

# 2010



# 2010

## WEEK ELEVEN IN REVIEW

December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010



## ALL OR NOTHING!



Maurice Jones-Drew is stopped by a wall of Cubs led by Phillip Merling. The Hawks 4<sup>th</sup> down gambit failed and the Cubs won 30-27. (STORY INSIDE)

### LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

#### THE GAMES

- CUBS BY DECISION IN HEAVY BOUT
- MARKHAM MAULED BY PATS
- BRES BLOWS THROUGH CORN KINGS
- SPARTANS SPEAR BEARS
- ELI ELECTROCUTES YORK
- KNIGHTS GET BY AND STAY ALIVE
- FLORIDA'S REVENGE PRESERVES DREAM OF PERFECTION
- DESERT RAIN IN MOHAVE A DINO'S DREAM

#### COMMENT

"EXPANSIOIN," "COUNTDOWN TO PERFECTION," "THE DECISION," "FOOTBALL GRINCHES," "T'WAS THE NIGHT BEEFORE CHRISTMAS," – Spats McChad

#### PREDICTIONS

With so many bad teams performing badly, Jimmy the Geek picks all favourites this week and tells you why.



*Who was slick  
in Week  
Eleven?*

**"BRYLCREEM" THE  
EFL'S OLDEST SPONSOR**



**Chris Johnson**  
RB  
Pickering  
Spartans

137 yards rushing, 23 receiving, 3 more TDs to lead rout of Kutztown.



**Patrick Willis**  
ILB  
Iowa City Cubs

11 tackles, 1 forced fumble, a pick and 39 yard return to upset Hawks.

# 4<sup>th</sup> AND FINISHED!

**HAWKS ALL OR NOTHING GAMBLE FAILS, CUBS WIN**



**IOWA CITY**

**30**



**RINGGOLD**

**27**

RINGGOLD – The decision will be debated for a long time to come and if the Crimson Hawks fail to make the playoffs for the fourth straight season, it could well be the tipping point in a change of direction at the Head Coach position. A back and forth struggle with unexpected twists and turnovers reached a crescendo of excitement when, clinging to a 30-27 lead, **Ronnie Brown** of the Cubs fumbled at his team's 44 yard line with 8:10 left in the game. The Hawks took control and moved the ball steadily toward the Iowa City goal line riding the legs of **Maurice Jones-Drew**. The Ringgold running back accounted for 41 yards on the drive, overcoming a holding penalty to **Chris Snee** with a 10-yard reception and converting on a key 4<sup>th</sup> down 1 at the Cubs' 35 yard line. When **Santonio Holmes** reeled in a 12-yard pass for a first down at the Iowa City 2 yard line, it looked like the Hawks were poised to swoop in for the kill. With the Cubs in a nickel package, **Vince Wilfork** made a great individual play by holding Jones-Drew to a 1-yard gain on a dive into the center of the thin Cubs line. With one yard to go for the TD, the Cubs switched into a goal line formation and stopped Jones-Drew cold on a carry off left tackle. A third down toss to Jones-Drew in the flat sailed high and it appeared that the Cubs had held Ringgold to a field goal try. But to the amazement of all, **Tim Molinaro** motioned for his offence to stay on the field. With 2:02 remaining in the game, it looked like an all-or-nothing gamble, or an attempt to draw the Cubs offside. But before the play-clock ticked away, the ball was snapped and the play set in motion. **Ben Roethlisberger** turned sharply around and handed to off to Jones-Drew as the Cubs defence converged. Ringgold's offensive line collapsed and no less than 3 Cubs defenders broke through to form an impenetrable wall against which the churning legs of Jones-Drew could make no headway. The Cubs had held the Hawks on 4<sup>th</sup> down and, against expectations, had held on to the lead as well. Three plays later, **Sam Bradford** scrambled 3 yards for a key first down, allowing Iowa to run out the remaining time on the clock.

The last minute drama would not have been necessary if Ringgold had not dug themselves into an early hole with loose defensive play on the Cubs opening drive for a touchdown and two costly interceptions thrown by Big Ben. Both **Patrick Willis** and **Jairus Byrd** returned picks to the Ringgold 9 yard line, leading to 14 points for the underdogs from Iowa City. Rookie, **Sam Bradford** managed the game by not turning the ball over and completing key throws, including the pass of the game – a 35-yard TD pass to **Lee Evans** to open the scoring.

12-17-2010 The Hawk's Nest Temp: 52 Wind: 10-20 MVP: **Sam Bradford**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Iowa City (4-7)	14	10	6	0	30
2009 Ringgold (5-6)	7	17	0	3	27

1 11:00 Iowa City	TD Bradford 35 pass to Evans (Rackers) (7-74-3:49)	7-0
1 9:43 Iowa City	TD Brown 9 run (Rackers) (1-9-0:09)	14-0
1 3:46 Ringgold	TD Roethlisberger 15 pass to Jones-Drew (Suisham) (8-62-2)	14-7
2 14:54 Iowa City	FG Rackers 43 (7-15-3:36)	17-7
2 8:56 Ringgold	TD Roethlisberger 20 pass to Holmes (Suisham) (12-78-5:51)	17-14
2 5:26 Iowa City	TD Brown 9 run (Rackers) (1-9-0:07)	24-14
2 5:13 Ringgold	TD Royal 102 kick return (Suisham) (0-0-0:20)	24-21
2 1:56 Ringgold	FG Suisham 25 (7-27-2:26)	24-24
3 7:25 Iowa City	FG Rackers 21 (11-59-5:26)	27-24
3 0:44 Iowa City	FG Rackers 25 (9-67-5:09)	30-24
4 9:02 Ringgold	FG Suisham 34 (13-69-6:26)	30-27

	ICC	RCH
First Downs	14	22
Rushes	29-89	22-59
Passes	24-18-212	46-27-304
Sacked	0-0	3-25
Fumble	2	2
Penalties	3-21	5-30
Turnovers	2	3
Time	26:31	33:29
Third Down	7-13	5-16
Fourth Down	1-2	3-4
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/2/2	5/2/2
Net Offense	301	338

## < Iowa City >

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	Sk	25	In	Td	Rate
Bradford	24	18	212	0	2	0	1	115.3

Rushing	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	10	Lg	TD
Brown	10	55	5.5	3	1	14	2
Bush	5	18	3.6	1	0	9	0
Jacobs	9	10	1.1	1	0	3	0
Bradford	5	6	1.2	1	0	4	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	25	Lg	TD
Winslow	6	0	8	70	11.7	3	0	20	0
Evans	4	0	5	98	24.5	4	2	35	1
Jacobs	3	1	4	9	3.0	0	0	4	0
Bush	2	0	2	8	4.0	1	0	7	0
Fitzgerald	2	0	3	19	9.5	0	0	10	0
Brown	1	0	1	8	8.0	0	0	8	0
Wallace	0	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0

