

2014



EFL NEWS

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

2014

Week Ten

Week Ten

December 21, 2014



MAR	27	VIR	37	SEB	17	MOH	24	CAR	28	COW	31	AUR	19	SCB	37	MVM	27	SC	27
CHP	17	SBE	16	TCT	24	DTL	44	YOR	29	ICC	33	CHI	13	PIC	45	GWG	24	LAK	10

Golden Boldin!



Anquan Boldin dodges Chino corner *Jeremy Lane* on his way to a 41-yard TD catch in OT as the Mustangs held on to their perfect record with a 19-13 victory. (STORY INSIDE)

LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

- FANTASTIC FINISH IN YORK
- ANOTHER FANTASTIC FINISH IN IOWA
- YET ANOTHER FANTASTIC FINISH IN CHINO
- AND MUCH MORE.....

Also in this issue

- SPATS FEATURE, 'STUNNING FINALES,' 'THE LITTLE LIEUTENANT,' 'DO THE RUSSELL!'
- JIMMY THE GEEK
- THIS WEEK IN EFL HISTORY



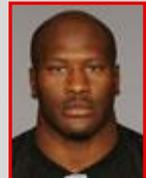
Who was slick in Week Ten?

"BRYLCREEM" THE EFL'S FIRST SPONSOR



Peyton Manning
QB
Pickering
Spartans

20 of 31, 328 yards, 6 TDs. Threw the Spartans to an improbable win.



James Harrison
OLB
Aurora
Mustangs

19 Tackles, 3 TFL, 2 PD, Near record day held AP in check.



10-0-0

Aurora

19



GAME OF THE WEEK

MVP

Anquan Boldin

13



7-3-0

Chino

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Ryan	35	59	398	1
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Forte	9	45	5.0	0
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Boldin	14	224	16.0	1

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Aurora	3	3	7	0	6	19
Chino	0	10	0	3	0	13

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Newton	19	38	130	1
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Peterson	25	88	3.5	0
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Woodhead	10	56	5.6	0

Play of the Game

Anquan Boldin snapped a punting duel in overtime by snaring a dart from **Matt Ryan** at the Chino sideline, shaking off a tackle and racing to the end zone for a 41-yard game-winning TD reception.

SUMMARY: The Mustangs converted 3 third downs in a 16-play opening drive that stalled inside the Chino red zone; **Julius Peppers** sacked **Matt Ryan** on 3rd down to set up a 42-yard **Nick Folk** FG to draw first blood. But the Convicts would find the end zone first after a 35-yard punt return by **Drki Archer** put them at mid-field. On a day when passing yards would be tough to earn for Chino, **Cam Newton** hit **Brian Hartline** for 17 yards to help set up a 7-yard TD pass to **Roddy White** to make it 7-3. **James Harrison** kept Chino's offence in check while the gritty Convicts' defence held the Mustangs to a FG before **Dan Bailey** made it 10-6 with a 48-yard FG before the half. A 45-yard pass to **Riley Cooper** got things going for the Mustangs in the 2nd half, setting up a 6-yard TD run by **Darrel Young** to give them a 13-10 lead. The game turned into a brutal defensive struggle until Aurora got moving again in the 4th quarter. But an end zone interception by Chino's **Ryan Shazier** held off the Aurora victory party. With time running out, Newton turned the Mustangs' defence around with a 47-yard bootleg that set up the game-tying FG with 1:01 left. In overtime, the teams each punted twice before **Anquan Boldin** took over; he secured a 17-yard hitch then got open down the sideline for a 41-yard game-winning TD catch.

QUOTES: "Anquan is our unsung hero this year. He makes it a lot easier to be a quarterback." – Aurora QB, **Matt Ryan**.
 "I'm proud of the way hung in there, especially on defence. That is a dominant team we faced today and we held our own. If good old Silverback doesn't make me pay for waiving him, maybe we take that game from them." – Chino coach, **Rob Nazar**, referring to former Convict, **James Harrison** and his 19 tackles.



HAPPY FAN



titter

ANGRY FAN



James Duthie @efljamesduthie
 The 'Stangs pass their first serious inter-conference test. D stays strong with JJ and "SB." AB saves day for offence.



Quentin San Pedro @QSP
 James Harrison will always be a Convict in my eyes. He was home today and expressing himself with violence against us.

12-19-2014 The Big House Temp: 80 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: **Anquan Boldin**

Scoring Summary

1 5:58	Aurora	FG Folk 42 (16-52-8:48)	3-0
2 12:41	Chino	TD Newton 7 pass to White (Bailey,D) (9-53-4:21)	3-7
2 5:27	Aurora	FG Folk 35 (13-63-7:11)	6-7
2 0:00	Chino	FG Bailey 48 (5-31-0:47)	6-10
3 9:46	Aurora	TD Young 6 run (Folk) (7-82-3:43)	13-10
4 1:01	Chino	FG Bailey 27 (13-70-3:39)	13-13
5 7:21	Aurora	TD Ryan 41 pass to Boldin	19-13

	AUR	CHI
First Downs	21	18
Rushes	16-69	35-165
Passes	59-35-398	38-19-130
Sacked	3-18	2-13
Fumble	0	0
Penalties	10-84	6-42
Turnovers	1	0
Missed Tackles	2	6
Blitzes	9	31
Time	36:28	31:11
Third Down	8-21	6-19
Fourth Down	0-0	1-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/1/2	2/1/1
Net Offense	449	282



EFL
ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

QUICK COUNTS!!

Blue 35, Blue 35, hut, hut hut! Red 23, 3, Red 23, 3, hut, hut, hut! Green 49, hut!



REGULATORS	7	17	0	3	0	27
6-4-0					OT	

Tony Romo
23 of 32, 244 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT



KNIGHTS	0	0	0	10	0	10
0-10-0						

Charles Woodson
5 Tackles, 2 PD, 1 INT TD

The Regulators set the tone early on both sides of the ball as **Tony Romo** connected with **Greg Jennings** for 15 yards and a TD on their opening drive and the defence held off LA's best offensive thrust of the day with a 4th down stand at their 35. **Derrick Johnson** intercepted Romo in the 2nd quarter, giving LA great field position, but **Tamba Hali** picked off **Mike Glennon** on the next play and returned it 69 yards to the LA 4 yard line to set up a TD plunge by Frank Gore to make it 14-0. From that point it was all Regs until a pick six by **Charles Woodson** in the 4th got the Knights on the board.



MONARCHS	3	7	0	14	3	27
3-7-0					OT	

Ryan Tannehill
26 of 39, 270 yards, 1 INT



GLADIATORS	7	7	7	3	0	24
2-8-0						

Ben Roethlisberger
21 of 35, 245 yards, 2 TDs

A 33-yard pick six by **Mychal Hendricks** got the Glads on the board then **Big Ben** connected on 3 straight passes for 64 yards, including a 25-yard TD strike to Jarvis Landry to make it 14-3 for Gwinnett early in the 2nd. The Monarchs hung close with a **DeMarco Murray** 7-yard TD run before half time, but a 6-yard TD pass to **Lance Moore** in the 3rd and a FG in the 4th made it 24-10 for Gwinnett. The Monarchs surged back late starting with a 100-yard kick return TD by **Josh Huff** followed by Murray's 2nd TD run to force overtime. **Dan Carpenter** put it away for the visitors with a 38-yard FG.



