

2010



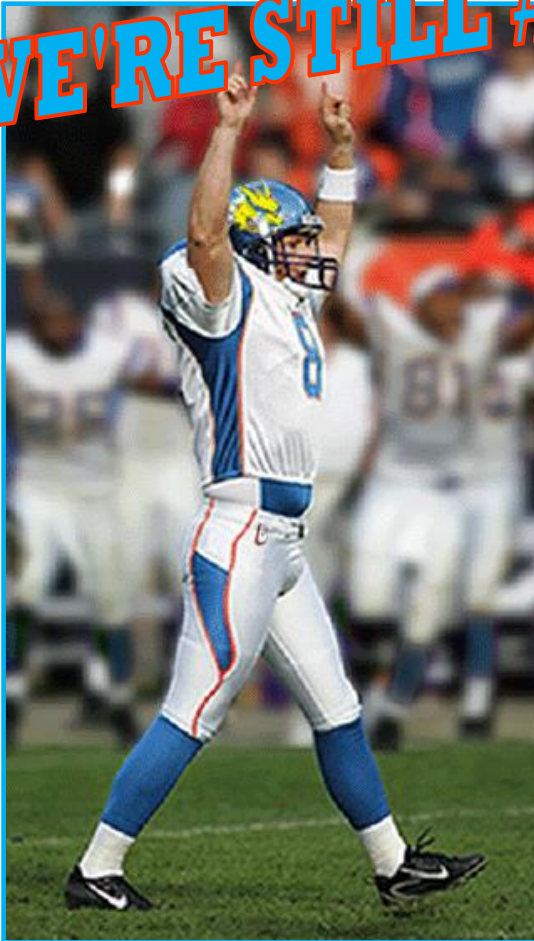
2010

WEEK FOUR IN REVIEW

October 31st, 2010



WE'RE STILL #1!



PICKERING – Round One goes to the Dragons. But it was close, so very close. The upstart Pickering Spartans proved they could challenge the best. Still unproven is whether they can beat the best.

There was a playoff atmosphere in Thermopylae Stadium as the Spartans received the opening kick. Spartan QB, Brett Favre looked jittery on his first drop back, throwing the ball directly to Dragons' corner, Antonio Cromartie, who returned it 23 yards to the Spartans 11. That set up the first points of the game, a 22-yard chip shot by Ryan Longwell to give Florida a quick 3-0 lead. With Favre injured on the
(*Story cont'd next page*)

LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

THE GAMES

- EPIC BATTLE IN PICKERING DECIDED IN EXTRA TIME
- PATRIOTS SURVIVE YORK CHALLENGE
- CONVICTS KNOCK OFF BEARS TO REMAIN UNDEFEATED
- HELLFIRE CONTINUE HOT STREAK WITH O.T. WIN OVER CUBS
- WARNER LEADS KNIGHTS TO FIRST WIN OF SEASON
- DURHAM PLOUGHS THROUGH MUCK TO NOTCH MESSY WIN
- ANTHONY WHO? ROOKIE RUNNER LEADS CORN KINGS OVER MUSTANGS
- CAMPBELL ERA OFF TO A GOOD START IN MARKHAM

COMMENT

- "SPARTANS NOT SO BRAVE," "FLACCO TAKING FLAK," & "EFL ROUND-UP" – Spats McChad

Florida's Ryan Longwell celebrates his game-winning field goal in overtime to beat the upstart Pickering Spartans 34-31. (STORY BEGINS ABOVE)



Who was slick in Week Four?

"BRYLCREEM" THE EFL'S OLDEST SPONSOR



Kurt Warner
QB
Los Angeles
Knights

4 TD passes, 282 yards, 145.4 QB Rating in Knights first win.



Andre Carter
DE
Los Angeles
Knights

8 tackles, 1 forced fumble, 1 Sack, 2 Stuffs, 4 Pressures, to harass Brees.

EPIC BATTLE AT THERMOPYLAE!

OVERTIME DECISION KEEPS FLORIDA ON TOP OF CONFERENCE



FLORIDA

34



PICKERING

31

interception, Vince Young came in and took control, leading the Spartans 69 yards in 5 plays for a major on a 21-yard TD pass to Vincent Jackson to make it 7-3 Pickering. The Dragons roared back on their next drive, aided by some good fortune in disguise. Koa Misi broke through and sacked Aaron Rodgers on 3rd & 5, forcing a fumble that was recovered then lost by David Harris, giving the ball back to Florida with a new set of downs at the Spartans' 33 yard line. 6 plays and a lost Pickering challenge later and the Dragons broke the plane for the first time on an 8-yard scramble by Rodgers to regain the lead 10-7. After Jon Kasay missed a 48-yard field goal attempt, the Dragons struck back quickly with a penalty-aided drive that ended with Jackson running the ball on the end-around 31 yards for a TD, to make it 17-7. With Favre struggling, the Spartans turned to Chris Johnson, who carried the ball 10 times for 68 yards during an 11-play drive, ending with Johnson crossing the plane from 5 yards out to bring Pickering within a field goal at the half, 17-14.

Longwell hit on a 52-yard field goal to start the 2nd half, then the teams sparred without results until Favre finally got on track late in the 3rd. A 34-yard pass to Vincent Jackson set up an 8-yard TD pass to Anquan Boldin to give Pickering 21-20 lead. Both QBs then turned on the other's defences with deadly speed. First, Rodgers hit Brandon Marshall for a 12-yard TD pass that put Florida back on top after the 2-point convert, 28-21. Two plays later, Favre connected again with Vincent Jackson on 51-yard short slant for a TD that caught the Dragons defence unawares to tie it 28-28. The momentum slowly shifted toward Pickering as they got the ball back and marched steadily down the field using the running game. But with time ticking away, the Dragons "Firewall" stood their ground when they needed to, stopping Chris Johnson for a 1-yard gain on 3rd and 5 at the Florida 24. Kasay's field goal put the Spartans ahead 31-28 with over 2 minutes left. It was just enough time for Rodgers to get Florida within Longwell's range. With 4 seconds on the clock, Longwell made a dramatic 48-yard field goal to tie the game. Next stop: Overtime.

Florida won the toss and conservatively handed off and passed the ball to Ray Rice 8 straight times, to cover 64 yards to the Pickering 14. There, Longwell made his 31-yard FG look easy as he handed Pickering their first loss.