## < Ringgold >

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	Sk	25	In	Td	Rate
Roethlisberger	46	27	304	3	0	2	2	74.9

Rushing	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	10	Lg	TD
Jones-Drew	20	52	2.6	3	1	10	0
Roethlisber	2	7	3.5	0	0	4	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	25	Lg	TD
Hightower	9	0	11	74	8.2	4	0	15	0
Holmes	6	1	10	91	15.2	6	0	23	1
Jones-Drew	5	0	10	56	11.2	3	0	15	1
Johnson	4	0	9	54	13.5	3	0	17	0
Thomas	2	0	3	19	9.5	2	0	11	0
Royal	1	1	2	10	10.0	1	0	10	0
Gronkowski	0	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0

## MANNING MAULS MARKHAM

**GAME POINTS:** It took one play for **Adrian Peterson** to surpass his total yards rushing from last week. Peterson started the game's opening drive with a 13-yard run and ended the drive with a 12-yard TD run to open the scoring. **Peyton Manning** took over after that, hitting **Marques Colston** for 23 yards to start their next drive and finishing it with an 11-yard TD pass to Colston to give the Pats a 14-0 lead. Markham scraped out a FG then Manning went back to work building the Pats' lead, connecting with **Jason Witten** near the sideline for an 8-yard TD pass to make it 21-3 at half time. **Jason Campbell** found seldom-used Jared Cook for a TD to make it a two-score game in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. With Markham driving in Charleswood territory and trailing 24-10, **Quentin Jammer** ended the rally with a pick to set up Manning's 3<sup>rd</sup> TD pass, an 11-yarder to **Bernard Berrian**.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Peyton Manning** completed 20 of 25 for 258 yards and 3 TDs, **Adrian Peterson** rushed for 58 yards and 1 TD on 15 carries, **Jon Beason** had 14 tackles, **Jason Campbell** went 14 of 23 for 118 yards, 1 TD and 1 INT, **DeAngelo Williams** gained 114 yards on 22 carries, **Jahvid Best** gained 69 yards on 20 carries.



31

CHARLESWOOD



10

MARKHAM

12-16-2010 The Dawg Pound Temp: 48 Wind: 10-20 None MVP: **Peyton Manning**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Charleswood (8-3)	14	7	3	7	31
2009 Markham (4-7)	0	3	7	0	10

1 10:03 Charleswood	TD Peterson 12 run (Gostkowski) (8-80-4:57)	7-0
1 3:20 Charleswood	TD Manning 11 pass to Colston (Gostkowski) (10-79-4:34)	14-0
2 8:12 Markham	FG Lindell 29 (12-64-5:25)	14-3
2 3:46 Charleswood	TD Manning 8 pass to Witten (Gostkowski) (7-65-4:12)	21-3
3 10:21 Charleswood	FG Gostkowski 44 (7-29-2:56)	24-3
3 4:02 Markham	TD Campbell 10 pass to Cook (Lindell) (14-80-6:19)	24-10
4 7:04 Charleswood	TD Manning 11 pass to Berrian (Gostkowski) (6-54-3:29)	31-10

	CHP	MAR
First Downs	21	22
Rushes	22-65	44-186
Passes	25-20-258	25-14-118
Sacked	0-0	1-4
Fumble	0	1
Penalties	3-25	6-52
Turnovers	0	1
Time	24:56	35:04
Third Down	4-7	10-17
Fourth Down	0-0	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/4/0	3/1/1
Net Offense	323	300



COWTOWN

24



VIRDEN

34

## BREES FIRES FOUR TDs IN VIRDEN VICTORY

**GAME POINTS:** **Devin Hester** fumbled on the game's first possession to set up a 17-yard TD pass from Cowtown's **Joe Flacco** to **Santana Moss**. The teams traded field goals before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter to make the score 10-3 for the Corn Kings. Then the Virden offence took control. **Drew Brees** passed at will against 5 and 6 defensive back sets, stringing together 4 consecutive unanswered TD passes to 4 different wide receivers to make the score 31-10 for Virden early in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. Hester, who started the game with a gaffe, led all receivers with 106 receiving yards. Flacco added a pair of late TD passes, one to **Donnie Avery** and one to **Zach Miller** in a futile comeback attempt.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Drew Brees** completed 25 of 33 attempts for 314 yards, 4 TDs and 1 INT, **Ricky Williams** carried 18 times for 111 yards, **Devin Hester** caught 7 passes for 106 yards and 1 TD, **Brandon Flowers** had a 27-yard INT return; **Joe Flacco** went 25 of 38 for 255 yards, 3 TDs and 2 INTs, **Marion Barber** gained 79 yards on 15 carries, **Santana Moss** caught 6 balls for 79 yards and 1 TD.

12-16-2010 TERRORDOME Temp: 76 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Drew Brees**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Cowtown (2-9)	10	0	0	14	24
2009 Virden (4-7)	3	14	7	10	34

1 13:31 Cowtown	TD Flacco 17 pass to Moss (Mare) (3-27-0:45)	7-0
1 8:31 Virden	FG Tynes 36 (9-58-4:49)	7-3
1 0:50 Cowtown	FG Mare 28 (13-56-7:27)	10-3
2 8:58 Virden	TD Brees 5 pass to Meachem (Tynes) (15-78-6:41)	10-10
2 0:42 Virden	TD Brees 3 pass to Holt (Tynes) (9-75-5:12)	10-17
3 5:41 Virden	TD Brees 22 pass to Bryant (Tynes) (7-42-3:32)	10-24
4 13:24 Virden	TD Brees 38 pass to Hester (Tynes) (6-90-3:53)	10-31
4 4:20 Cowtown	TD Flacco 17 pass to Avery (Mare) (7-62-3:09)	17-31
4 2:03 Virden	FG Tynes 37 (6-32-2:10)	17-34
4 0:32 Cowtown	TD Flacco 9 pass to Miller (Mare) (9-83-1:28)	24-34

	COW	VV
First Downs	19	26
Rushes	20-88	24-131
Passes	38-25-255	33-25-314
Sacked	0-0	3-20
Fumble	0	3
Penalties	5-40	6-82
Turnovers	2	3
Time	27:42	32:18
Third Down	3-12	4-8
Fourth Down	3-4	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/3/1	4/2/2
Net Offense	343	425