SLUGGS	10	14	10	3	0	37
7-3-0					OT	

Knowshon Moreno
19 Carries, 123 yards



SPARTANS	7	14	3	21	0	45
7-3-0						

Peyton Manning
20 of 31, 328 yards, 6 TDs, 1 INT

This full blown shootout saw the Spartans overcome two separate 10-point deficits and **Peyton Manning** go a perfect 3 of 3 for 113 yards and 2 TDs on 4th down. Trailing 10-0 in the 1st, Manning hit **Demaryius Thomas** for a 44-yard TD on 4th and 3 then eventually took a 21-17 lead on a 34-yard dump-off for a TD to **Chris Johnson**. After the Sluggs had ground their way back into a 34-24 lead behind the running of **Knowshon Moreno**, Manning struck in the 4th quarter with TD passes of 25 yards to **Pierre Garçon** and a 4th down hitch that Thomas took 65 yards to the house for the winning score.

Blue 35, Blue 35, hut, hut hut! Red 23, 3, Red 23, 3, hut, hut, hut! Green 49, hut!



CANNIBALS

9-1-0

3	0	3	22	0	28
OT					

Philip Rivers

22 of 34, 309 yards, 2 TDs



EXCALIBURS

5-5-0

7	6	7	9	0	29
OT					

Tom Brady

20 of 35, 329 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT

Back-up punt returner **Micah Hyde** scored the only major of the 1st half, returning a punt 89 yards to the house to fuel a 13-3 York half time lead. **Tom Brady** added to the lead with a short cross to **Kelvin Benjamin** that the rookie took 73 yards for a TD to make it 20-3 for York. Carthage suddenly exploded for 22 points on a pair of **Philip Rivers** TD passes of 42 and 46 yards to **Doug Baldwin** and **Josh Gordon** and 28-yard pick-six by **Rashad Johnson**. But a 52-yard TD pass to **Victor Cruz** followed by a successful onside kick and 31-yard **Blair Walsh** FG with 0:05 left handed Carthage its first loss.



CORN KINGS

6-4-0

7	3	14	7	0	31
OT					

Joe Flacco

27 of 41, 382 yards, 3 TDs



CUBS

6-4-0

6	3	10	14	0	33
OT					

Russell Wilson

23 of 29, 310 yards/2 running TDs

A tightly contested 1st half saw the Cubs settle for FGs while the Corn Kings notched a TD on a 9-yard pass from **Joe Flacco** to **Julius Thomas** to gain a narrow 10-9 edge. The teams scored on each of their possessions in the 3rd with the Corn Kings tallying 2 TDs to Iowa's 1 TD and 1 FG to take a 24-19 lead into the 4th. A 37-yard TD pass to **Larry Fitzgerald** gave Cowtown a 31-19 lead, but **CJ Spiller** scored from 4 yards to make it 31-26. **Russell Wilson** capped an 81-yard 2-minute drill with a 38-yard pass to a double-teamed **Mike Wallace** then ran it in from 1 yard for the win with 0:10 left.



HELLFIRE

1-9-0

7	10	7	0	0	24
OT					

Andrew Luck

29 of 50, 339 yards, 2 TDs



T-LIZARDS

6-4-0

7	17	14	6	0	44
OT					

Drew Brees

22 of 25, 344 yards, 3 TDs

A fumble by **Harry Douglas** at the Hellfire 12 set up a **Fred Jackson** 2-yard TD run for Durham that erased an early Hellfire lead. **Drew Brees** then connected on a 62-yard bomb to **Calvin Johnson** for a TD to put the Lizards in front 14-7. A 73-yard punt return TD by **Devin Hester** made it 24-10 for Durham but a 27-yard catch-and-run TD by **Robert Woods** on a dump-off from **Andrew Luck** to end the half kept Mohave close. Durham pulled away with 2 TDs in 2 possessions in the 3rd, an 8-yard slant to **TY Hilton** and a 66-yard bomb to **Megatron** for his 2nd TD. The Hellfire could not recover.

Blue 35, Blue 35, hut, hut hut! Red 23, 3, Red 23, 3, hut, hut, hut! Green 49, hut!



SWORDFISH

3-7-0

0	3	7	7	0	17
				OT	

Andy Dalton

24 of 41, 243 yards, 2 TDs



TRIUMPH

7-3-0

0	10	0	14	0	24
				OT	

Johnny Manziel

26 of 42, 314 yards, 3 TDs

Johnny Manziel hit **Antonio Brown** underneath for an 8-yard TD pass to open the scoring for the Triumph. A fumbled snap by **Andy Dalton** killed a Swordfish drive and Twin Cities added a FG off that turnover to build a 10-3 half time lead. The Swordfish tied it and took the lead on the strength of a 4th down stand at their 22 yard line and 2 TD passes, of 11 and 20 yards, to **Zac Stacy**. But Manziel found **Vincent Jackson** open down field for a 24-yard TD to even the score. He went 4 out of 5 for 60 yards on the next drive and notched the game-winner with a 15-yard TD pass to **Kendall Wright**.



NORTH STARS

5-5-0

7	7	7	6	0	27
				OT	

Alex Smith

16 of 20, 201 yards, 2 TDs



PATRIOTS

3-7-0

0	3	0	14	0	17
				OT	

Blake Bortles

20 of 39, 255 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT

A 4th down stop by the Stars on the Pats' opening series led to the opening score 4 plays later when **Alex Smith** hit **Jacoby Jones** for a 15-yard TD. The Markham offence fell silent until late in the 2nd quarter when Smith hooked up with a double-covered **Jordy Nelson** on a long cross for a 34-yard scoring play to make it 14-3 for Markham. **Donald Butler** picked off **Blake Bortles** in the 3rd to set up a 1-yard score by Smith on the QB sneak. Trailing 24-3 heading into the 4th, the Pats attempted to rally with a pair of TDs on passes to **Sammy Watkins** and **Jason Avant** but fell short in the end.



VIOLATORS

4-6-0

14	3	10	10	0	37
				OT	

Matt Stafford

18 of 37, 366 yards, 3 TDs, 2 INTs



BLUE EAGLES

3-7-0

3	3	0	10	0	16
				OT	

Terrelle Pryor

13 of 43, 95 yards, 1 INT

A penalty-assisted first possession by the Violators led to a 4-yard TD run by **Jamaal Charles** to give Virden an early 7-0 lead. Four Virden turnovers in the 1st half stifled their attack but led to just 2 Scarborough FGs, while **Torrey Smith** struck fast with an 80-yard catch-and-run for a TD to help build a 17-6 half time Virden lead. **Aqib Talib** forced a fumble that set up a FG then a roughing-the-kicker penalty on **Justin Tuck** kept a Virden drive alive long enough for **Matt Stafford** to find **Michael Floyd** for a 24-yard TD pass to give Virden an insurmountable 27-6 lead heading into the 4th.