10-27-2010 Thermopylae Stadium Temp: 58 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: Aaron Rodgers

	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot
2009 Florida (4-0)	3	14	3	11	3	34
2009 Pickering (3-1)	7	7	7	10	0	31

1 11:46 Florida	FG Longwell 22 (4-6-1:31)	3-0
1 8:36 Pickering	TD Young 21 pass to Jackson (Kasay) (5-69-2:55)	3-7
2 14:54 Florida	TD Rodgers 8 run (Longwell) (16-80-8:42)	10-7
2 7:12 Florida	TD Jackson 31 run (Longwell) (6-62-1:08)	17-7
2 1:31 Pickering	TD Johnson 5 run (Kasay) (11-76-5:29)	17-14
3 12:33 Florida	FG Longwell 52 (6-22-2:14)	20-14
3 3:17 Pickering	TD Favre 8 pass to Boldin (Kasay) (7-83-3:39)	20-21
4 14:48 Florida	TD Rodgers 12 pass to Marshall (2 - Rice) (6-52-3:18)	28-21
4 13:38 Pickering	TD Favre 51 pass to Jackson (Kasay) (2-55-0:55)	28-28
4 2:20 Pickering	FG Kasay 41 (13-65-7:54)	28-31
4 0:04 Florida	FG Longwell 48 (9-49-2:16)	31-31
5 10:01 Florida	FG Longwell 31 (10-64-4:46)	34-31

	FLD	PIC
First Downs	23	24
Rushes	32-183	38-232
Passes	28-18-160	21-14-201
Sacked	3-20	0-0
Fumble	2	2
Penalties	3-18	5-56
Turnovers	0	3
Time	31:50	33:09
Third Down	5-11	5-9
Fourth Down	1-1	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	3/2/1	2/2/0
Net Offense	323	433

< Florida >

< Pickering >

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	Sk	25	In	Td	Rate
Rodgers	28	18	160	3	0	0	1	91.4

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	Sk	25	In	Td	Rate
Favre	16	10	147	0	2	1	2	106.0
Young	5	4	54	0	0	0	1	151.3

Rushing	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	10	Lg	TD
Rice	25	124	5.0	6	1	16	0
Jackson	1	31	31.0	1	1	31	1
Rodgers	6	28	4.7	2	1	12	1

Rushing	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	10	Lg	TD
Johnson	25	140	5.6	9	4	20	1
Jennings	10	56	5.6	3	2	16	0
Harvin	1	29	29.0	1	1	29	0
Young	1	7	7.0	0	0	7	0
Johnson	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	25	Lg	TD
Marshall	6	1	7	56	9.3	4	0	16	1
Miller	4	0	5	23	5.8	2	0	10	0
Jackson	4	1	6	45	11.3	2	0	22	0
Rice	3	1	7	24	8.0	2	0	9	0
Houshmandza	1	0	2	12	12.0	1	0	12	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	25	Lg	TD
Jackson	6	0	6	134	22.3	5	2	51	2
Gonzalez	4	0	6	40	10.0	3	0	13	0
Johnson	2	0	4	7	3.5	0	0	4	0
Boldin	2	0	3	20	10.0	2	0	12	1
Harvin	0	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	0	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0

PATS SURVIVE SCARY SWORDS

GAME POINTS: **Adrian Peterson** dove 1 yard through the York line to pay dirt with 1 minute remaining to give Charleswood a victory by the narrowest of margins against a team they were expected to beat handily. Despite 5 turnovers and a bundle of untimely penalties, the Pats survived a scare after **Tom Brady** led York to 17 unanswered points to start the 2nd half. After building a 17-6 lead at halftime, the Pats got into trouble early in the 3rd quarter when **Sabby Piscitelli** picked off **Peyton Manning** at the Pats' 2 yard line. **Pierre Thomas** took it in from there to make it 17-13. Brady caught fire on York's next drive, hitting on long passes to move his team 88 yards to go ahead on a 5-yard TD pass to **Michael Crabtree**. A battle of field position eventually gave the Pats control at the York 33 with 1:37 remaining, then Manning drove the team quickly for the winning score.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Adrian Peterson** rushed for 83 yards and 1 TD on 17 carries, **Sidney Rice** caught 8 passes for 133 yards, **Justin Smith** had 2 sacks; **Tom Brady** went 19 of 32 for 222 yards, 1 TD, **Pierre Thomas** rushed for 80 yards, 1 TD, on 23 carries.



YORK



CHARLESWOOD

23

24

10-28-2010 Patriot Place Temp: 75 Wind: MVP: **Adrian Peterson**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 York (2-2)	6	0	14	3	23
2009 Charleswood (3-1)	0	17	0	7	24

1 7:14 York	FG Graham 32 (8-62-4:28)	3-0
1 2:10 York	FG Graham 31 (4--3-1:28)	6-0
2 14:20 Charleswood	FG Gostkowski 44 (5-36-2:35)	6-3
2 13:27 Charleswood	TD Bullitt 14 yd fumble recovery (Gostkowski) (0-0-0:43)	6-10
2 0:16 Charleswood	TD Manning 9 pass to Peterson (Gostkowski) (9-56-3:36)	6-17
3 8:52 York	TD Thomas 2 run (Graham,S) (2-2-0:43)	13-17
3 2:56 York	TD Brady 5 pass to Crabtree (Graham,S) (6-88-3:23)	20-17
4 14:56 York	FG Graham 35 (7-14-2:48)	23-17
4 1:01 Charleswood	TD Peterson 1 run (Gostkowski) (6-33-0:59)	23-24

	YOR	CHP
First Downs	15	17
Rushes	27-82	25-78
Passes	32-19-222	35-24-286
Sacked	3-21	1-4
Fumble	2	3
Penalties	4-35	9-65
Turnovers	2	5
Time	29:48	30:12
Third Down	2-13	5-13
Fourth Down	0-2	1-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	7/2/3	4/2/0
Net Offense	283	360



CHINO



KUTZTOWN

34

24

CONVICTS FINISH OFF BEARS IN FOURTH

GAME POINTS: **Cortland Finnegan's** interception of **Tony Romo** late in the 3rd quarter was the turning point in a tight game. The turnover set up **Donovan McNabb's** 4-yard TD pass over the middle to **Hines Ward** on the first play of the 4th quarter and gave Chino a 10-point separation over the Golden Bears, the biggest lead for either team to that point. Turnovers would be the undoing of the Bears on this day – on top of Finnegan's key pick, **Austin Collie's** fumble set up Chino's first TD. The two teams matched each other score-for-score in the first half with Romo connecting on 2 TD passes to Collie while WR **Joshua Cribbs** continued to show he is a greater threat to run the ball than to catch it with a 17-yard TD run on an end-around.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Donovan McNabb** completed 24 of 32 passes for 256 yards and 3 TDs, **Randy Moss** caught 8 passes for 90 yards and 2 TDs; **Tony Romo** went 21 of 27 for 220 yards, 2 TDs and 1 INT, **Ray Lewis** made 8 tackles, 4 for losses.