## SPARTANS BLOW OUT BEARS

**GAME POINTS:** Chris Johnson broke through numerous keys and run defences to rush for 137 yards and 3 TDs in leading the Spartans to a 45-3 rout of the Golden Bears. The Pickering star got things started with an 8-yard TD run at the end of an 88-yard opening drive to give his team a lead they would not give back. On Kutztown's first possession, **Jonathan Joseph** picked off **Tony Romo** on his first pass attempt, running it back 52 yards for a TD and a 14-0 lead. **Brett Favre** joined the action with a 36-yard pass to **Vincent Jackson** followed by a 10-yard TD pass to **Percy Harvin** 3 plays later to take a 21-0 lead at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. The Spartans went into half time up 28-0 after Johnson's 2<sup>nd</sup> TD, a 1-yard trap as he avoided a keying linebacker. There was no change in momentum in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half as Pickering piled on 17 more points to win easily.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Brett Favre** went 20 of 25 for 276 yards, 2 TDs and 1 INT, **Chris Johnson** rushed for 137 yards and 3 TDs on 22 carries, **Percy Harvin** caught 6 passes for 94 yards and 2 Tds, **Randy Starks** had 8 tackles, 2 sacks, 1 stuff, 1 forced fumble; **Tony Romo** went 15 of 29 for 149 yards and 2 INTs.



KUTZTOWN



PICKERING

3

45

12-16-2010 Thermopylae Stadium Temp: 40 Wind: 5-15 None MVP: Chris Johnson

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Kutztown (6-5)	0	0	3	0	3
2009 Pickering (10-1)	14	14	7	10	45

1 9:52 Pickering	TD Johnson 8 run (Scobee) (9-88-5:01)	0-7
1 8:35 Pickering	TD Joseph 52 interception return (Kasay) (0-0-0:54)	0-14
2 11:10 Pickering	TD Favre 10 pass to Harvin (Kasay) (6-81-3:24)	0-21
2 0:23 Pickering	TD Johnson 1 run (Kasay) (10-63-3:40)	0-28
3 8:09 Kutztown	FG Kaeding 35 (15-65-6:44)	3-28
3 0:32 Pickering	TD Favre 31 pass to Harvin (Kasay) (1-31-0:15)	3-35
4 3:42 Pickering	TD Johnson 1 run (Kasay) (13-80-9:45)	3-42
4 0:36 Pickering	FG Kasay 29 (4-1-2:09)	3-45

	KUT	PIC
First Downs	14	27
Rushes	26-90	27-144
Passes	29-15-149	25-20-276
Sacked	4-17	0-0
Fumble	1	0
Penalties	7-50	4-25
Turnovers	3	1
Time	29:45	30:15
Third Down	5-13	4-6
Fourth Down	1-1	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	1/0/1	5/4/1
Net Offense	222	420



GWINNETT



YORK

35

21

## "ELECTRIC ELI" SHOCKS YORK

**GAME POINTS:** Eli Manning threw 4 TD passes, 3 of those to **Reggie Wayne**, to outshoot **Tom Brady** at Camelot and give the Gladiators an important road victory, 35-21. **Thomas Jones** broke the center of the Excaburs' line for a 3-yard TD run after **Thomas DeCoud** snatched up a **Michael Crabtree** fumble and returned it 48 yards to the York 3-yard line with 1:25 left in the first half. That broke a 14-14 tie and turned out to be a momentum-changer. **Thomas Jones** broke free for an 83-yard run on the first play of the second half to set up Manning's 3<sup>rd</sup> TD pass of the game, a quick 1-yard out pattern to Wayne as the York defence gunned for Jones. The Glads turned to veteran **Willie Parker** to control the ball on the way to their final TD, a 4-yard pass to **Dallas Clark**. Brady added a late TD pass for York, his 3<sup>rd</sup> of the game and 2nd to **Darren McFadden**.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Eli Manning** went 15 of 20 for 198 yards and 4 TDs, **Thomas Jones** carried 21 times for 144 yards and 1 TD, **Reggie Wayne** caught for 89 yards and 3 TDs; **Tom Brady** went 31 of 51 for 299 yards and 3 TDs.

12-16-2010 Camelot Temp: 45 Wind: 0-5 None MVP: Thomas Jones

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Gwinnett (4-7)	7	14	14	0	35
2009 York (3-8)	7	7	0	7	21

1 9:50 York	TD Brady 10 pass to Shockey (Graham,S) (10-73-4:57)	0-7
1 2:06 Gwinnett	TD Manning 14 pass to Wayne (Brown,J) (12-78-7:37)	7-7
2 6:34 Gwinnett	TD Manning 27 pass to Wayne (Brown,J) (5-76-2:51)	14-7
2 2:24 York	TD Brady 15 pass to McFadden (Graham,S) (3-33-1:30)	14-14
2 1:18 Gwinnett	TD Jones 3 run (Brown,J) (1-3-0:07)	21-14
3 13:51 Gwinnett	TD Manning 1 pass to Wayne (Brown,J) (2-84-1:01)	28-14
3 3:33 Gwinnett	TD Manning 4 pass to Clark (Brown,J) (9-71-5:14)	35-14
4 13:04 York	TD Brady 5 pass to McFadden (Graham,S) (13-65-5:13)	35-21

	GWG	YOR
First Downs	19	21
Rushes	38-189	13-41
Passes	20-15-198	51-31-299
Sacked	0-0	1-6
Fumble	2	1
Penalties	8-62	6-34
Turnovers	1	1
Time	33:19	26:41
Third Down	6-12	4-15
Fourth Down	1-2	1-4
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/4/0	3/3/0
Net Offense	387	334

## KNIGHTS DO JUST ENOUGH TO WIN

**GAME POINTS:** The LA Knights outlasted Garland in a defensive struggle at The Corral. Despite optimal weather conditions, both offences struggled to execute consistently. Garland failed to fully exploit their opportunities, managing just 2 FGs on 3 trips inside the LA 10 yard line. With Garland clinging to a 9-7 lead near the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, **Kurt Warner** kept the longest drive of the day alive with 3 completions to convert third downs on a 73-yard march to the Garland end zone, finishing with 4-yard TD pass to **Roddy White** on 3<sup>rd</sup> down and goal. On Garland's first play from scrimmage after the kickoff, **Andre Carter** sacked **Matt Ryan** and forced a fumble that the Knights recovered at the Garland 19 yard line. **Chris Carpenter** nailed a 3-pointer from 32 yards away to put LA ahead by 8 points. LA sealed the win on **Brian Orapko's** 4<sup>th</sup> down sack of Ryan at the LA 9 yard line with 3 minutes remaining in the game.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Kurt Warner** went 15 of 27 for 130 yards and 2 TDs, **Steve Smith** caught 8 passes for 88 yards and 1 TD, **Charles Woodson** had 11 tackles, 2 deflections and 1 forced fumble; **Matt Ryan** went 21 of 32 for 187 yards.