WEEK TEN

STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Carthage	9	1	0	0.900	322	32.2	240	24	8.2	5 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
Twin Cities	7	3	0	0.700	233	23.3	201	20.1	3.2	3 2 0	3 1 0	5 1 0
Virden	4	6	0	0.400	297	29.7	273	27.3	2.4	3 2 0	0 4 0	1 5 0
Charleswood	3	7	0	0.300	181	18.1	275	27.5	-9.4	3 2 0	2 2 0	2 4 0
Mohave	1	9	0	0.100	231	23.1	316	31.6	-8.5	0 5 0	1 3 0	1 5 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Chino	7	3	0	0.700	246	24.6	210	21	3.6	4 1 0	3 1 0	4 2 0
Santa Clara	7	3	0	0.700	321	32.1	264	26.4	5.7	4 1 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
Iowa City	6	4	0	0.600	297	29.7	304	30.4	-0.7	3 2 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Mission Viejo	3	7	0	0.300	211	21.1	267	26.7	-5.6	2 3 0	1 3 0	2 4 0
Los Angeles	0	10	0	0.000	152	15.2	307	30.7	-15.5	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 6 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Pickering	7	3	0	0.700	287	28.7	220	22	6.7	4 1 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Cowtown	6	4	0	0.600	280	28	252	25.2	2.8	3 2 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Durham	6	4	0	0.600	303	30.3	238	23.8	6.5	4 1 0	3 1 0	4 2 0
Markham	5	5	0	0.500	208	20.8	192	19.2	1.6	3 2 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
York	5	5	0	0.500	201	20.1	210	21	-0.9	2 3 0	1 3 0	2 4 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Aurora	10	0	0	1.000	337	33.7	131	13.1	20.6	5 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
South Carolina	6	4	0	0.600	269	26.9	249	24.9	2	3 2 0	3 1 0	4 2 0
Scarborough	3	7	0	0.300	204	20.4	272	27.2	-6.8	0 5 0	1 3 0	2 4 0
Sebastian	3	7	0	0.300	220	22	299	29.9	-7.9	1 4 0	1 3 0	1 5 0
Gwinnett	2	8	0	0.200	198	19.8	278	27.8	-8	1 4 0	1 3 0	2 4 0

PASSING

#	Team	Team	Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Cutler	TCT	153	104	68.0	1200	4	2.6	42	15	9.8	113.2
2	Manning, P	PIC	313	203	64.9	2676	8	2.6	80	28	8.9	110.9
3	Brees	DTL	175	131	74.9	1512	4	2.3	66	10	5.7	110.0
4	Rivers, P	CAR	306	206	67.3	2872	9	2.9	75	20	6.5	106.8
5	Foles	DTL	164	98	59.8	1295	1	0.6	57	11	6.7	104.6
6	Wilson, R	ICC	312	215	68.9	2594	6	1.9	69	17	5.4	104.3
7	Newton, C	CHI	316	216	68.4	2158	3	0.9	47	17	5.4	101.5
8	Ryan, M	AUR	388	250	64.4	2816	7	1.8	76	25	6.4	100.0
9	Stafford, M	VV	335	208	62.1	3049	9	2.7	80	18	5.4	98.5
10	Smith, A	MAR	252	157	62.3	1609	2	0.8	48	15	6	97.1
11	Griffin II	SCB	288	178	61.8	2280	5	1.7	65	15	5.2	96.7
12	Flacco	COW	368	231	62.8	2897	13	3.5	80	24	6.5	94.2
13	Romo	SC	404	252	62.4	2586	7	1.7	71	21	5.2	90.8
14	Glennon	LAK	167	104	62.3	994	1	0.6	55	6	3.6	88.3
15	Luck	MOH	357	212	59.4	2578	9	2.5	77	15	4.2	85.2
16	Brady	YOR	288	164	56.9	2054	7	2.4	73	12	4.2	83.0
17	Dalton	SS	373	216	57.9	2326	6	1.6	74	14	3.8	82.1
18	Tannehill	MVM	319	192	60.2	2039	8	2.5	51	13	4.1	82.0
19	Roethlisberger	GWG	335	204	60.9	2232	11	3.3	63	14	4.2	80.8
20	Bortles	CHP	282	163	57.8	2009	10	3.5	72	13	4.6	80.5

RUSHING

#	Player	Team	Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Morris, A	COW	183	986	5.4	41	6
2	Johnson, C	PIC	206	965	4.7	35	3
3	Lacy	CAR	204	932	4.6	57	13
4	Charles ,J	VV	189	910	4.8	51	8
5	Lynch, M	YOR	193	901	4.7	48	7
6	Moreno	SCB	178	880	4.9	24	13
7	Spiller	ICC	144	848	5.9	55	4
8	McCoy, L	GWG	212	805	3.8	35	7
9	Gore	SC	148	699	4.7	56	8
10	Forte	AUR	165	695	4.2	55	11
11	Murray	MVM	160	685	4.3	62	8
12	Ivory	CHP	153	630	4.1	50	5
13	Bell, L	LAK	154	590	3.8	44	1
14	Peterson, A	CHI	138	581	4.2	31	6
15	Ellington	MAR	100	527	5.3	43	2
16	Ball, M	MOH	109	509	4.7	27	3
17	Jackson, F	DTL	108	498	4.6	20	10
18	Newton, C	CHI	63	472	7.5	55	3
19	Ridley	SCB	91	460	5.1	26	7
20	Mason, T	TCT	87	453	5.2	21	5

RECEIVING

#	Player	Team	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Brown, A	TCT	75	845	11.3	45	9
2	Green, A	SC	74	951	12.9	71	8
3	Bryant, D	VV	69	1152	16.7	50	9
4	Boldin	AUR	66	1152	17.5	76	14
5	Edelman	AUR	60	563	9.4	52	7
6	Johnson, A	SCB	59	714	12.1	40	1
7	Woodhead	CHI	59	502	8.5	35	4
8	Graham, J	MOH	58	797	13.7	65	5
9	Wright, K	TCT	57	528	9.3	35	5
10	Garcon	PIC	56	727	13	71	12
11	Wallace, M	ICC	55	890	16.2	69	8
12	Jackson, V	TCT	55	945	17.2	42	7
13	Douglas, H	MOH	53	605	11.4	39	4
14	Jackson, D	SBE	52	802	15.4	60	7
15	Olsen	CHI	52	456	8.8	36	3
16	Fitzgerald	COW	51	739	14.5	80	8
17	Williams, T	CHP	49	727	14.8	72	4
18	Thomas, D	PIC	48	881	18.4	80	9
19	Jeffery	SCB	48	768	16	65	9
20	Rice, R	SBE	47	377	8	22	0