10-31-2010 Lincoln Financial Temp: 71 Wind: 0-5 None MVP: **Joshua Cribbs**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Chino (4-0)	10	7	3	14	34
2009 Kutztown (1-3)	7	10	0	7	24

1 11:34 Chino	TD McNabb 11 pass to Moss (Reed,J) (4-39-2:16)	7-0
1 10:20 Kutztown	TD Romo 31 pass to Collie (Kaeding) (3-66-1:03)	7-7
1 5:15 Chino	FG Reed 19 (11-51-4:52)	10-7
2 13:24 Kutztown	FG Kaeding 47 (9-50-3:57)	10-10
2 9:17 Chino	TD Cribbs 17 run (Reed,J) (8-72-3:53)	17-10
2 1:27 Kutztown	TD Romo 2 pass to Collie (Kaeding) (16-89-7:43)	17-17
3 8:59 Chino	FG Reed 45 (10-38-5:49)	20-17
4 14:56 Chino	TD McNabb 4 pass to Ward (Reed,J) (6-44-2:13)	27-17
4 9:27 Kutztown	TD McCoy 4 run (Kaeding) (10-64-5:18)	27-24
4 4:22 Chino	TD McNabb 3 pass to Moss (Reed,J) (10-42-4:49)	34-24

	CHI	KUT
First Downs	21	22
Rushes	28-78	26-108
Passes	32-24-256	27-21-220
Sacked	0-0	2-9
Fumble	1	2
Penalties	10-74	3-26
Turnovers	1	3
Time	31:02	28:58
Third Down	6-13	6-10
Fourth Down	1-1	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	5/4/1	2/2/0
Net Offense	334	319

HELLFIRE STILL SMOKING

GAME POINTS: Rob Bironas kicked a 22-yard field goal with 1:55 remaining in Overtime to earn the Hellfire a victory over the stubborn Cubs. Mohave's **Matt Schaub**, the league's early favourite for MVP, knitted together two TD drives in the second half that appeared to put the game away: connecting at the back of the end zone for a 3-yard TD pass to **Owen Daniels** and sneaking across the goal line from 1 yard out for a 24-10 lead. But the Cubs got a 58-yard kick return from **Ellis Hobbs** and **Reggie Bush** gained 35 all-purpose yards to set up a 1-yard TD run by **Ronnie Brown** to close within a TD. They tied it up after **DeMeco Ryans** forced a fumble at the Mohave 42 yard line and 6 plays later Bush busted it in off left tackle from 4 yards out for another TD. The Cubs missed a chance to steal it after Mohave failed to convert on a daring 4th down gamble at their own 44 in Overtime. **Neil Rackers**' 53-yard attempt went wide.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Matt Schaub** went 28 of 41 for 297 yards and 2 TDs; **Sam Bradford** went 16 of 29 for 150 yards. 1 TD and 2 INTs. **Patrick Willis**. 15 Tackles.



IOWA CITY



MOHAVE

24

OT

27

10-27-2010 The Fiery Depths Temp: 118 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Matt Schaub**

	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot
2009 Iowa City (1-3)	0	10	0	14	0	24
2009 Mohave (4-0)	10	0	7	7	3	27

1 11:45 Mohave	TD Schaub 36 pass to Owens (Bironas) (3-49-1:31)	0-7
1 1:40 Mohave	FG Bironas 36 (14-61-6:37)	0-10
2 13:01 Iowa City	TD Bradford 20 pass to Fitzgerald (Rackers) (1-20-0:13)	7-10
2 7:49 Iowa City	FG Rackers 22 (10-58-4:04)	10-10
3 7:35 Mohave	TD Schaub 3 pass to Daniels (Bironas) (13-72-7:10)	10-17
4 9:44 Mohave	TD Schaub 1 run (Bironas) (18-81-9:34)	10-24
4 6:42 Iowa City	TD Brown 1 run (Rackers) (5-36-2:49)	17-24
4 1:26 Iowa City	TD Bush 4 run (Rackers) (6-42-2:30)	24-24
5 1:55 Mohave	FG Bironas 22 (14-52-7:40)	24-27

	ICC	MOH
First Downs	17	32
Rushes	22-118	55-175
Passes	29-16-150	41-28-297
Sacked	0-0	2-8
Fumble	0	2
Penalties	4-20	4-25
Turnovers	2	2
Time	24:05	49:00
Third Down	2-10	14-20
Fourth Down	1-1	1-3
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/3/1	5/2/2
Net Offense	268	464



LOS ANGELES



VIRDEN

38

21

WARNER LEADS KNIGHTS CHARGE TO VICTORY

GAME POINTS: Newly acquired **Kurt Warner** regained his old form in his first game with the Knights, throwing 4 TD passes to 4 different receivers to lead LA to their first victory in 2010. Safety, **Yeremiah Bell**, also acquired in the trade that brought Warner to the West Coast, made his presence felt early, intercepting **Drew Brees** and returning it 29 yards to the Viriden 20 to set up the Knights' opening TD. LA broke the game open near the end of the first half when Warner connected on a medium slant to **Steve Smith** for 55 yards and a TD to make it 21-7. Two plays later, **Andre Carter** forced a fumble in Violators' territory that set up a 27-yard **Kris Brown** FG as time expired for a 24-7 halftime lead. Brees could not overcome the deficit against the "Blue Shield" defence.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Kurt Warner** had a near perfect day, finishing 22 of 29 for 282 yards and 4 TDs, **Steve Smith** had 8 catches for 130 yards and 1 TD, **Andre Carter** made 8 tackles, 1 sack, 2 run stuffs, 1 forced fumble; **Drew Brees** went 32 of 47 for 301 yards, 3 TDs, 2 INTs, **Joseph Addai** made 10 catches for 62 yards and 2 TDs.

10-30-2010 *TERRORDOME* Temp: 80 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Kurt Warner**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Los Angeles (1-3)	7	17	7	7	38
2009 Viriden (0-4)	7	0	7	7	21

1 5:50 Los Angeles	TD Warner 7 pass to Heap (Brown,K) (3-20-0:52)	7-0
1 0:04 Viriden	TD Brees 8 pass to Addai (Tynes) (10-77-5:32)	7-7
2 14:06 Los Angeles	TD Warner 14 pass to Benson (Brown,K) (2-32-0:54)	14-7
2 0:42 Los Angeles	TD Warner 55 pass to Smith (Brown,K) (3-68-0:30)	21-7
2 0:02 Los Angeles	FG Brown 27 (3-12-0:18)	24-7
3 11:43 Viriden	TD Brees 4 pass to Addai (Tynes) (5-71-3:06)	24-14
3 5:12 Los Angeles	TD Charles 2 run (Brown,K) (11-71-6:18)	31-14
4 6:30 Viriden	TD Brees 5 pass to Bryant (Tynes) (13-75-5:26)	31-21
4 1:44 Los Angeles	TD Warner 14 pass to White (Brown,K) (7-80-4:46)	38-21

	LAK	VV
First Downs	18	26
Rushes	17-52	27-113
Passes	29-22-282	47-32-301
Sacked	0-0	2-13
Fumble	2	3
Penalties	2-15	7-50
Turnovers	1	3
Time	23:56	36:04
Third Down	3-8	5-12
Fourth Down	0-0	2-5
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/4/0	5/3/0
Net Offense	334	401

LIZARDS WIN A WET ONE!