17

LOS ANGELES



9

GARLAND

12-18-2010 The Corral Temp: 64 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Steve Smith**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Los Angeles (4-7)	0	7	0	10	17
2009 Garland (1-10)	3	3	3	0	9

1 3:04 Garland	FG Gould 23 (10-58-4:54)	0-3
2 13:27 Garland	FG Gould 43 (8-29-3:43)	0-6
2 0:18 Los Angeles	TD Warner 10 pass to Smith (Carpenter) (12-55-1:44)	7-6
3 5:50 Garland	FG Gould 18 (12-65-6:16)	7-9
4 10:03 Los Angeles	TD Warner 4 pass to White (Carpenter) (12-73-5:50)	14-9
4 7:50 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 32 (4-4-1:47)	17-9

	LAK	GDM
First Downs	15	14
Rushes	31-74	25-85
Passes	32-18-164	32-21-187
Sacked	1-6	4-34
Fumble	4	3
Penalties	7-42	6-40
Turnovers	1	1
Time	29:13	30:47
Third Down	10-18	6-15
Fourth Down	0-1	0-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	5/2/1	3/0/2
Net Offense	232	238



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FLORIDA



14

CHINO

## DRAGONS WIN IN THE BAG

**GAME POINTS:** The Florida defence sacked Chino quarterbacks 6 times and forced 3 turnovers leading to 13 points to beat the Convicts at The Big House and keep their perfect string of victories alive. The Chino defence came to play, holding the Florida attack to a season-low 13 first downs and 237 yards of offence, but 11 penalties, all but 1 of them to the offence, and offensive miscues held the Chino attack to just one meaningless touchdown in the last minute of the game. After a 1<sup>st</sup> quarter stalemate, **Joshua Cribbs** fumbled the kick return early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter giving Florida the ball at the Chino 37. **Aaron Rodgers** completed 3 of 4 on the ensuing drive, hitting **Heath Miller** from 11 yards for the game's first TD. Chino never came close after that.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Aaron Rodgers** went 16 of 25 for 170 yards, 2 TD and 1 INT, **Terrell Suggs** made 10 tackles and 1 sack, **Ndamukong Suh** made 6 tackles, 2 sacks and 1 deflection, **LaMarr Woodley** made 6 tackles and 2 sacks; **Donovan McNabb** went 17 of 29 for 170 yards and 1 INT, **Randy Moss**, 6 catches, 83 yards, and 1 TD.

12-17-2010 The Big House Temp: 79 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Terrell Suggs**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Florida (11-0)	0	13	7	6	26
2009 Chino (8-3)	0	3	3	8	14

2 14:13 Florida	FG Longwell 46 (9-66-4:20)	3-0
2 11:49 Florida	TD Rodgers 12 pass to Miller (Longwell) (5-37-2:11)	10-0
2 6:56 Chino	FG Reed 32 (12-42-4:38)	10-3
2 2:18 Florida	FG Longwell 22 (5-14-2:14)	13-3
3 9:26 Florida	TD Rodgers 1 pass to Houshmandzadeh (Longwell) (10-77-5:2)	20-3
3 3:24 Chino	FG Reed 24 (13-51-5:54)	20-6
4 14:05 Florida	FG Longwell 49 (4-9-1:39)	23-6
4 9:45 Florida	FG Longwell 52 (4-5-2:32)	26-6
4 0:48 Chino	TD Cutler 3 pass to Moss (2 - Moreno) (10-38-1:44)	26-14

	FLD	CHI
First Downs	13	17
Rushes	27-75	22-79
Passes	25-16-170	43-27-266
Sacked	1-8	6-45
Fumble	2	3
Penalties	3-25	11-80
Turnovers	1	3
Time	29:13	30:47
Third Down	1-12	8-19
Fourth Down	0-0	3-6
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/2/2	4/1/2
Net Offense	237	300

## DINO DEFENCE DOMINATES

**GAME POINTS:** The Thunder Lizard's defence turned the heat up on the Hellfire, holding them to 10 first downs and just 122 yards of net offence. **Michael Turner** recorded his first 100-yard game in limited action this season, scoring Durham's first two TDs on runs of 1 and 10 yards to give his team a 14-0 lead by half time. The Mohave offence gained over half its total yards for the game on its second possession of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, moving 90 yards on 15 plays by mixing timely passes with 6 carries by **Rashard Mendenhall** and hitting pay dirt on a QB sneak by **Matt Schaub** inches from the goal line. The Hellfire were back in the game, but promptly lost two timeouts on failed challenges trying to stop the slow but relentless Durham offence on their ensuing possession. The Lizards came close to turning the ball over on the Mohave 37 when **Philip Rivers** fumbled at the end of a 7-yard scramble, but **Leonard Davis** pounced on the loose ball to preserve the drive. Five plays later, **Mason Crosby** made good on a 43-yard field goal to give Durham a two-score lead with 10 minutes remaining. Mohave's last gasp came after Rivers fumbled and lost it at the Durham 45. But 3 consecutive penalties, 2 holds and a false start, created a 1<sup>st</sup> and 35 that Mohave could not recover from.

**KEY PERFORMANCES:** **Philip Rivers** completed 17 of 22 for 165 yards, **Michael Turner** gained 116 yards and scored 2 TDs on 26 carries, **Jonathan Vilma** made 10 tackles, 1 deflection and 1 forced fumble; **Matt Schaub** went 10 of 21 for 86 yards, **Rashard Mendenhall**, 15 carries for 52 yards, **London Fletcher** had 11 tackles and 1 FF.



