stuck in neutral, the home side has the clear edge.

**TAKE: Seahawks -7**

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## **Arizona Cardinals at San Francisco 49ers**

*Line: 49ers -1.5 • Total: 43.5*

Arizona moved to 2–0 with a 27–22 win over Carolina, fueled by two early turnovers from Bryce Young that gave them a big cushion. Kyler Murray made plays with his legs and arm before a late interception nearly cost them, but the Cardinals held on. San Francisco also sits at 2–0 after beating New Orleans 26–21 with Mac Jones starting in place of Brock Purdy. Jones hit a deep shot to Jauan Jennings and leaned on Christian McCaffrey, while the defense closed it with a strip-sack of Rattler. With both teams riding momentum, this shapes up as a close fight, but Arizona has been more opportunistic.

**TAKE: Cardinals +1.5**

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## Dallas Cowboys at Chicago Bears

Line: Bears -1.5 • Total: 49.5

The Cowboys won a 40–37 overtime shootout against the Giants, with Dak Prescott throwing three touchdowns and Brandon Aubrey drilling a 64-yarder to force OT. The defense, however, looked shaky, giving up deep plays to Russell Wilson and Malik Nabers all night. Chicago, meanwhile, was humiliated 52–21 by Detroit, as Caleb Williams committed multiple turnovers and the defense fell apart in the second half. While the Bears are at home, their offensive line woes and defensive lapses are glaring. Dallas has too much firepower to let another track meet slip away.

**TAKE: Cowboys +1.5**

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## Kansas City Chiefs at New York Giants

Line: Chiefs -5.5 • Total: 44.5

Kansas City fell to 0–2 after a 20–17 loss to Philadelphia, where Patrick Mahomes pressed too much with a thin receiver group and Travis Kelce dropped a critical red-zone ball. The offensive line penalties persisted, and the defense allowed a late scoring drive to seal it. The Giants, meanwhile, pushed Dallas to overtime in a 40–37 defeat behind Russell Wilson’s deep passing and Malik Nabers’ breakout performance. New York still went just 1-for-5 in the red zone and their defense wilted late. Kansas City is desperate, but until the receivers prove reliable, their margin for error is thin.

**TAKE: Under 44.5**

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## Detroit Lions at Baltimore Ravens

Line: Ravens -5.5 • Total: 51.5

Detroit exploded in Week 2 with a 52–21 rout of Chicago, as Jared Goff spread the ball to Brock Wright and Amon-Ra St. Brown while the defense forced turnovers that turned into points. The offense proved capable of striking quickly and sustaining long drives alike. Baltimore also piled on in a 41–17 win over Cleveland, with Lamar Jackson mixing short strikes with Derrick Henry’s power running while the defense forced three turnovers that broke the game wide open. While both defenses made key stands, each unit also gave up yards between the 20s. With Goff firing on all cylinders and Jackson always capable of explosives, points should come in bunches.

**TAKE: Over 51.5**



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**GUARANTEED NFL PICKS**

| THIS WEEKS GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET BEST BETS |              |                |                  |                      |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
|                                          | Best Bet     | Best Bet       | Best Bet         | Best Bet             |
| NFL                                      | Eagles - 3.5 | Steelers - 1.5 | Buccaneers - 6.5 | Lions/Ravens OV 51.5 |

## GRIDIRON GOLD SHEET RESOURCES

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### Week 2 Passing Leaders

| Rk | Player         | Tm  | Cmp | Att | Yds | TD |
|----|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 1  | Russell Wilson | NYG | 30  | 41  | 450 | 3  |
| 2  | Dak Prescott   | DAL | 38  | 52  | 361 | 2  |
| 3  | Jared Goff     | DET | 23  | 28  | 334 | 5  |
| 4  | Bryce Young    | CAR | 35  | 55  | 328 | 3  |
| 5  | Daniel Jones   | IND | 23  | 34  | 316 | 1  |

### Week 2 Rushing Leaders

| Rk | Player          | Tm  | Att | Yds | TD |
|----|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 1  | Jonathan Taylor | IND | 25  | 165 | 0  |
| 2  | Bijan Robinson  | ATL | 22  | 143 | 0  |
| 3  | James Cook      | BUF | 21  | 132 | 2  |
| 4  | Kenneth Walker  | SEA | 13  | 105 | 1  |
| 5  | Alvin Kamara    | NOR | 21  | 99  | 0  |

### Week 2 Receiving Leaders

| Rk | Player            | Tm  | Rec | Yds | TD |
|----|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 1  | Malik Nabers      | NYG | 9   | 167 | 2  |
| 2  | Ja'Marr Chase     | CIN | 14  | 165 | 1  |
| 3  | Wan'Dale Robinson | NYG | 8   | 142 | 1  |
| 4  | Rome Odunze       | CHI | 7   | 128 | 2  |



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