GAME POINTS: Philip Rivers threw 2 TD passes in the second half to push Durham past the flightless Hawks. A steady rain at Jurassic Park seemed to affect Ringgold more than the home team, especially in the running game, which generated only 33 yards. Durham broke a 3-3 tie in the third quarter after a fumble by Ringgold punter, **Dustin Colquitt** gave them the ball at the Hawk's 6 yard line. Rivers hit **Antonio Gates** two plays later for a 6-yard TD pass to give the home team a 10-3 lead. The Thunder Lizard's defence took complete control as Ringgold tried to mount a comeback, giving up just one first down the rest of the way.

KEY PERFORMANCES: Philip Rivers completed 21 of 34 for 194 yards, 2 TDs and 1 INT, **Michael Turner** rushed for 82 yards on 13 carries, **Antonio Gates** caught 6 passes for 54 yards and 1 TD, **Ty Warren** made 8 tackles, 1 sack, 2 pressures and 1 forced fumble; **Ben Roethlisberger** went 16 of 25 for 140 yards, **Maurice Jones-Drew** rushed for 27 yards on 12 carries, **Santonio Holmes** caught 5 passes for 5 yards.



3

RINGGOLD



20

DURHAM

10-27-2010 Jurassic Park Temp: 91 Wind: Calm Rain MVP: **Philip Rivers**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Ringgold (2-2)	0	3	0	0	3
2009 Durham (2-2)	0	3	7	10	20

2 12:40 Durham	FG Crosby 34 (18-82-8:23)	0-3
2 8:15 Ringgold	FG Suisham 23 (10-63-4:14)	3-3
3 9:21 Durham	TD Rivers 6 pass to Gates (Crosby) (2-6-0:38)	3-10
4 13:33 Durham	TD Rivers 4 pass to Muhammad (Crosby) (11-80-6:26)	3-17
4 2:20 Durham	FG Crosby 19 (14-64-9:45)	3-20

	RCH	DTL
First Downs	10	22
Rushes	21-33	36-140
Passes	25-16-140	34-21-194
Sacked	2-10	0-0
Fumble	3	1
Penalties	6-46	7-40
Turnovers	2	2
Time	23:04	36:56
Third Down	4-12	8-15
Fourth Down	0-2	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	1/0/1	4/2/2
Net Offense	163	334



20

GARLAND

OT



23

COWTOWN

ROOKIE MAGIC SAVES CORN KINGS

GAME POINTS: Rookie running back **Anthony Dixon** rushed for 172 yards and scored a TD to turn around the game and spark an overtime victory for Cowtown. With Garland leading 10-6, **Dominique Foxworth** picked off **Joe Flacco** on the opening drive of the 3rd quarter and returned the ball 25 yards for a TD to make it 17-6. Less than one minute later, **Brian Cushing** picked off Flacco to set up a 51-yard **Robbie Gould** field goal and the Mustangs were firmly in control, 20-6. But with Garland playing the pass late in the 3rd quarter, the Corn Kings assembled an 11-play drive consisting entirely of running plays with Dixon scoring on a 3-yard sweep. They tied it up at the end of a marathon 19-play drive on a 9-yard TD pass from **Matt Moore** to **Donnie Avery**. The Corn Kings won the toss and used the pass to maintain possession, driving the ball to the Mustangs 15 yard line where **Olindo Mare** won the game with a 32-yard field goal.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Joe Flacco** went 15 of 24 for 194 yards and 3 INTS, **Matt Moore** completed 8 of 14 for 81 yards and 1 TD, **Anthony Dixon** rushed for 172 yards and 1 TD on 33 carries; **Matt Ryan** went 16 of 26 for 134 yards.

0-30-2010 Tillman Field Temp: 66 Wind: 0-5 MVP: **Anthony Dixon**

	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot
2009 Garland (0-4)	3	7	10	0	0	20
2009 Cowtown (2-2)	0	6	7	7	3	23

1 9:48 Garland	FG Gould 29 (9-56-4:59)	3-0
2 6:23 Cowtown	FG Mare 27 (12-60-7:17)	3-3
2 0:57 Garland	TD Ryan 1 run (Gould) (12-64-5:12)	10-3
2 0:00 Cowtown	FG Mare 50 (8-47-0:57)	10-6
3 13:52 Garland	TD Foxworth 25 interception return (Gould) (0-0-0:10)	17-6
3 11:03 Garland	FG Gould 51 (4--2-2:02)	20-6
3 0:14 Cowtown	TD Dixon 3 run (Mare) (11-80-5:36)	20-13
4 7:02 Cowtown	TD Moore 9 pass to Avery (Mare) (19-91-7:44)	20-20
5 10:01 Cowtown	FG Mare 32 (11-62-4:53)	20-23

	GDM	COW
First Downs	15	28
Rushes	22-97	42-220
Passes	31-20-167	38-23-274
Sacked	2-9	2-16
Fumble	1	0
Penalties	5-40	8-53
Turnovers	0	3
Time	27:01	37:58
Third Down	5-14	8-15
Fourth Down	2-2	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/1/1	5/2/2
Net Offense	255	478

GWINNETT



27

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Jason Campbell** completed 22 of 30 for 233 yards and 2 TDs, **Jahvid Best** ran for 71 yards and 1 TD on 21 carries, **Chad Ochocinco** caught 8 balls for 108 yards and 1 TD; **Eli Manning** went 22 of 36 for 208 yards, 1 TD and 1 INT, **Thomas Jones** rushed for 73 yards and 1 TD on 16 carries, **DJ Williams** made 13 tackles and 1 forced fumble.

10-30-2010 The Dawg Pound Temp: 63 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: Jason Campbell						GWG			MAR		
						First Downs			1924		
						Rushes			19-7836-133		
2009 Gwinnett (1-3)						370717			Passes36-22-20830-22-233		
2009 Markham (2-2)						777627			Sacked1-30-0		
						Fumble			11		
1 13:02 Markham						TD Campbell 39 pass to Ochocinco (Lindell) (4-73-1:46)			0-7		
1 2:50 Gwinnett						FG Brown 31 (9-51-3:36)			3-7		
2 10:46 Markham						TD Campbell 12 pass to Thomas (Lindell) (13-74-6:57)			3-14		
2 5:51 Gwinnett						TD Jones 15 run (Brown,J) (11-74-4:47)			10-14		
3 5:22 Markham						TD Best 2 run (Lindell) (11-65-6:00)			10-21		
4 10:13 Markham						FG Lindell 35 (16-62-7:54)			10-24		
4 7:16 Markham						FG Lindell 17 (5-18-2:50)			10-27		
4 1:21 Gwinnett						TD Manning 14 pass to Clark (Brown,J) (11-60-2:46)			17-27		