KICKING

#	Player	Team	FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts
1	Zuerlein	ICC	27	25	92.6	9	3	51	105
2	Crosby	VV	25	22	88	8	3	54	97
3	Folk	AUR	20	17	85	11	5	55	91
4	Hauschka	CAR	21	17	81	8	2	53	88
5	Prater	MOH	25	22	88	5	2	56	87
6	Dawson	DTL	15	15	100	4	2	57	81
7	Henery	SCB	16	14	87.5	5	1	50	81
8	Novak	COW	18	16	88.9	5	1	56	78
9	Bailey, D	CHI	23	17	73.9	9	1	52	78
10	Feely	SBE	24	19	79.2	4	0	49	78
11	Tucker, J	SC	21	15	71.4	6	2	54	77
12	Vinatieri	SS	19	17	89.5	5	2	54	74
13	Brown, J	MAR	18	16	88.9	8	4	53	70
14	Walsh	YOR	20	14	70	4	2	54	63
15	Carpenter	MVM	15	12	80	1	0	44	61
16	Gostkowski	TCT	11	11	100	5	0	49	59
17	Suisham	GWG	10	10	100	3	0	45	54
18	Bironas	CHP	11	9	81.8	4	0	49	49
19	Janikowski	PIC	5	4	80	0	0	38	47
20	Lindell	LAK	11	9	81.8	4	1	59	44



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad



NEW YORK – Christmas is upon us once again and I feel like it was less than a year ago that I was in this same position – three days until Santa comes and my Christmas shopping about 5% done. Procrastination is not a new failing of mine but it certainly feels like I have less time for that these days, making it less of a problem through no self-disciplinary effort on my part.

I am not the only one who feels like time is going faster. My barber of 18 years, Joe (an old immigrant from Bologna who has been in America most of his life but who still speaks English with an almost indecipherable Italian accent) feels the same way: “It eez ‘cuz we get olt, Spats. You slow down ass you geet olt.” In Joe’s view of accelerating time, time is moving along at the same pace but it is just taking him longer to do things, making it seem as if there is not enough time in the day. I’m not sure about Joe’s theory – he certainly seems to cut my hair and push me out the door as quickly as he ever did (or maybe that’s just my own feeling of accelerating time kicking in).

I recently met up with an old college buddy named Thiery (yes, Thiery), who I had not seen in many years. We agreed that it felt like only yesterday that we had been rejected as pledges for the *Manticore Society* at Cornell for showing up already drunk for a binge-drinking hazing ritual involving the forced chugging of randomly-selected pitchers of Belgian ‘Dubbel’ Beer and urine drawn from senior members of the fraternity – as if anybody could tell the difference! As a philosophy major he postulated a theory that as the milestones of one’s life pass (puberty, first drink, first legal drink, first kiss, first penetration, etc) there are fewer things to experience for the first time and more things to look back on. This makes daily life a “blur” and the distant past more vivid, leading to the feeling that time is flying by. In other words, life is meaningless and boring for people who live in the past and don’t challenge themselves in the present, making the days drag on and the years fly by.

But what about the people who attempt to live life to the fullest but who can’t find the time to live it as fully as they would like because time is flying by? My favourite doe-eyed waitress, Pren, jumped all over this topic when I light-heartedly mentioned that it just seemed like yesterday that I had met her and discovered this great bar, *The Foxes Den*, where she worked (in fact it had been 3 days before). “Oh, this means you are quickening your spiritual vibration, Robert,” she said excitedly, using the name I had inadvertently used by means of introduction. In Pren’s new age world spiritual growth was accompanied by a shortening of temporal, or linear, time. As she explained the concepts in more detail I nodded and smiled enough that, by the end of her explanation, she considered me to be spiritually advanced enough to slip me the occasional freebie glass.

According to my geeky genius nephew, Byron, time is indeed speeding up, but he does not connect my holiday disorganization to that phenomenon: “You’re like this every year, Uncle Spats; you’re just looking for a new excuse. By coincidence, though, the Schuman Resonance of the Earth, which is connected to your heartbeat, was measured last month at 12 cycles per second, which is a 54% increase since 1980 when it began to rise after thousands of years of stability. Once it reaches 13 the Earth will stop rotating on its axis, the magnetic poles will flip, and most of us will die in the natural cataclysm that follows. The good news, Uncle, is that you won’t have to worry about Christmas shopping when that happens.”

Byron’s explanation, whether it had been meant to scare me or not, had the effect of putting the Christmas season in perspective for me: you just never know when it will all end. So whether time is really speeding up, or you just *think* it is, slow down enough to enjoy the view, smile at a stranger, and touch the ones you love – that’s what Christmas is all about.

STUNNING FINALES

I am postponing my ‘Parkpourri’ tour for a week to review some of the incredible finishes in the Week 10 slate of games. While time on Earth may be speeding up, time in the EFL seems to be slowing down in the 4th quarter – a period that, it seems, is becoming quite distinct from the first three and intensely action-packed in more and more games this year.

We start at Camelot, in York, where the Excaliburs had the Cannibals on their knees after three quarters, with a 20-6 lead, and appeared ready to deliver a swift and sure death-blow to their perfect season. The rain had been unkind to the running game for both sides over 3 quarters of play, but particularly to Carthage running back **Eddie Lacy**, who had grunted his way to a mere 10 yards on 13 torturous carries before having his hand stepped on in the 3rd quarter, knocking him out of the game. **LeGarrette Blount** had more success gaining his footing on the soggy track but it became apparent, after the Cannibals dragged out a 7-minute drive that yielded just a field goal (to make it 20-9 early in the fourth quarter), that they were not going to overcome a two-score deficit by running the ball under these conditions.

The momentum shifted suddenly in favour of Carthage when **Karl Klug** blocked a **Donnie Jones** punt after a second straight three-and-out by the York offence. Despite York deploying 6 and 7 defensive backs to stop the pass, **Philip Rivers** coolly found **Doug Baldwin** open on a deep curl route for a 42-yard touchdown pass. With their lead down to 5 points, a nervous York counter-attack stalled near mid-field, bringing on the punting unit. Jones made up for his previous block by dropping a kick on the Carthage 4 yard line. But it would make no difference to a suddenly re-charged Rivers. After grinding out some room with the running game and sneaking across the line of gain on 4th and inches, Rivers found Blount for a 15-yard completion then hit **Josh Gordon** in stride over the middle for a 46-yard touchdown. After missing the 2-point convert Carthage held a 21 -20 lead that they soon added to when safety **Rashad Johnson** jumped the route on a short out pass from **Tom Brady** and ran it back 28 yards for a touchdown to make it 28-20 for the Cannibals with just 3:16 left in the game. It was a stunning collapse for the home team and it looked almost certain at that moment that the Cannibals' perfect season would survive the weather at York.