17

DURHAM



7

MOHAVE

12-17-2010 The Fiery Depths Temp: 86 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Michael Turner**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Durham (8-3)	7	7	0	3	17
2009 Mohave (6-5)	0	0	7	0	7

1 2:46 Durham	TD Turner 1 run (Crosby) (15-88-8:09)	7-0
2 0:43 Durham	TD Turner 10 run (Crosby) (9-70-4:51)	14-0
3 1:36 Mohave	TD Schaub 1 run (Bironas) (15-90-7:47)	14-7
4 10:16 Durham	FG Crosby 43 (13-55-6:14)	17-7

	DTL	MOH
First Downs	23	10
Rushes	42-181	22-59
Passes	22-17-165	21-10-86
Sacked	2-14	3-23
Fumble	3	1
Penalties	9-55	8-60
Turnovers	2	1
Time	36:52	23:08
Third Down	5-13	1-9
Fourth Down	1-2	1-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/2/0	1/1/0
Net Offense	332	122

## WEEK ELEVEN LEADERS

### Passing

Brees (VV)	33-25-314
Roethlisberger (RCH)	46-27-304
Brady (YOR)	51-31-299
Favre (PIC)	25-20-276
Manning, P (CHP)	25-20-258

### Rushing

Jones, T (GWG)	21-144
Johnson, C (PIC)	22-137
Turner, M (DTL)	26-116
Williams, D (MAR)	22-114
Williams, R (VV)	18-111

### Receiving

Crabtree (YOR)	10-117
Hester, D (VV)	7-106
Harvin (PIC)	Jun-94
Wayne (GWG)	Jun-89
Smith, S (LAK)	Aug-88

# LEADER BOARD

## STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Charleswood	8	3	0	0.727	348	31.6	193	17.5	14.1	5 0 0	2 1 0	5 2 0
Kutztown	6	5	0	0.545	258	23.5	269	24.5	-1	3 3 0	1 2 0	4 3 0
Mohave	6	5	0	0.545	224	20.4	266	24.2	-3.8	5 1 0	3 0 0	5 2 0
Virден	4	7	0	0.364	247	22.5	304	27.6	-5.2	2 3 0	0 3 0	1 6 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Chino	8	3	0	0.727	281	25.5	158	14.4	11.2	5 1 0	3 0 0	7 0 0
Iowa City	4	7	0	0.364	226	20.5	302	27.5	-6.9	1 4 0	1 2 0	2 5 0
Los Angeles	4	7	0	0.364	243	22.1	247	22.5	-0.4	2 3 0	0 3 0	2 5 0
York	3	8	0	0.273	222	20.2	323	29.4	-9.2	2 4 0	2 1 0	2 5 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Pickering (y)	10	1	0	0.909	364	33.1	163	14.8	18.3	4 1 0	3 0 0	6 1 0
Durham	8	3	0	0.727	269	24.5	195	17.7	6.7	5 0 0	1 2 0	4 3 0
Markham	4	7	0	0.364	196	17.8	284	25.8	-8	3 3 0	1 2 0	2 5 0
Cowtown	2	9	0	0.182	157	14.3	315	28.6	-14.4	2 4 0	1 2 0	2 5 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Florida (z)	11	0	0	1.000	320	29.1	138	12.5	16.5	6 0 0	3 0 0	7 0 0
Ringgold	5	6	0	0.455	253	23	251	22.8	0.2	3 2 0	2 1 0	4 3 0
Gwinnett	4	7	0	0.364	261	23.7	336	30.5	-6.8	3 2 0	1 2 0	2 5 0
Garland	1	10	0	0.091	227	20.6	352	32	-11.4	1 5 0	0 3 0	1 6 0

z-clinched division

y-clinched wildcard

## PASSING

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Favre	PIC	309	209	67.6	2791	6	1.9	53	22	7.1	111.7
2	Rodgers	FLD	266	175	65.8	2163	5	1.9	75	15	5.6	101.8
3	Manning, P	CHP	355	243	68.5	2895	12	3.4	73	21	5.9	98.7
4	Romo	KUT	329	220	66.9	2640	8	2.4	60	16	4.9	97.3
5	Brees	VV	345	220	63.8	2769	10	2.9	51	19	5.5	94.9
6	Manning, E	GWG	328	201	61.3	2438	10	3	78	23	7	94.8
7	Roethlisberger	RCH	340	221	65	2573	11	3.2	53	18	5.3	91.9
8	Schaub	MOH	347	223	64.3	2648	10	2.9	56	17	4.9	91.8
9	McNabb	CHI	327	196	59.9	2355	7	2.1	64	17	5.2	90.4
10	Rivers, P	DTL	323	191	59.1	2373	11	3.4	86	21	6.5	89.5
11	Brady	YOR	411	264	64.2	2742	11	2.7	55	21	5.1	89.3
12	Warner	LAK	307	187	60.9	1990	9	2.9	74	18	5.9	87.2
13	Campbell, J	MAR	283	184	65	2014	9	3.2	64	11	3.9	85.6
14	Bradford	ICC	234	142	60.7	1449	6	2.6	53	9	3.8	80.6
15	Ryan, M	GDM	283	179	63.3	1895	11	3.9	68	8	2.8	75.9

## RUSHING

			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Johnson, C	PIC	237	1380	5.8	40	21	8	Rice, R	FLD	146	694	4.8	58	5
2	Jones, T	GWG	224	1047	4.7	83	7	9	McCoy, L	KUT	172	692	4	75	4
3	Williams, R	VV	213	947	4.4	68	6	10	Charles	LAK	137	691	5	17	5
4	Peterson, A	CHP	223	907	4.1	48	13	11	Best	MAR	161	597	3.7	56	4
5	Jones-Drew	RCH	182	839	4.6	94	3	12	Williams, D	MAR	97	581	6	54	3
6	Jackson, S	CHI	169	750	4.4	50	2	13	Brown, R	ICC	132	566	4.3	50	8
7	Mendenhall	MOH	163	701	4.3	49	4	14	Barber	COW	124	524	4.2	27	1
8	Rice, R	FLD	146	694	4.8	58	5	15	Thomas, P	YOR	118	524	4.4	36	3

Yards/Game				Rushing Gains of				10+	Rushing 1st Downs			
1	Johnson, C	PIC	126	1	Johnson, C	PIC	43	1	Johnson, C	PIC	85	
2	Jones, T	GWG	95.2	2	Jones, T	GWG	26	2	Jones, T	GWG	57	
3	Williams, R	VV	86.1	3	Charles	LAK	24	3	Peterson, A	CHP	52	
4	Williams, D	MAR	83	4	Williams, R	VV	23	4	Williams, R	VV	45	
5	Peterson, A	CHP	82.5	5	Jackson, S	CHI	22	5	Jackson, S	CHI	38	

## RECEIVING

			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Holmes	RCH	72	976	13.6	40	6	8	Smith, S	LAK	60	672	11.2	55	8
2	Welker	GDM	71	926	13	68	4	9	Witten	CHP	60	668	11.1	73	9
3	Wayne	GWG	67	1020	15.2	78	14	10	Colston	CHP	57	738	12.9	32	4
4	Rice, S	CHP	66	864	13.1	28	3	11	Johnson, A	RCH	57	843	14.8	53	7
5	White, R	LAK	65	686	10.6	42	3	12	Crabtree	YOR	54	763	14.1	55	6
6	Moss, R	CHI	63	877	13.9	51	9	13	Fitzgerald	ICC	53	521	9.8	28	8
7	Jennings, G	KUT	61	955	15.7	60	2	14	Clark, D	GWG	51	525	10.3	25	5
8	Smith, S	LAK	60	672	11.2	55	8	15	Ochocinco	MAR	49	532	10.9	39	2