Passing

Rushing

Receiving

Brees (VV)	47-32-301
Schaub (MOH)	41-28-297
Manning,P (CHP)	35-24-286
Warner (LAK)	29-22-282
McNabb (CHI)	32-24-256

Dixon,A (COW)	33-172
Johnson,C (PIC)	25-140
Rice,R (FLD)	25-124
Williams,R (VV)	21-122
Bush,R (ICC)	Dec-94

Jackson,V (PIC)	6-134
Rice,S (CHP)	8-133
Smith,S (LAK)	8-130
Bryant,D (VV)	9-113
Ochocinco (MAR)	8-108

LEADER BOARD

STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Mohave	4	0	0	1	120	30	92	23	7	3 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Charleswood	3	1	0	0.75	131	32.8	85	21.3	11.5	2 0 0	2 1 0	3 1 0
Kutztown	1	3	0	0.25	89	22.3	120	30	-7.8	1 2 0	1 2 0	1 3 0
Virден	0	4	0	0	76	19	142	35.5	16.5	0 2 0	0 3 0	0 4 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Chino	4	0	0	1	138	34.5	53	13.3	21.3	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
York	2	2	0	0.5	95	23.8	110	27.5	-3.8	2 0 0	2 1 0	2 2 0
Iowa City	1	3	0	0.25	92	23	112	28	-5	0 1 0	1 2 0	1 3 0
Los Angeles	1	3	0	0.25	79	19.8	106	26.5	-6.8	0 1 0	0 3 0	1 3 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Pickering	3	1	0	0.75	133	33.3	74	18.5	14.8	1 1 0	3 0 0	3 1 0
Cowtown	2	2	0	0.5	80	20	103	25.8	-5.8	2 1 0	1 2 0	2 2 0
Durham	2	2	0	0.5	88	22	60	15	7	2 0 0	1 2 0	2 2 0
Markham	2	2	0	0.5	64	16	101	25.3	-9.3	2 1 0	1 2 0	2 2 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Florida	4	0	0	1	127	31.8	68	17	14.8	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Ringgold	2	2	0	0.5	94	23.5	95	23.8	-0.3	1 0 0	2 1 0	2 2 0
Gwinnett	1	3	0	0.25	106	26.5	137	34.3	-7.8	1 0 0	1 2 0	1 3 0
Garland	0	4	0	0	82	20.5	136	34	13.5	0 2 0	0 3 0	0 4 0

PASSING

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Schaub	MOH	148	108	73	1293	2	1.4	56	11	7.4	118.4
2	Favre	PIC	93	60	64.5	864	4	4.3	53	11	11.8	116.1
3	Manning, E	GWG	127	81	63.8	935	2	1.6	49	10	7.9	105.6
4	McNabb	CHI	131	84	64.1	1124	3	2.3	64	8	6.1	102.1
5	Rodgers	FLD	100	65	65	803	2	2	59	6	6	101.4
6	Kolb	GDM	69	43	62.3	481	1	1.4	39	4	5.8	96.3
7	Brady	YOR	144	93	64.6	913	2	1.4	39	8	5.6	95.1
8	Manning, P	CHP	138	94	68.1	1092	7	5.1	32	9	6.5	92.4
9	Roethlisberger	RCH	116	71	61.2	763	2	1.7	48	5	4.3	87.7
10	Romo	KUT	111	73	65.8	875	4	3.6	60	4	3.6	86.7
11	Bradford	ICC	58	38	65.5	368	2	3.4	24	3	5.2	86
12	Brees	VV	132	81	61.4	940	5	3.8	41	7	5.3	84.8
13	Rivers, P	DTL	124	68	54.8	852	5	4	86	7	5.6	78.4
14	Ryan, M	GDM	74	48	64.9	454	2	2.7	31	1	1.4	74.9
15	Campbell, J	MAR	108	65	60.2	661	5	4.6	39	5	4.6	73.9

RUSHING

			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Johnson, C	PIC	100	615	6.2	40	5	8	Williams, D	MAR	40	255	6.4	54	2
2	Williams, R	VV	90	484	5.4	63	2	9	Dixon, A	COW	53	249	4.7	18	1
3	Jones-Drew	RCH	77	466	6.1	94	3	10	Rice, R	FLD	54	243	4.5	20	1
4	Jones, T	GWG	87	432	5	24	2	11	Thomas, P	YOR	63	227	3.6	28	2
5	Peterson, A	CHP	84	377	4.5	28	4	12	Bush, R	ICC	36	225	6.3	21	3
6	Mendenhall	MOH	70	342	4.9	49	3	13	Bush, M	DTL	34	165	4.9	20	1
7	McCoy, L	KUT	65	285	4.4	23	4	14	McGahee	GDM	28	165	5.9	77	3
8	Williams,D	MAR	40	255	6.4	54	2	15	Best	MAR	46	161	3.5	15	1

								Rushing 1st downs			
Rushing TDs				Rushing Gains of 10+							
1	Johnson, C	PIC	5	1	Johnson, C	PIC	18	1	Johnson, C	PIC	37
2	Peterson, A	CHP	4	2	Jones, T	GWG	17	2	Jones, T	GWG	26
3	McCoy, L	KUT	4	3	Williams, R	VV	12	3	Peterson, A	CHP	25
4	Mendenhall	MOH	3	4	Peterson, A	CHP	9	4	Williams, R	VV	23
5	Jones-Drew	RCH	3	5	Bush, R	ICC	8	5	McCoy, L	KUT	18
Rushing 1st Down		%	Rushing TD %					Yards/Game			
1	Johnson, C	PIC	37	1	Bush, R	ICC	8.3	1	Johnson, C	PIC	153.8
2	Bush, R	ICC	33.3	2	McCoy, L	KUT	6.2	2	Williams, R	VV	121
3	Williams, D	MAR	32.5	3	Johnson, C	PIC	5	3	Jones-Drew	RCH	116.5
4	Jones, T	GWG	29.9	4	Williams, D	MAR	5	4	Jones, T	GWG	108
5	Peterson, A	CHP	29.8	5	Peterson, A	CHP	4.8	5	Peterson, A	CHP	94.3

RECEIVING

			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Moss, R	CHI	31	477	15.4	51	3	8	Ward, H	CHI	23	334	14.5	64	5
2	White, R	LAK	30	302	10.1	21	1	9	Driver	MOH	22	292	13.3	39	1
3	Smith, S	LAK	28	314	11.2	55	4	10	Colston	CHP	22	309	14	32	0
4	Witten	CHP	26	240	9.2	25	5	11	Crabtree	YOR	22	295	13.4	34	5
5	Rice, S	CHP	26	321	12.3	28	2	12	Fitzgerald	ICC	22	221	10	22	5
6	Daniels, O	MOH	26	273	10.5	19	4	13	Wayne	GWG	21	351	16.7	49	5
7	Holmes	RCH	25	306	12.2	28	2	14	Jennings, G	KUT	21	367	17.5	60	0
8	Ward, H	CHI	23	334	14.5	64	5	15	Shockey	YOR	20	188	9.4	24	0



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – Nothing exciting is going on in New York City right now. Yes, you read that right. The center of the world has a Butte, Montana quality to it at the moment. Tourism is down because of phantom bed bugs and the weather is starting to turn bleak. Good thing I have EFL Sunday Ticket and a \$5 coupon for a case of Budweiser.

