

2015

Week Eleven



EFL NEWS

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

2015

Week Eleven

December 21, 2015



MVM	27	TCT	38	CHI	17	BCR	30	ICC	36	SEB	17	PIC	50	SC	31	AUR	24	GWG	31
CAR	17	LAK	3	VIR	3	MOH	27	HP	13	DTL	42	SBE	27	MAR	19	COW	10	YOR	38

CUTS LIKE A SWORD!



De'Anthony Thomas

York return ace, *De'Anthony Thomas* cuts through a wall of Gladiators on his way to an 80-yard punt return TD in Week Eleven action vs Gwinnett. (Story Inside....)

LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

- BRADY OUTDUELS BIG BEN
- MUSTANGS ROLL OVER CORN KINGS
- BRES SHOOT FISH IN BARREL
- CUBS SHOCK PATS
- RGIII HOT AS HELLFIRE
- REGS TOP STARS
- CONVICTS SURVIVE COUSINS
- MONARCHS CHECK MARIOTA
- AND MORE.....

Also in this issue

- SPATS FEATURE, 'THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS,' 'SANTA CLAUS IS COMING,' & 'AROUND THE EFL.'
- JIMMY THE GEEK BREAKS DOWN THE PLAYOFF PICTURE
- THIS WEEK IN EFL HISTORY – WEEK ELEVEN OF 2009



*Who was slick
in Week
Eleven?*

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



Tom Brady
QB
York
Excaliburs

21 of 27, 320 yards, 3TDs. Near perfect QB rating in tough win.



Luke Kuechly
ILB
South Carolina
Regulators

8 Tackles, 1 PD 2 TFL, 1 INT. Had key pick early in win over Stars.



6-5-0



GAME OF THE WEEK



6-5-0

Gwinnett

31

MVP

Tom Brady

38

York

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Big Ben	28	45	375	3
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
McCoy	21	86	4.1	0
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Maclin	9	208	23.1	2

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Gwinnett	0	14	3	14	-	31
York	7	10	7	14	-	38

Play of the Game

With York holding a 17-14 lead, the Glads punted on their first possession of the 2nd half. A high, 53-yard punt from **Andy Lee** was returned by **De'Anthony Thomas** 80 yards for a TD.

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Brady	21	27	320	3
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Lynch	26	101	3.9	1
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Benjamin	6	133	22.2	2

SUMMARY: In the quest for a wildcard berth in the Can-Am Conference, every game counts. A feeling of playoff tension filled the air at Camelot for this cross-divisional match-up with post-season implications. The Swords took their shot early with an opening play bomb to **James Jones**, complete for 46 yards and a 1st down at the Glads' 34. A broken play check down from **Tom Brady** to **Marshawn Lynch** finished off the drive with a 28-yard TD play. **Blair Walsh** hit on a 54-yard FG to make it 10-0 before the Glads got on the board with a 10-yard slant to **Jarvis Landry** for a TD. The Swords came back hard with Brady hitting **Kelvin Benjamin** on a long slant for a 60-yard TD pass, but Gwinnett staved off early calamity with a **Mychal Kendricks** strip sack of Brady in the Gwinnett red zone to set up a counter-drive and 31-yard TD pass from **Ben Roethlisberger** to **Jeremy Maclin** to make it 17-14 for York at half time. The Glads' offence went 3-and-out to open the 2nd half and York turned it into 7 points the other way when returner **De'Anthony Thomas** slipped through a converging Gwinnett coverage team to return the punt all 80 yards for a 10-point lead. The Glads chipped away at that lead with a pair of FGs, but York put away the game with a 31-yard TD pass to Benjamin and a 3-yard TD run by Lynch.

QUOTES: "I will hand it to Tom Brady – he made a few beautiful throws that stabbed us in the vitals. That Thomas kid sure is all he is cracked up to be. It looked like we had him hemmed in on that punt return but he found a crack and slipped right through." – Gladiators' coach, **Dave Birdsall**.
 "I never doubted Tom even when you loudmouths in the media were yapping bad about him. I've never doubted Tom in his whole career....except for that time he said he could turn Juron Criner into a top ten receiver; I had my doubts about that and I was right." – York coach, **Jay Hammond**.