RAC Yards				Yards/Game				Receiving		First	Downs
1	Jennings, G	KUT	476	1	Welker	GDM	116	1	Holmes	RCH	61
2	Jones-Drew	RCH	410	2	Wayne	GWG	92.7	2	Wayne	GWG	47
3	Jackson, V	PIC	358	3	Hester, D	VV	90.1	3	Rice, S	CHP	45
4	Moss, R	CHI	351	4	Holmes	RCH	88.7	4	Moss, R	CHI	43
5	Welker	GDM	328	5	Jennings, G	KUT	86.8	5	Jennings, G	KUT	41



# AROUND THE



## With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – The EFL announced its expansion plans for 2011 at a Press Conference in Canton, Ohio on Saturday. The League had originally planned to make the announcement last week at the Radio City Music Hall here in New York City, but cancelled those plans and postponed the date without explanation.

I am no rocket scientist but I am fairly astute when it comes to matters of politics and sports protocol and I knew as soon as I was told by my employer that the Hall date was cancelled and that I had to book a train ticket to Canton (flights there are too expensive in these tough economic times I am told) or else cover the conference at home by watching the EFL network feed, that my hopes for a New York franchise were about to be cruelly dashed.

As expected, the League formally announced the awarding of an expansion franchise to the **South Carolina Regulators**, a Charleston-based outfit owned by **Hal “The Colonel” Corson**, President and CEO of Corson Cotton, a dye and textile firm with a branch of subsidiaries dealing in a variety of local agricultural commodities. Corson’s company is the exclusive textile supplier to ‘Jubber’ and ‘Plode’ sports gear manufacturers and the main supplier of soy beans for the ‘Super Soy Boy’ line of genetically modified meat substitutes and ‘Hinterland Harry’s Edible Hiking Gear.’ Corson was also rumoured to have covered the costs of hundreds of green fees and hotel and restaurant bills for strategic planning meetings of the EFL Board of Governors held the past two springs at Myrtle Beach.

Coming as a surprise was the announcement that the second expansion franchise would be awarded to a Chicago consortium headed by **Chris Wadley**, President of *Wadley Western Alliance Confederated Co-operative Optimum Insurance Company* (WWACCO Insurance for short). A descendant on his mother’s side of Patrick and Catherine O’Leary, whose infamous cow kicked over the lantern in the barn they owned (and apparently on which they held a full insurance policy), starting the Great Chicago fire of 1871; Wadley parlayed a 129-year delayed settlement on the original claim (the first cheque had been sent to the O’Leary’s *old* address – the one destroyed in the fire) into an extremely successful insurance business of his own. His team, aptly named the **Chicago Blaze**, will play in a new stadium built on the site of the old Soldier Field, which was tragically and unexpectedly destroyed by fire late last year. The unnamed park is under construction and is expected to be finished in time for the pre-season.

The award of the Chicago franchise was considered a long shot by most observers. New York investor, **Franklin P. Wellesley-Woodingham IV** of ‘*Wellesley-Woodinghampton, Wadsworth, Wingham and Wilson Ltd.*,’ was considered the front-runner after spending a small fortune entertaining EFL Board Members at a promotional event for his team, the **New York Mega-Giant Juggernauts** at New York’s Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. I was at that party and I can’t believe that the New York bid did not win on the strength of the ‘Veal Oscar’ and the open martini bar alone! I hear most of the members of the EFL Board are scotch drinkers prefer their beef mature.

### **COUNTDOWN TO PERFECTION**

The Dragons took another big stomp toward that elusive Perfect Season with a big win over Chino on the road at ‘The Big House.’ Normally I would characterize the win as just another “step,” but in this case it was a “stomp.” With it, Florida may have stomped out the last real opposition to their quest for perfection. The Dragons had failed to solve the Chino puzzle in two previous seasons and they looked more vulnerable this season than they had previously, coming off a late and improbable challenge to their pristine record by the exasperatingly stubborn Markham North Stars immediately before this week’s showdown with their arch foe. In this year’s re-match they took care of business by being more like Chino than Chino – using defence, turnovers and an opportunistic offence to earn their 11<sup>th</sup> win.

The Florida “Firewall” burned **Donovan McNabb** and his offensive line, ringing up 6 sacks to bring their league-leading total to 35. They also induced 10 line penalties, 3 of those on **Phil Loadholt** and 3 on **Marcus McNeill**, who had the unenviable task of blocking **Ndamukong Suh** and **Justin Tuck** respectively. Completely missing from the Chino offence was any of the imagination or improvisation that characterizes McNabb’s better outings – he looked dull and slow in the pocket as he tried to process the swirling coverage in the secondary while pass rushers bore down up on



Ringgold coach, Tim Molinaro, cannot bear to look after Maurice Jones-Drew is stopped for no gain on 4<sup>th</sup> and goal at the one. The Hawks lost to the Cubs 30-27.

him. Instead of moving in the pocket or scrambling, McNabb often hung on to the ball too long trying to find the open man. To be fair, a defence as good as Florida's will do that to a quarterback, even a good one. But McNabb's been around the block a few times and should have a few tricks of his own to throw back at young whippersnappers like *Michael Griffin* and *Darrelle Revis*. The truth is that age is starting to get to McNabb. The mind is willing but the flesh is weak. He probably saw opportunity and wondered if he had it in him to take advantage of it; and while he wondered, *LaMarr Woodley* ear-holed him down to the hard, track beaten turf of The Big House.

#### THE DECISION

One thing that Ringgold head coach, **Tim Molinaro** cannot be accused of is meekness. He is an aggressive coach, the architect of the experimental 7 and 8-man blitzes and a run-and-gun style offence he calls "Shoot 'n Pray" that leaves his quarterback taking hit after jarring hit until his name gradually transforms into a 14-letter tongue-twister that nobody can easily spell or pronounce. [Big Ben started his career named *Ben Ross*, but the record shows that through successive trips to the hospital for concussion treatments it gradually transformed from *Ross*, to *Rosszz*, to *Rossis*, to *Rothlis*, to *Rothliswannaburgerpleeze* (he thought he was at Burger King), to *Rossllthzburger*, and finally to *Roethlisberger*]. When Molinaro's system works, it is impressive to watch. When it doesn't, it's a horror show.