ON THE EDGE OF VICTORY, “BRAVE” SPARTANS BACK DOWN

I’m probably not going to be invited to any Media hospitality suite sponsored by the **Pickering Spartans** for a while after writing this column, but the truth needs to be spoken about the self-styled brave, “*never surrender*” Spartans. When they had the game in their hands this week, they lost their nerve and handed it back to the **Florida Dragons**. After four quarters of regulation and five minutes of overtime, the team that was determined to win won. The team that was determined not to lose lost.

In the old days it would have been a tie – perhaps a more fitting end to a game that saw the Spartans dominate the play, but also make all the critical errors and get none of the big breaks. Pickering never touched the ball in the extra frame and Florida ended up winning on a coin toss. But unlike some of the angry Pickering boosters out there screaming foul at the refs and bemoaning their bad luck, I maintain that the best team won. The Dragons showed why they are the Champions and the Spartans showed why they are, at the moment, also-rans. Why, Spats, you ask?

First let me preface this with the good news observation that the game turned out to be everything the sporting world had hoped it would be. It was not merely a close game – it was a close game between closely matched teams. The one-year transformation of the Pickering Spartans from cellar dwellers to contenders is something that needed to be seen to be believed. After their Week Four battle against Florida; the Spartans have made a believer out of me. The closeness was no fluke. If these two teams meet again in the playoffs, the struggle will be just as tight.

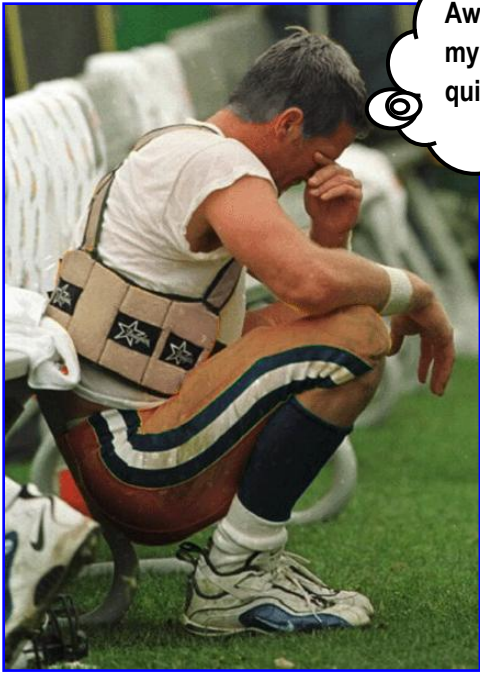
The game took several twists and turns. After a shaky start put them down 17-7, Pickering fought their way back into the game using their superstar running back, **Chris Johnson**. They handed him the ball 10 times in an 11-play drive while Florida guarded against the pass and Johnson delivered the goods with 68 yards and a TD. It was a brilliant drive under the circumstances, but its very success insidiously sowed the seeds of later failure, as I shall reveal shortly.

In the second half the Spartan’s defence enjoyed a measure of success in preventing the Dragons from sustaining the long, back-breaking type of drive they have executed in the past to subdue their opponent’s will when they have the lead. They held the Florida attack to 3 points in the 3rd quarter and, by the end of it, had taken the lead 21-20 on a TD pass from **Brett Favre** to **Anquan Boldin** – Favre, who had looked a little off his game early, was warming up and stepping into the foreground on the game’s stage.

The Dragons fired back with a timely 41-yard kick return by **Courtney Roby**, a series of effective runs by **Ray Rice**, and a 12-yard touchdown pass from **Aaron Rodgers** to **Brandon Marshall**. The cherry on top of that Touchdown Sundae was a successful 2-point convert that would turn out to have game-changing implications.

Favre wasted no time getting his team back on even-footing. He hit Vincent Jackson on a quick slant and the fleet-footed wide receiver ran it straight through the Florida defence for 51-yard touchdown pass to tie the game at 28. Unaccustomed to giving up leads more than once in a game, the Dragons started to press and took a couple of uncharacteristic penalties that helped to put the brakes on their offence. The shift in momentum was palpable.

The game’s “Moment of Truth” came on Pickering’s final drive. The Dragons had burned two timeouts on failed challenges and had an eye on the clock as the Spartans repeatedly ran little-used **Rashad Jennings** down their throats to dig themselves out of a deep hole and march into field goal range. It was impressive to watch, but by the time the Spartans had reached the Florida 30, everybody watching the game everywhere, especially the Dragons, realized that the Spartans had no intention of throwing the ball. The Dragons made adjustments, but the Spartans did not.



Aw My Gawd,
my coach is a
quiche-eater!

OTHER FAMOUS QBS ALONG FOR THE RIDE

Bob Griese – never had big numbers.

Trent Dilfer – exception to rule that you need a good QB to win a Championship.

Jim McMahon – the perfect sidekick to the 1985 Bears Championship ‘D’

Pickering's Brett Favre ponders loss to Dragons. Did the Spartans really sign him for \$8.9 million per year just to hand the ball off?

Pickering finally faced 3rd down and 5 at the Florida 25 with 2:25 remaining. A first down at this point would have clamped a vice on Florida's hopes of a comeback should the Spartans go on to score. If not, Florida's chance of a last second victory would have been slim. If ever there was a time for a play action pass, this was it. And if you could pick the perfect quarterback to do it, it would have been **Brett Favre**.

Instead, **Coach Konstantakos** called a right side pitch to **Chris Johnson**. The Dragons were waiting for it. In fact, they could hardly have called a more perfect defence for it without putting 10 men in the box. Johnson did well just to get past the line of scrimmage to eke out a 1-yard gain without fumbling. **Jon Kasay** kicked a field goal to give the Spartans a 31-28 lead, but the score was celebrated with reservation since everyone knew that a severe test was about to be endured, and probably failed, by the Spartans defence.

The rest of the game played out according to the Florida script. Rodgers dinked and dunked his way into field goal range and **Ryan Longwell** made a

challenging 48-yard kick to send the game into Overtime. The Football Gods, finding the Spartans unworthy, awarded the coin toss to Florida and the Dragons moved easily into field goal range again to win it. The Dragons celebrated, **Gus Konstantakos** threw his headset, **Chris Johnson** hung his head, and **Brett Favre** stormed off the field.