With **Jay Hammond** gesticulating madly on the sidelines and Brady looking startled then confused as the York playbook whistled by his right ear after being hurled at



Interim Banana Sluggs' coach **Ryan Rich** poses for the cameras before his Week 10 debut against the Pickering Spartans. Rich was commissioned Lieutenant for the game, replacing a PTSD-stricken **Major Gerow**, who was permanently relieved of his duties.

him by his furious coach, the mood on the York bench looked anything but inspiring. But the fourth quarter frenzy was not over by a long shot. A third-down sack by **Lavonte David** put York at the edge of a 4th-and-11 precipice. But the cool Brady proved his worth on the next play, finding **Kelvin Benjamin** open for a 16-yard gain and new life. Three plays later he connected with **Victor Cruz** across the middle for a 52-yard touchdown and a chance to tie the game with 1:15 left. But **Donte Whitner** hammered **Giovanni Bernard** in the end zone to knock the ball loose on the 2-point convert attempt to keep the score at 28-26, causing an enraged Hammond to literally faint with rage at what looked like a non-call of pass interference.

When he woke from his fit a few minutes later, he was stunned to discover that **Marcus Easley** had recovered the onside kick for his team. The Cannibals' defence was now on its heels and Brady took advantage, connecting on passes of 10 and 16 yards to Benjamin and 14 yards to Cruz to pull well within the range of **Blair Walsh** with 8 seconds left. The York kicker made no mistake from 31 yards, turning the frantic fourth into a 29-28 fairy tale ending, or a tragedy, depending on your point of view.

THE LITTLE LIEUTENANT

With Major **Cooper Gerow** on "permanent administrative leave" from the Banana Sluggs after going AWOL for the team's Week Nine tilt against Scarborough, **General Brathwaite Supernaw**, Commander of 'Operation Rעדעד' realized that the stress of handling a **Chris Worthley**-built team far exceeded anticipated levels. He needed someone with experience to step in right away and take control of the Sluggs for the critical Week Ten match-up with the Pickering Spartans while he and his advisors figured out a more permanent coaching solution.

Coincidentally, General Supernaw happens to be a golfing buddy of **Richard Rich**, the world's richest man. Rich is known in these pages as the father of **Ryan Rich**, the richest boy in the world, but he is also reportedly a generous private donor to the Pentagon's missile defence and chemical warfare programs under the Democracy Fund military charity.

Aware that Richard's son holds the world record for youngest person to ever coach a team in a professional football game, Supernaw dialed up Rich and made arrangements for Ryan to fly into Pickering and coach the Spartans: a job the young lad was more than eager to undertake for the relatively cheap fee of all expenses paid and an unlimited supply of vanilla milkshakes,

'Skittles' and cheese Doritos during his time with the team.

Ryan Rich was flown in to the Sluggs' training facility in Santa Clara with only 4 days to prepare a game plan. To his dismay, he found a team not very interested in listening to a 12-year old kid, even one wearing military style fatigues and holding a special Presidential Commission for the rank of Lieutenant of Special Ops – Football Division. **Robert Mathis** was running the defence while the defensive coordinator hid inside his office. **RGIII** was in charge of the offence and claimed to have a "thousand" plays inside his head. With Marine Sergeant-Major **Cliff "Buzz" Cudgel** at his side to enforce discipline, Rich tried to install a basic version of his 'KLaw' system in time to face the Spartans. According to Santa Clara insiders, the system was never fully implemented due to friction between young Ryan and quarterback **RGIII**, who apparently thought the whole thing was a big joke. What turned out to be a joke was how **RGIII** and the big names on the Banana Sluggs' defence played in a game that was theirs for the taking, but ended up being taken away from them by the savviest of veteran quarterbacks.

However, the locker room dysfunction that plagued the Banana Sluggs during the week before the game was not obvious to fans during the game itself. The Spartans and Sluggs played vigorously and put on an impressive show. The lead exchanged hands four times but the Sluggs held the advantage for a cumulative 47 minutes compared with just 7 minutes for the Spartans, giving the impression throughout that they were winning the game and **Peyton Manning** was always coming from behind. It was during this seemingly interminable period of being in front that Santa Clara failed repeatedly to put the game away despite plenty of opportunities with the Spartans gambling heavily on both offence and defence.

Ryan Rich was as about as stoic as a 12-year old could be while watching his quarterback ad lib in critical situations instead of sticking to the play call. But with Santa Clara in front 31-24 late in the third quarter, when **Robert Griffin** failed to pull the trigger in time on yet another carefully prepared play action pass on a critical 3rd down play with the Spartans committed to stopping the run, Ryan completely lost his cool on the sideline. In plain view of the cameras and within earshot of the microphones, he stomped his foot, tore off his headset, and bawled: "*Stupid RGIII, you are so crap!*" While **Matt Flynn** struggled to conceal a smile, the rest of the team and the coaching staff looked aghast at their tiny coach. But Ryan, tears streaming down his face, looked right back at them and defiantly shouted, "Well it's true! He's *crap!*"

*Out of the mouths of babes....*the saying goes. While no coach should ever say something like that in public about his quarterback, let alone a first round pick, it may be that some day we might look back on those words and see that the intemperate boy showed wisdom beyond his years. While raw talent seemed to ooze from **RGIII** with every move he made on the field, he still frittered away his chances with baffling indecision here, and premature action there – like a Ferrari spinning its wheels in the mud.

On the other side, the Master Manning never failed to capitalize on the most momentary lapse by his opponent. And, if no lapse was forthcoming, he made the play anyway. Apart from a first-quarter interception thrown under pressure, Peyton successfully took what the Sluggs' defence gave him – which was not very much usually – and made the most of it. Showing that his balls are as hard as brass, Pickering coach **Gus Konstantakos** kept his offence on the field for three crucial 4th down situations. In two of those situations the moves were genius born of madness. Trailing 34-31 with 4:00 remaining in the game and facing 4th and 2 at his own 11, the Spartans insanely went for it. With all of his receivers covered Manning dumped off to **Chris Johnson** in the flat. The running back fell forward for a 4-yard gain and a 1st down to stave off disaster. Six plays later, facing 4th and 6 at his 35 with 2:19 left, Gus put his faith in Manning again and Peyton delivered big time. This time he put the ball in the hands of his favourite target, **Demaryius Thomas**, and the stud receiver shed off two tacklers to sprint 65 yards for a touchdown and a 38-34 Spartans lead; one that they would not relinquish.

There was no similar comeback magic in the arm or the feet of **RGIII**. A four-and-out was all he had in him. The Spartans delivered the mortal blow two plays later when Manning connected with **Pierre Garçon** for a 20-yard scoring strike to make it 45-34. The rest of the game played out with a herky-jerky attempt at a miracle rally by the Sluggs yielding a field goal then a desperate, but failed, onside kick attempt to make the final score, Pickering 45, Santa Clara 37. **RGIII**, while not exactly "crap," was no match on this day for **Peyton Manning**. But will this outcome be the final word on this rivalry? Who knows, **RGIII** may yet get another chance this year to prove his little critic wrong.