The Hawks threw caution to the wind this Sunday and the crafty Iowa City Cubs made them pay for it. A lot of fuss will be made about Molinaro's decision to go for it on fourth down and goal at the one yard line while trailing by 3 points late in the game. Rightly so; but before I get to that, it is worth including in the discussion how the Hawks, a better team in most respects than Iowa City, got to the point where they were trailing by 3 with just over two minutes remaining in the game.

Let's just say that Ringgold's predicament was a team effort. The defence let a rookie stretch the field against them on the game's opening drive. While *DeMarcus Ware* and *Clay Matthews* shuffled aimlessly behind the front 3, not blitzing and unsure who they were supposed to be covering, Sam Bradford gave fans a taste of why the Cubs placed their future in his hands, throwing darts to *Larry Fitzgerald* and firing laser beams to *Lee Evans*. After exactly four minutes had passed, Iowa City was leading 7-0 on a 35-yard long slant to Evans delivered by the fearless rookie. Three plays into Ringgold's first possession, Roethlisberger had a "Bubbles" moment (his teammate's term for those times when Ben's mind suddenly goes blank and he is operating on brain stem). He saw *Patrick Willis* looming like a predator and, imagining he has holding a javelin instead of a football, launched it like a missile directly at the star linebacker's chest, where it remained embedded between his arms as he ran the interception back 31 yards to the Ringgold 9 yard line to set up the Cubs' second touchdown. Roethlisberger did the same thing to Cubs' safety, *Jairus Byrd*, who also returned his pick to the Ringgold 9 yard line to set up the third Iowa City major score. Once more, the Hawks fell victim to their lack of focus, patience and discipline.

Despite the rocky start, the Crimson Hawks fought back and trailed by only 3 points when *Kerry Rhodes* knocked the ball from *Ronnie Brown's* arms at the Iowa City 44 yard line with 8:10 remaining. The Hawks took control and drove the ball steadily on the ground toward the Cubs' goal line, eventually facing a 1<sup>st</sup> down and goal at the Iowa City 2. After three straight plays to *Maurice Jones-Drew* had gained only 1 yard, it looked like the Hawks would have to settle for a field goal to tie the game. But Molinaro had another plan – the kind that makes history of the famous or the infamous kind. He decided to go for it – *really* go for it. Everyone, even diehard Ringgold fans, thought it was a lame ruse to get the Cubs to jump offside. There was a collective gasp and a pregnant pause in the crowd noise as Big Ben took the snap and actually handed the ball off. Jones-Drew was stopped cold by three Cubs defenders, his offensive line prone to a man around him. From that instant, hindsight kicked in and locked its unfailing sights on **Tim Molinaro**.

For critics of the emotionally volatile and eccentric coach this was just another irrational decision at the wrong time for his team. "*Molinaro's Circus is losing its novelty. These aren't growing pains we're seeing each week, just bad coaching. It's time to fire the bum!*" wrote *Jebediah Cleburne* of the *Ringgold Ring & Chronicle*.

For his supporters, including most of his players, the 'avant-garde' coaching genius had once again challenged the boundaries of the game, and found the game wanting. "*Tim Molinaro is an artist. Players are his medium and the field his canvass,*" wrote *Ortin Scampo* of *The Tennessean*, "*He challenges us all to look at football from a new perspective.*"

*Many will criticize this decision but they do not understand the passion of the game that is unlocked by such a move. Win or lose, it's about the passion, the fury and the rage. Convention will call it a loss for Ringgold. I daresay it is a victory for Football."*

Others, in the middle, claimed to admire the "gutsiness" of the decision to go for it, while disputing the choice of call. "I like the message it sends to his team," said **Tim Zantz** of CBS, "but I question calling Jones-Drew's number in that situation. They rode him like a pack mule to get there and he had to be tired."

Ironically, it looked as if the Cubs defence was keying on **Tim Hightower** on the play. It was just bad luck that in an effort to get to him, the Cubs defenders would cross the path of Jones-Drew as he launched himself directly into **Philip Merling** and **Vince Wilfork**.

#### **FOOTBALL'S GRINCHES DAMPEN JOY OF FOOTBALL**

It was a perfect day for football in the Mohave Desert...until the game started. Although the sky was clear, the wind calm, the air warm and dry, the road-runners relaxed at the side of the road enjoying a cola; the pace of play of the Durham Thunder Lizards nevertheless managed to negate all that, bringing an atmosphere of mist and muck to the driest place in the United States. **Michael Turner** finally made his mark on a game and, while effective, it was tedious to watch. The longest play from scrimmage for both teams was 18 yards – one for each side. The Durham offence treaded warily through the invisible mud, like street mimes creating the illusion of a trek through wild bush country, only there was nothing actually standing in their way. The Mohave defence was hypnotized. They bought into the illusion on both sides of the ball, slipping and sliding for good measure despite the Velcro stickiness of the Mohave brand desert "turf." All that was needed was a computer-animated snowstorm or monsoon superimposed on the screen to create the illusion of an authentic "Weather Bowl." I watched with wonderment at the Dinosaur's ability to import their wet weather brand of football to the desert and, in effect, impose their own home field advantage on the road. If they can pull off this trick at Thermopylae Stadium or Dragonmount later this year, they could end up emerging as the surprise survivor of the EFL toughest Conference. The question is: will anyone other than Durham fans have the patience to watch it?

#### ***'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS.....***

*'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the league,  
Not a good game was stirring, and it caused much fatigue,  
The fans they were sleeping, but not in their beds,  
They dropped where they stood, from sheer boredom and dread.*

Week Eleven was not a good week for the EFL's Competition Committee. They are probably trying to answer a few tough questions this morning about league parity, starting with the big one: "Where is it?" I will remind the reader that it was this column (and therefore, me) who first dared to speak what many had been thinking, but not saying, about the disparity between the top five teams in the EFL and everyone else. There have been weeks when the gap was obvious, even to an ostrich, but none more so than this past week. Worse than that, there appears to be a pecking order among the bad teams in the league that make a competitive game between the so-called 'Have-Nots' almost as rare as an upset of one of the so-called 'Haves.'

The newly bad Gwinnett Gladiators got a much needed jolt from "Electric Eli" as he outpitched York's **Tom Brady** in a 35-21 win at Camelot. **Eli Manning** has experienced some critical lapses this year, but he is ranked 6th in the league in passing because when he is good, he is shockingly good. Eli zapped the York defence for 4 TD passes, including 3 more to wide receiver **Reggie Wayne**, giving him 14 TD catches on the season and making the pair the most lethal TD pass combo in the league.