The post game media scrum in the Pickering locker room was like a scene from My Fat Greek Funeral. Konstantakos called it a “heart-breaking loss.” Personally, *I* think it was more of a tragedy because the Spartans were drawn into disaster by their own fatal flaw. When the moment called for bold action, the Spartans played it safe like a bunch of wusses. After an off-season replete with clever trades, shrewd drafting and strategic free agent signings with the goal of building an offensive powerhouse unrivalled in the league, the Spartans played that 3rd down and 5 exactly like a team with none of that would have done. They behaved, when it mattered, like a team that did not believe it could reach out and take what it wanted from the vaunted Dragons; in their *heads*, they were still a 4-12 team playing the two-time EFL Champions. They were just happy to be there.

Well, maybe it was not in *all* of their heads. Favre did not play on that 4-12 team from last year. He played for a winner in another league. He was clearly very unhappy with the game's result and how it came about. “I just want to make plays to help my team,” a dejected Favre said in a brief post-game interview. That, my readers, is media code for *‘let me throw the damn ball in a gawd-damn passing situation to win the <mother-bleeping> game!’*

I never liked Favre much but I have to agree with him on this. You pay a guy \$8.9 million a year to lead your offence and you don't put the ball in his hands to convert a critical third down that could possibly win the game? Konstantakos can justify and rationalize the call all he wants, but all I see is that he failed his “balls moment.” It takes more than stock-piling talent to win Championships. It takes balls and the judgment to know when it is time to put them on the table.

JOE STARTING TO TAKE FLAK IN COWTOWN

The Corn Kings are off to a 2-2 start and find themselves in the middle of a four-way race in the North Division. Cowtown diehards, being diehards, are predicting resurgence for the green-and-gold based on delusional fantasies revolving around quarterback, **Joe Flacco**. But for others, the shine on Flacco is beginning to lose some of its lustre. No rational, objective observer now expects the first-year starter to transform this stagnant franchise any time soon.

Prior to the regular season, everyone knew that Flacco did not have the supporting cast to lead the Kings to contention, but many thought that he had more weapons at his disposal than other young quarterbacks in a rebuilding situation. 2010 was to be a developmental year for Flacco, to establish his reputation and credentials in the league. So far he is establishing a reputation for throwing the ball to the wrong team. “Joe Cool,” (so dubbed by his teammates for his calm demeanour during practice and in the huddle) leads all quarterbacks in interceptions and is chilling his offence into a frosty hibernation. If not for a totally unexpected career day by rookie running back, **Anthony Dixon** last week, Cowtown would have fallen to Garland in a lop-sided contest similar to their first two losses of the season. Flacco threw 3 interceptions, one

returned for a touchdown, and was largely ineffective against the worst rated pass defence in the EFL. **Chad Pennington** is quietly beginning to receive a measure of posthumous respect for what he accomplished with the same cast of offensive characters in 2009.

Still, Joe remains surprisingly popular in downtown Cowtown. One thing he does much better than Pennington is bail hay, milk cows and throw horseshoes – skills of high value in “Corn King Country.” To promote the team, Flacco and tackle **Jordan Gross** have been attending every local county fair and competing in traditional contests. Despite no farming background, Flacco has actually won some of these contests, placing him in high esteem in the community. He is now engaged to the Mayor’s daughter, Emma-Lou and goes to Church every Saturday, to make up for Sundays when he is playing. It is quite possible that Flacco could fall flat on his face as the Corn King QB and still carve out a good life for himself in Cowtown. But he could reduce some of the whispering behind his back at the corner barbershop if he would start to do the things the locals cannot – like lead his football team to a few scores on the playing field.

A TRADE BLESSED

What a difference a change of scenery makes! **Jason Campbell** and **Kurt Warner**, the two worst rated quarterbacks in EFL after three weeks, are swapped for each other by their desperate owners and, in their first games with their respective teams; each win the Game MVP honour. It could be the start of a fittingly “Hollywood” ending for LA – the beleaguered, supposedly “washed up vet” getting a final shot at redemption and leading the Knights on an unprecedented unbeaten streak into the playoffs and Championship, and finding true love in the process. Was that Susan Sarandon spotted outside the Knights’ locker room in the TERRORDOME waiting for Kurt?

Speaking of love, at the Dawg Pound the Fat Lady has a new love of her life. After **Jason Campbell** completed a 20-yard pass to **Devery Henderson** in a crowd of Gwinnett defensive backs for a long first down conversion at the end of the 3rd quarter, Markham’s biggest fan forced herself up on her haunches and bellowed, “Come to Mama, Jason! Come to Mama! Ooooh, I love my little Jasy Jasy!” The force of the effort to raise herself, even briefly, caused a sudden build-up of extreme pressure in her colon, which burst upon the second “Jasy,” making a sound like a thousand ‘vuvuzela’ horns blown fiercely in unison for about 2 seconds. The explosion forced fecal matter through the seams in her industrial-grade ‘Depends’ in fountain-like streams to splatter at least a dozen fans behind her. The remainder shot out like a geyser to shower a dozen more when, unable to sustain her massive frame, she landed with force on her backside against her custom made iron bench in Row 54. Yet another classic obscenity from the “Shame of Markham” that will set records for hits on U-Tube because we have lost our collective moral compass and sense of good taste.

AROUND THE HORN

York under **Tom Brady** is turning into a pesky team. After knocking off LA last week, the Excaliburs slashed at the Patriots at Patriot Place and almost took them down as well. Ranked 15th overall in offence and 12th in defence, it is unclear exactly how they have managed a 2-2 record against stiff competition. The Brady Factor and not playing in the hellish ‘Hole in the Wall’ are two obvious reasons. But could another be the new coach?

I am still trying to figure out why it took Mohave 4 quarters and almost the entire overtime period to finally put away the Cubs 27-24. The Hellfire dominated in every statistical aspect and did not lose the turnover battle – often the culprit when a good team is challenged by an inferior. I’ve watched the tape twice and I am writing it off to “Cubs Mojo.” It is a quality only the Cubs have. It does not always come into play on any given day, but when it does something happens to turn the game sideways at critical moments. The Mojo kicked in this week the moment Mohave took what looked like a commanding 24-10 lead in the 4th quarter. **Ellis Hobbs** returned a kick 58 yards, **Reggie Bush** got hot, **DeMeco Ryans** forced a fumble (for which he charged the team \$500 thousand) and Bush got hot again. The next thing you know, the Cubs have posted 2 TDs and the game is tied. Now that’s ‘Mojo!’

It’s no secret to me why the Durham Thunder Lizards are under-achieving and their fans are irritable. Jurassic Park is an unnatural place. I flipped over to the Ringgold-Durham game when the score was 3-3 and watched the punters duel for a couple of series in a steady downpour. The Hawks looked like they did last year – stuck in the mud, while the Lizards tiptoed more nimbly, but not much more effectively over the soaking, genetically-engineered growth they call “Dino-Turf.” I couldn’t watch it for long. I no longer cared what happened; I just didn’t want to look at it anymore.