SILVERBACK'S REVENGE

With their perfect record on the line, the Mustangs found themselves locked in an old-fashioned defensive struggle at the Big House in Chino with the outcome turning on the performances of two players.

Perhaps inspired by his old digs, or simply mad as hell at Chino coach **Rob Nazar** for releasing him, Aurora's **James Harrison**, "Silverback," put on a tackling clinic and, in the process, held All Pro running back **Adrian Peterson** in check on a day when the league's top team looked ripe for an upset. Harrison had 19 tackles, (one shy of the EFL record set by **Zach Thomas** of Winnemucca back in 2008), including 3 tackles for loss. Just to show that he can do it all, he added 2 passes defended to also frustrate **Cam Newton**.

The Convicts' ageing Lockdown Crew was not exactly in the "lockdown" form of past seasons, but they certainly kept the Mustangs from roaming freely on the field. While **Rich Liotta's** crew moved the ball well, in four trips to the Chino red zone they found the end zone just once, and twice settled for field goals. On the fourth trip, with a chance to put the game away in the 4th quarter, **Matt Ryan** was intercepted by **Ryan Shazier** in the end zone. That stop enabled the Convicts to stay close, eventually

tie the game at 13, and send it into overtime. But overtime is when an Aurora player who had been a thorn in the Convicts' side all day turned into a dagger in their hearts.

Anquan Boldin put up league season-high numbers with 14 receptions for 224 yards and scored the game-winning touchdown with a 41-yard catch in overtime. On a day when the Chino defence acquitted itself well overall, Boldin found success not just because he is good but also because the Convicts showed little interest in stopping him.

Severin Handfottner Jr. of 'Coaches Call' wrote an interesting little piece on this game and made the following observations that I reprint here: "*Chino refused to budge far from their base nickel and dime formations. They played a lot of zone defence and never tried to take Boldin out of the game by doubling him or assigning Alterraun Verner to stick to him like glue. Boldin was targeted 22 times, but only twice was Verner the cover man. Against zone coverage, Boldin caught 9 of 13 for 160 yards and one TD; against man coverage he was a much less impressive 5 of 9 for 64 yards.*"

I might add to Handfottner's analysis that the Mustangs spread the field a lot with 3 and 4-wide receiver sets and that **Matt Ryan** attempted a league season-high 59 passes. It's not being talked about elsewhere, but the fact that the Mustangs came into the Big House with guns blazing and scored only 19 points would make me concerned if I were a horse-lover.

DO THE RUSSELL!

At Joe Ferguson Stadium in Iowa, the Corn Kings and Cubs both had their share of offensive highlights to amaze their fans. But the ultimate highlight reel in this game was the performance of **Russell Wilson** in the clutch and the fan celebration that followed.

Wilson is making **Deron Redding** look like a genius. The Cubs' QB is coming into his own in this, his third season as a starter, drawing rave reviews for his competitiveness and smarts when the game is on the line. This week he stunned the Corn Kings with a gritty 4th quarter performance in which he and **CJ Spiller** methodically dismantled the Cowtown defence to overcome an 11-point deficit and emerge with a 33-31 victory to raise the Cubs' record to 6-4.

This was a hard-fought, close game for the better part of three quarters until a pair of back-to-back touchdowns by the Corn Kings put the visitors apparently in the driver's seat with a 31-19 lead early in the fourth quarter. But appearances can be deceiving, and they were in this case. The Cubs pounded the ground 10 times with Spiller and **Darren Sproles** over an 80-yard touchdown drive, meeting token resistance from Cowtown on the way, to narrow the deficit to 31-26. But the Corn Kings came back on the attack and looked poised to run out the clock until a third down sack of **Joe Flacco** by **Mario Williams** forced a punt and set the stage for Wilson with 2:12 left in the game. The Cubs' QB came alive as if he had been waiting all day for the moment when the game would be on the line. He completed 3 passes on the drive for 59 yards, all into double-coverage, to set up his own 1-yard touchdown run for the win. Cubs fans did more than roar their approval, they started dancing to a familiar tune first made popular in the 70s by Van McCoy and the Soul City Symphony – they poured into the aisles to do 'The Russell.'

'The Russell' is a dance that involves a lot of running around in circles interspersed with throwing, tucking and leaping motions. It is crazy to watch, but so is the quarterback for whom it is named. The YouTube contests are already beginning.

AROUND THE EFL

At TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, **Johnny Manziel** prevailed in his fifth and hopefully final start in place of **Jay Cutler**, vanquishing the Swordfish 24-17 with 314 yards passing and 3 touchdown passes. Swordfish coach **Russ Lemmon** must have seen something on film that made him worried about Triumph running back **Tre Mason**. Or perhaps he mistakenly thought that **Doug Martin** was back from injury. Whatever the reason might be, Lemmon seemed inordinately pre-occupied with the rookie running back and subsequently paid a price for that attention. When Sebastian played the run and keyed on Mason, Manziel was 6 of 6 for 83 yards and 2 TDs. Can you say, *difference in the game?*

Seven penalties for 54 yards, 8 missed tackles, errant throws by **Big Ben**, and an unforgiveable lapse in special teams coverage combined to tip the balance away from the home town Gladiators in favour of the visitors as the Monarchs topped Gwinnett 27-24 in overtime. **Josh Huff** made the most of a rare opportunity, returning a kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown to spark a 14-point 4th quarter rally by Mission Viejo. **DeMarco Murray** sent the game into overtime with a plunge into the end zone from the 1-centimeter line to set up a rare *dramatic moment* for the Monarchs – an overtime 38-yard field goal by **Dan Carpenter** for the win.

Week by week the Violators are dragging themselves back into the playoff race kicking and screaming. Despite an exemplary effort to give the game away to the basket case Blue Eagles, Virden's natural talent carried the day against the incompetent leadership of Scarborough quarterback **Terrelle Pryor** and his demoralized supporting cast. **Torrey Smith** featured in the game's big highlight with an 80-yard touchdown catch to lead Virden to a 37-16 win.

At Patriot Place in Charleswood a bold attempt by the Pats to seize the initiative with a 4th down gamble at their 41 on their opening possession fell flat, leading to an early Markham touchdown and a ticket to boredom for most of the game. **Alex Smith** and **Jordy Nelson** hooked up for a 34-yard touchdown pass to end Markham's big play drought and lead them to a 27-17 win.

At Jurassic Park in Durham, Coach **George Kaldis** announced that he would continue as head coach of the Thunder Lizards after beating Mohave 44-24. At the same press conference, **Calvin Johnson** announced that he was ready to be admired again after hauling in bombs of 62 and 66 yards for touchdowns: unfamiliar numbers in an off-year.