In the **TERRORDOME**, Cowtown's **Joe Flacco** posted the first three-TD pass game of his career to lead his team to 24 points, the most since they racked up 37 in Week Two against Markham. Unfortunately, Flacco also threw 2 interceptions while his opponent, **Drew Brees**, passed at will against the sieve-like Cowtown pass defence for over 300 yards and 4 touchdowns in a 34-24 Violator win. Virden, at 4-7, is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league in offence which should give you a good idea, without looking, how bad their defence is performing. The Corn Kings offence continues to be as explosive as Play Doh.

Pickering is starting to scare people. They annihilated **Tony Romo's** Golden Bears 45-3 and looked machine-like in the process. **Chris Johnson** is a one-man assembly line, producing 23 of the finest top grade touchdowns at the rate of just over 2 per game. Brett Favre attempted to get noticed with a pair of TD passes to **Percy Harvin**, but it was not enough to distract fans and the media from Johnson's fleet-footedness. So Brett tearfully announced after the game that he would be retiring from Football before practice on Monday, citing not enough playing time and a not-sore-enough throwing shoulder. "My shoulder isn't getting enough work and I'm not in the kind of pain I'm used to," explained Favre, "I feel I can't be as effective this way and I am sorry to say that it is time for me to go. I want to thank **Gus Konstantakos** for giving me this opportunity and showing faith in my abilities." The announcement caught everyone by surprise and prompted a flurry of incredulous questions by the media. But by the end of the session Favre had announced his return to Football citing that his "shoulder" was responding well to all the "attention" it had been received during his time away from the game.

To round off this deplorable week we learned that the LA Knights are just slightly better than Garland and the 'Amazing Absorbing Man' took the wrong dose of secret formula before Markham's 31-10 loss to Charleswood.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL, MY DEAR READERS....A GOOD NIGHT!**

# BUG THE BOOKIE!

## JIMMY THE GEEK GIVES YOU HIS PICKS FOR WEEK TWELVE EFL ACTION

*Your source for fantasy and on-line betting solutions*



### PLAYOFF PICTURE AT A GLANCE

		PACIFIC-ATLANTIC CONFERENCE		CAN-AM CONFERENCE	
OUT	ALIVE	IN	IN	ALIVE	OUT
			1		
			2		
			3		
			4		

### JIMMY'S Week TWELVE picks

#### PICKERING @ MOHAVE (line – SPARTANS by 6)

As dominant as the Spartans have been lately, I do not expect them to toy with Mohave on the road with the same force and *élan* as they managed against Kutztown. The Hellfire have good, solid players on defence who will keep Brett Favre and Chris Johnson contained at least long enough for the game to garner its fair share of TV ratings. But with Owen Daniels and his back-up out of action and Ryan Harris out, it will be just a matter of time before the cracks in the Mohave attack appear and the game snowballs in Pickering's favour. **Pick: PICKERING**

#### IOWA CITY @ FLORIDA (line – DRAGONS BY13\_)

A healthy Florida squad, at home, with the Division clinched and a perfect record versus a nearly healthy 4-7 Iowa City team on the road with playoff hopes alive. What a story this would make if only any of us rational writers dared to dream! But really, do we absolutely need to discuss this?

**Pick: FLORIDA**

### **MARKHAM @ VIRDEN (line – VIOLATORS by 3)**

The North Stars are healthy heading into the TERRORDOME but there are some nervous members of the secondary who might want to sit this one out anyway. Drew Brees' offence is not slowing down for anyone, let alone Markham's defence. The Markham offence is statistically near the bottom of the league but have been more effective than their numbers indicate, often getting the job done at important times. They should move the ball against the "violatable" Virden defence, but will they move it fast enough? Nope. **Pick: VIRDEN**

### **LOS ANGELES @ GWINNETT (line – Pick'em)**

The Knights barely got by Garland last week to stay alive in the race for a wild card spot in the PAC; but does anyone, even LA fans, care anymore? The Knight's win was so uninspiring coming against the team with the worst record in the league that it may have signalled that they are emotionally depleted. Do they have anything left in the tank to take full advantage of their deep talent pool? It doesn't look that way. The Gladiators, at 4-7, are suffering a similar calamity this season and had lost 5 in a row before Eli Manning shocked York for 4 TD passes in last week's 35-21 win. The Knights are better on paper, but the Glads have the home field and the edge in morale right now. **PICK: GWINNETT**

### **CHARLESWOOD @ COWTOWN (line – PATRIOTS by 10)**

The Pats continue their tour of the soft underbelly of the Can-Am conference with a trip to Tillman Field and a much-needed week off. Charleswood can help knock the Corn Kings out of the playoff hunt and boost their own chances with a win here. There is no reason to think it won't happen, despite tackle Joe Staley and corner Jerraud Powers being out. The Kings are also banged up and playing horrendous football on top of it. The fact that they are still barely alive in the playoff hunt is a disgrace to the conference. **Pick: CHARLESWOOD**

### **GARLAND @ YORK (line – EXCALIBURS by 3)**

A local York reporter wrote a funny piece called 'The Sword and the Swoon,' a chronicle of York's five-game losing streak. In that stretch they have lost honourably to some stiff competition but have also had their manhood ripped from them by Kutztown and Markham. It is clear that the lack of a running game is hurting Tom Brady, but he gets a boost from the return of Pierre Thomas this week. Garland fought LA tough last week, but that accomplishment is becoming less of a distinction these days. The Garland defence is slowly creeping up in the rankings and they pose a turnover threat to opponents, but how much of a threat they pose to a cool cucumber like Tom Brady remains to be seen. I really don't like either team here but I have a hunch that York, under the magic hand of their QB, will wrench free the sword of victory. **Pick: YORK**

### **KUTZTOWN @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 6)**

This could end up being the game of the week. Darren Sharper is listed 'Probable' and if he returns he provides a whole new range of possibilities for the Kutztown defence. If he sits out, it will make Durham's job on offence a lot easier but that is not saying much when the offence moves at the speed of ooze. The explosive Bear offence misfired last week and will recover a bit this week. But if Romo cannot find a running game to cool off the #2 ranked EFL pass defence then he will spend a long day on his back. **Pick: DURHAM**

### **RINGGOLD @ CHINO (line – CONVICTS by 8)**

The "Decision" will reach out from beyond the grave of Week Eleven to haunt the Crimson Hawks this week in Chino. Despite the brave words coming from the Ringgold camp supportive of their coach, to play as they did last week against Iowa City and then decline a chance to tie it and send it into overtime at *home* has to take an emotional toll on any team. Chino, as they always do when they come off a big loss, will be looking for blood of the crimson kind this week at The Big House. But with both Cortland Finnegan and Aqib Talia 'Doubtful' for this game, they will have to ensure Donovan McNabb brings his arm to the park. **PICK: CHINO**