Chino stayed in the ranks of the undefeated with a 34-24 over the Golden Bears. It was an important win for the black & grey because they are about to head into a tough 3-game stretch which will see them take on undefeated Mohave, then cross conferences to face off against Durham and Pickering. Could the game against the Spartans be a Championship Preview?

SPATS HITS THE ROAD

I have a pair of tickets to the Charleswood/LA game at Round Table Stadium next week – a gift from my journalistic colleague and good friend, **Gabrielle Laurent-Vainluven**. I will be glad to get out of New York for a week. When next you hear from me, I will be in Tinseltown enjoying Sushi with the Jet Set. (I hope).

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JIMMY'S WEEK FIVE PICKS

CHARLESWOOD @ LOS ANGELES (line – PATRIOTS by 5)

It is no over-dramatization to characterize this game as a psychological “must win” for the Knights. A loss would not technically eliminate them from the playoff hunt, but a loss would make the road back more difficult and plant the seed of doubt that they can compete with the top teams in their Conference. Kurt Warner’s performance against Virden provided a glimpse of his capabilities but let us remember that it was against Virden – the league’s worst defence. The Pats woke up in the nick of time last week against the irritatingly competitive Excaliburs and may be struggling with confidence issues themselves after Peyton Manning threw away the game against Mohave in Week One. Strong teams, fragile psyches. The Knights are closer to the edge and will curl up in the fetal position first. **Pick: CHARLESWOOD**

KUTZTOWN @ IOWA CITY (line – GOLDEN BEARS by 4)

It is still early in the season and anything can happen with these two 1-3 teams. Both possess top grade talent to accompany glaring imperfections. They are both dangerous but will do well to gain a wildcard berth. The one that wins this game can hang on to that hope a little longer; the one that loses might as well start forming next year’s plan. They are evenly matched – the Bears gaining the edge in offence and the Cubs the edge in defence. Both teams are missing key defenders to injury, but Kutztown is the harder hit, with both of their starting corners unavailable. In these situations I usually go with the team with the better quarterback, so Tony Romo and the Bears it is! **Pick: KUTZTOWN**

MOHAVE @ CHINO (line – CONVICTS by 7)

Signs that the Hellfire are cooling off following a red hot start came late in the game against Iowa City last week. Matt Schaub has been phenomenal and his performance so far is covering up debilitating weaknesses in the offensive line that will be exposed this week by Chino’s “Lockdown Crew.” The Convicts won convincingly in Kutztown and show no signs of weakening as they return home to the unfriendly confines of the Big House. Haloti Ngata and Bernard Pollard are out – both losses that will be felt. But the Mohave defence is vulnerable and Donovan McNabb is capable of picking it apart. **Pick: CHINO**

VIRDEN @ YORK (line – EXCALIBURS by 4)

This game boils down to a battle between two great quarterbacks leading weak teams – like a pair of master Samurai swordsmen duelling with pool noodles. Tom Brady and Drew Brees will share the benefit of facing questionable defences, the most questionable of which is Virden’s – as already pointed out, ranked dead last in the league. York has the home field advantage and continues to reap the rewards of some kind of divine blessing bestowed on Jay Hammond when, like Moses, he delivered the Outlaws from bondage in wicked Winnemucca and brought them to heavenly Avalon. Virden brings a robust and swift attack that poses

trouble for good defences and should make short work of the Excaliburs no-name brand 'D.' The winless Violators are also motivated to erase the goose-egg from the "W" column and they see themselves as better than their Week Four hosts. I agree. Once the Divine Protection wears off, the Excalibur's blades will dull really quickly. **Pick: VIRDEN**

DURHAM @ FLORIDA (line – DRAGONS by 6)

The good news for Durham is that they get to visit a warm and sunny climate this week. The bad news is they have to play Florida for the privilege. Both teams are completely healthy so there are no built-in excuses going into the game. The Dragons looked mortal at times against the Spartans and were happy to escape Pickering with a win. Now they are at home and looking to regain their swagger. On paper, the Lizards match up better than anybody against the Florida machine, but they cannot seem to translate that talent into on-field performance against their Conference Foe. They carry a snake-bitten trepidation with them after several losses. Dare I say it about football professionals, but could the Dragons be in their heads? Quite possibly....most likely....okay, *definitely*. Expect Philip Rivers to turn the ball over at the exact wrong moment, *again*. **Pick: FLORIDA**

COWTOWN @ GWINNETT (line – GLADIATORS by 3)

The bewilderingly bad Gwinnett defence rose out of last place in the team rankings last week. This week, three of their top defenders, most worryingly Robert Mathis, are out. Fortunately, they only have to deal with Cowtown's inoffensive offence. The Corn Kings posted eye-popping numbers last week against Garland but analysts recognized that Anthony Dixon's 172-yard performance was custom-made for a Garland defence that stubbornly kept 6 DBs on the field for almost the entire second half to guard against the pass and protect their 14-point lead. There will be no easy yards for Cowtown at the Coliseum despite the Gladiators' troubles. The Glads need a win and the Corn Kings are ripe for the husking. Watch Eli Manning grab an early lead then sit back and watch his defence re-emerge. **PICK: GWINNETT**

MARKHAM @ GARLAND (line – MUSTANGS by 1)

The North Stars traded away their most dangerous defensive asset at the trade deadline and now look like the Markham we all know and love to ridicule. Their top offensive player, DeAngelo Williams is still out due to injury and sparkplug Darren Sproles is gone. They already have the lowest rated offence, so where can they go from here? The Mustangs have issues with their defence but that is as much due to how they use it as it is due to personnel and execution. Expect them to get a boost of undeserved confidence shutting down the harmless Markham assault team. Matt Ryan is doubtful, but Wes Welker is back and Kevin Kolb is no downgrade. The Mustangs will easily earn their first win and beat the spread. **Pick: GARLAND**

PICKERING @ RINGGOLD (line – SPARTANS by 4)

The Spartans continue to upgrade their tool box for the tough job of winning the Championship. Jason Taylor is a key acquisition because he gives the Spartans a pass rush threat from a spot where they had lacked it. They head into Ringgold fully healthy and ready to inflict vengeance on the Hawks for their Week Four loss to Florida. The Spartan camp may be experiencing a bout of dissension – insiders say Brett Favre is questioning the coach and practices are tense. The Crimson Hawks are also healthy, but based on the performance of their offence in the past two games; they may be crippled silently by mental flashbacks to 2009. No time to panic if you are a fan of the crimson, brass and pewter – those drops-offs in production occurred against two great defences in Florida and Durham. But should you be concerned? Yes. Big Ben needs a big game here and Maurice Jones-Drew needs to go back to the MVP form he displayed in the first three weeks if Ringgold stands a hope of upsetting an angry Brett Favre out to prove that this is *his* team. **Pick: PICKERING**