Finally, at Round Table Stadium in LA, the Knights' defence served reminders that they are pretty good while their offence demonstrated that it did not matter to the bottom line how good the defence is because the offence is very bad. **Tamba Hali** intercepted **Mike Glennon** and ran it back 69 yards to set up the winning touchdown in a 27-10 South Carolina triumph.

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JIMMY'S WEEK ELEVEN PICKS

CHARLESWOOD @ MISSION VIEJO (line – MONARCHS by 6)

INJURIES: Charleswood – Michael Crabtree (OUT), Jerod Mayo (OUT), Anthony Spencer (OUT), Vince Wilfork (OUT); Mission Viejo – Cody Latimer (DOUBTFUL), Brandon Browner (OUT), Brian Cushing (OUT), Mike James (OUT), Russell Okung (OUT), Kenbrell Thompkins (OUT), Mike Williams (OUT).

Although neither team is eliminated yet from post-season play, it is hard to escape the conclusion that this game is steeped in irrelevance as far as the playoff picture is concerned. Whether the coaches will admit it or not, this contest is about positioning for the off-season and the 2015 draft. As far as that goes, the Pats have more building to do and could use the higher pick, but the Monarchs are also in dire need of a talent upgrade, especially at wide receiver and in the secondary, where poor safety play has put them last in the league in average yards-per-pass-attempt surrendered. If the Pats have any strength advantage relative to the Monarchs, it is at wide receiver, where they have a playmaker in Sammy Watkins and a sneaky deep threat in Terrance Williams. But as the game film piles up on Blake Bortles, his results on the field have steadily dropped. Ryan Tannehill at home is a more attractive pick, even with the points. **PICK: MISSION VIEJO**

LOS ANGELES @ VIRDEN (line – VIOLATORS by 14)

INJURIES: Los Angeles – Cortland Finnegan (OUT), Garrett Graham (OUT), Kenny Vaccaro (OUT); Virden – Mark Ingram (PROBABLE), Nick Perry (DOUBTFUL), Melvin Ingram (OUT), Justin Blackmon (OUT), Julio Jones (OUT).

The 4-6 Violators are ranked 5th in the ESPN Power Rankings, ahead of three PAC front-runners in the standings. That is just one telling fact about the league's apparently most unlucky team. The other telling fact is that Virden has turned the ball over 19 times, second worst in the league, and taken it away from opponents just 8 times. That fact goes a long way to explaining how they, with the most efficient offence in the league and a middling performing defence, have lost 6 games already. But the Violators are turning it around and have a three-game win streak under their belts. There is no reason to believe that, with the winless Knights coming to town, it won't be four games after this week. The question is, as usual, the spread, which is a little light considering the disparity in talent and the home field advantage for Virden. The Knights have taken the ball away from their opponents 18 times, good for second in the league. I'm not saying they stand a chance to win, but if Virden plays loose with the football like they did last week against the Blue Eagles, they might have trouble pulling away. Or they might just blow the Knights out anyway. **PICK: VIRDEN**

TWIN CITIES @ CHINO (line – CONVICTS by 3)

INJURIES: Twin Cities – Doug Martin (OUT), Henry Melton (OUT), Shane Vereen (OUT); Chino – Jahri Evans (QUESTIONABLE), Phil Loadholt (DOUBTFUL), James Jones (OUT).

Jay Cutler is healthy again, bringing the Manziel-era in Twin Cities to an end for now. It was an exciting ride with Johnny Football at the controls, but one that most Triumph fans are glad is over now that the team is entering the stretch. The question that is eagerly waiting answering is which Jay Cutler will emerge from rehab – the one who still leads the league in passer rating and averaged 3 touchdown passes per game over the first third of the season, or the impetuous one of seasons past capable of really bad stretches when overwhelmed by a childish pout. The Convicts are quite familiar with Cutler's bad stretches, leaving him unprotected in the expansion draft that saw the Triumph make him the number one pick. But they also saw firsthand what he could do to defences

with that golden arm and they must respect the receivers on the other end of the pass. So far the Convicts have managed to slow down most of their opponents to their speed, bending but not breaking on D and controlling the ball on offence with a versatile running game led by Adrian Peterson and Cam Newton. But now they face a high-powered attack with no viable running threat; meaning there will be no bending when Twin Cities has the ball, just breaking one way or the other. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

MOHAVE @ IOWA CITY (line – CUBS by 12)

INJURIES: Mohave – Dwayne Gratz (OUT), Chris Houston (OUT), Justin Houston (OUT), Bruce Irvin (OUT), Amini Silatolu (OUT); **Iowa City** – Stephon Gilmore (OUT), Xavier Rhodes (OUT).

The Hellfire have been in almost uninterrupted freefall since the season started while the Cubs are surging with the inspired play of quarterback Russell Wilson. This is a big line but an attractive one given the Cubs current hot streak and the general ineptness of Mohave. But not everything is going the Cubs' way these days. Hidden behind the glittering play of the leagues most dynamic quarterback and the exciting backfield combo of CJ Spiller and Darren Sproles is the unequivocally worst pass defence in the league. If Andrew Luck can't get it going against the ramshackle Cubs' secondary then there is no hope for him in Mohave. I'm not projecting an upset here, but when teams feed off the energy of a shootout they play above their heads. **PICK: MOHAVE**

CARTHAGE @ SANTA CLARA (line – CANNIBALS by 1)

INJURIES: Carthage – Eddie Lacy (OUT), Kyle Rudolph (OUT), Harrison Smith (OUT), Earl Wolff (OUT); **Santa Clara** – Randall Cobb (OUT), Alfonzo Dennard (OUT), Rob Gronkowski (OUT), Clay Matthews (OUT), Louis Nix III (OUT).

York broke the seal on the Cannibals' perfect season last week and, when seals get broken, leaking can occur. Both teams are coming off dispiriting losses in which their defences were made to look foolish by a couple of veteran quarterbacks with hall-of-fame pedigree. The good news for those defences is that neither will have to face a quarterback of quite such calibre this week. While Philip Rivers is enjoying one of his best seasons, he has yet to prove that he can consistently carry the Cannibals on his back without the threat of Eddie Lacy to keep linebackers honest. This week he will get his chance to prove it with Lacy out and LeGarrette Blount literally all by himself as the only option in the backfield. RGIII is proving good enough to get a powerhouse team into playoff position, but his questionable leadership is causing concern. The Sluggs are the stronger team on paper and they are at home. I don't see them winning over skeptics here, but I can't see them losing either. **PICK: SANTA CLARA**

MARKHAM @ SCARBOROUGH (line – BLUE EAGLES by 1)

INJURIES: Markham – Anthony Fasano (OUT), Jordan Reed (OUT); **Scarborough** – Kroy Biermann (OUT), Nate Burleson (OUT), King Dunlap (OUT), Aaron Rodgers (OUT), Charles Sims (OUT), D.J. Williams (OUT).

There is less to like about Terrelle Pryor with each week that he subs for a sidelined Aaron Rodgers. Sure he can run like a running back, but he also passes like a running back. The Blue Eagles took the ball away from the Violators 5 times last week and still could not avoid a blowout loss because Pryor completed only 13 passes in 43 attempts. If his play does not improve significantly this week the Eagles stand no chance against a slow-and-steady Markham team that doesn't make many mistakes on either side of the ball and is not intimidated on the road. The North Stars can get back in the discussion for a playoff berth by pulling off a win here and there is no reason to expect otherwise. Forget the spread and take the "upset." **PICK: MARKHAM**

SEBASTIAN @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 13)

INJURIES: Sebastian – Wes Welker (PROBABLE); Leon Hall (OUT), Rahim Moore (OUT); **Durham** – Marquise Goodwin (OUT), Eugene Monroe (OUT).

With one sack in 6 games, no. 1 overall pick Jadeveon Clowney is not lighting up opposing quarterbacks at his projected pace. Without a dramatic pass rush contribution from the rookie sensation it is hard to picture the Swordfish limiting the Durham passing attack with Leon Hall and Rahim Moore still out with injury. While the Thunder Lizards have been underwhelming offensively when measured against the pundits' hype, they are still ranked 4th in the league in efficiency and in points scored. Regardless of who starts at quarterback for Durham, it could be a very long day for the Sebastian defence. **PICK: DURHAM**

PICKERING @ SOUTH CAROLINA (line – SPARTANS by 2)

INJURIES: Pickering – Craig Stevens (OUT), Charles Tillman (OUT); **South Carolina** – Sam Acho (OUT), Kyle Van Noy (OUT).

Coach Hal Corson is reportedly using the Vegas line favouring Pickering as bulletin board material in the Regulators' locker room. Taking the angle that no visitor should be favoured to "beat us in our own house," Corson is instilling a persecution complex in his players, hoping that they play more consistently with the backbone and obstinacy they displayed in losses to Durham and Iowa City. Pointing to performances in defeat as good examples might not be the best way to introduce a winning

culture to his organization, but if his team can recapture that feeling of impending loss and desire to overcome defeat *before* they fall behind, that might do the trick. The Spartans are well-deserved favourites here, notwithstanding Corson's umbrage. The team is on fire and Peyton Manning is proving his worth. With Demaryius Thomas roaming at will through opposing secondaries and Joe Haden and Troy Polamalu picking up their play of late, the Spartans appear equally equipped to prevail in a shootout or survive trench warfare. This won't be an easy win for the visitors, but it won't be by less than a field goal. **PICK: PICKERING**

COWTOWN @ AURORA (line – MUSTANGS by 12)

INJURIES: **Cowtown** – Brandon Flowers (DOUBTFUL), Ryan Clady (OUT); **Aurora** – Duane Brown (QUESTIONABLE).

At first glance this is a surprisingly big spread considering the Corn Kings come into the game ranked third overall in offence and seventh in defence. But a closer examination of the match-ups explains why most people in the know feel the Mustangs will maintain their perfect record without much of a fight. The Corn Kings have somehow managed to stay in the playoff race while burdened by a 1-2 takeaway/turnover ratio. Going up against the no. 1 turnover-generating team in the league, the Corn Kings cannot expect the bounces to go their way. Then there are the match-ups up front when the Corn Kings have the ball. JJ Watt is measuring coffins for left tackle Austin Howard and back-up Cyrus Kouandjio while NaVorro Bowman is reportedly practising knocking down effigies of Alfred Morris and ripping off the heads. On the other side, Mustangs' tackle Duane Brown is questionable, opening blitzing opportunities for Ryan Kerrigan, but Matt Ryan is not losing sleep over it. The Mustangs might not gallop away with this one, but a steady trot while the Kings stand still should be good enough to cover. **PICK: AURORA**

YORK @ GWINNETT (line – EXCALIBURS by 4)

INJURIES: **York** – Von Miller (QUESTIONABLE), Robert Geathers (OUT), Asante Samuel (OUT); **Gwinnett** – Lance Briggs (OUT), Tommy Kelly (OUT), Maurkice Pouncey (OUT), Reggie Wayne (OUT).

York is staggering back into the crowded North Division race after a dramatic last second win over Carthage last week. Geno Atkins is back and Von Miller is listed as questionable, making this the healthiest Excalibur defence to take the field since Week Two. Are things actually looking up for Jay Hammond and the Yorkies? It would certainly appear that way, but if the Swords are to prove worthy of a "dark horse" tag in the current mob rush towards the door to the playoffs in the Can-Am Conference they will have to beat teams like the Gladiators and overcome a red zone scoring glitch that is frustrating their modestly efficient offence. York is last in the league in red zone scoring and ranked 17th in red zone touchdown percentage. They average just 20 points per game in a division where offence rules. That is not going to get them far even if a newly healthy defence picks up its play in the coming weeks. For Gwinnett the torture continues as they play out the agonizing string with gamely fought losing performances that nobody gives them credit for because they are the Gladiators and have Ben Roethlisberger and LeSean McCoy to boost their image while their amateurish supporting cast toils incompetently in the background. **PICK: YORK**



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This Week in EFL History
With Professor Sterling Smitherman

FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – Week Eight in the 2008 EFL season witnessed both the powerhouse Florida Dragons and Charleswood Patriots rise to perfect 8-0 records. But while the Dragons sleep-walked to a 31-3 win over the helpless Winnemucca Outlaws, the Patriots struggled to subdue the unimpressive Anchorage Buccaneers by a score of 24-17. The opportunistic Bucs took an early 14-0 lead on a 97-yard kick return for a TD by Devin Hester and a 14-yard TD pass from Drew Brees to Kevin Curtis set up by an Adrian Peterson fumble. In the end, Peyton Manning led his team back from the edge with a 424-yard passing day and

3 TD passes to earn Offensive Player of the Week.

The Hellfire stayed close on the tail of the Dragons in the South Division, rising to 7-1 after knocking off the Spartans 27-23. Julian Peterson made 7 tackles and notched 3 sacks to earn Defensive Player of the Week honours.

At Tillman Field in Cowtown, mirror-image performances by the starting QBs made for an interesting finish as the Corn Kings upset Chino 19-17 to win their third straight. The "bad" Jay Cutler turned up for the Convicts, throwing 2 costly interceptions in the 1st half that put Cowtown in front 13-3. Jake Delhomme came on in relief of Cutler and got the Convicts back in front with a pair of TD passes in the 2nd half. After Chad Pennington was picked off twice in two possessions, Chris Redman came on in relief to lead the game-winning FG drive.

The Cubs continued to be the only PAC team worth following as they upended Kutztown 34-21 with a 28-point rally in the 2nd half led by back-up QB, Trent Edwards. At 6-2, the Cubs moved a game in front of Chino, their only real rival in the West Division. Meanwhile, the weakling Expansion Division went 0-4 and looked worse than the record doing it.