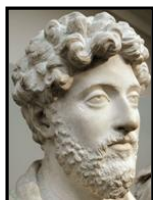


ANGRY FAN



titter

HAPPY FAN



Marcus Aurelius @MAXIV

They will deny the indictment, but the Gladiator defenders were not prepared to stop Tom Brady. They were prepared to stop Beast Mode.



I Am Fanicus @Fanicus5

Brady is unstoppable! Benjamin is unstoppable! Beast Mode is unstoppable! Our D stops ALL!

12-17-2015 Camelot Temp: 51 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: Tom Brady

Scoring Summary

1 12:48 York	TD Brady 28 pass to Lynch (Walsh) (4-80-2:04)	0-7
2 12:08 York	FG Walsh 54 (7-44-3:06)	0-10
2 6:39 Gwinnett	TD Roethlisberger 10 pass to Landry (Suisham) (9-76-5:24)	7-10
2 6:23 York	TD Brady 60 pass to Benjamin (Walsh) (1-60-0:16)	7-17
2 0:46 Gwinnett	TD Roethlisberger 31 pass to Maclin (Suisham) (9-73-2:06)	14-17
3 13:22 York	TD Thomas 80 punt return (Walsh)	14-24
3 10:15 Gwinnett	FG Suisham 45 (7-41-2:55)	17-24
4 13:59 Gwinnett	FG Suisham 42 (11-42-3:41)	20-24
4 9:05 York	TD Brady 31 pass to Benjamin (Walsh) (9-80-4:54)	20-31
4 6:50 Gwinnett	FG Suisham 34 (9-58-2:06)	23-31
4 1:56 York	TD Lynch 3 run (Walsh) (14-85-4:47)	23-38
4 1:24 Gwinnett	TD Roethlisberger 61 pass to Maclin (2 - Wayne) (2-61-0:2)	31-38

	GWG	YOR
First Downs	25	20
Rushes	25-110	31-125
Passes	45-28-375	27-21-320
Sacked	1-10	1-8
Fumble	3	1
Penalties	7-65	5-50
Turnovers	2	1
Missed Tackles	7	11
Blitzes	8	12
Time	31:19	28:41
Third Down	7-14	5-13
Fourth Down	1-1	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/1/1	2/1/0
Net Offense	475	437

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



MONARCHS

4-7-0

0	13	7	7	0	27
OT					

Ryan Tannehill
 24 of 31, 261 yards, 3 TDs



CANNIBALS

4-7-0

0	7	0	10	0	17
OT					

Eddie Lacy
 16 Carries, 100 yards

A scoreless 1st quarter gave way to a blast of fireworks in the 2nd as **Ryan Tannehill** connected for a 28-yard TD pass to **Dwayne Bowe** and a 43 yard TD pass to **Luke Willson** on back-to-back drives. The Cannibals replied with a 53-yard TD pass from **Marcus Mariota** to **Emmanuel Sanders** to make it 13-7 at half time. The Monarchs led off the 2nd half with a **Chris Ivory** 4-yard TD run, but Carthage got within a FG after a **David Hawthorne** fumble recovery set up a 1-yard Mariota TD run. The Monarchs made use of a short field, clinching on a TD pass after a missed 4th & 8 by the Cannibals.



CONVICTS

6-5-0

7	3	0	7	0	17
OT					

Greg Olsen
 12 Catches, 133 yards, 1 TD



VIOLATORS

0-11-0

0	0	3	0	0	3
OT					

Jamaal Charles
 19 Carries, 87 yards

Kirk Cousins went 5 of 5 for 74 yards, including a 16-yard TD pass to **Greg Olsen**, on a late 1st quarter drive that broke an early deadlock. The Cousins to Olsen combo gained 40 yards on 3 completions on Chino's next possession, setting up a 42-yard **Dan Bailey** FG to make it 10-0 at half time. Viriden stopped **DeMarco Murray** short on 4th and goal at the half-yard line and the Violators drove back 81 yards for a 36-yard **Mason Crosby** FG to get on the board. Chino finally put it away in the 4th when **Antoine Bethea** intercepted **Derek Carr** to set up a 45-yard TD pass on a long fly to **Malcom Floyd**.



RAVENS

7-3-1

3	14	10	3	0	30
OT					

RGIII
 29 of 41, 266 yards, 3 TDs, 1 INT



HELLFIRE

2-9-0

7	3	7	10	0	27
OT					

Tevin Coleman
 21 Carries, 117 yards, 1 TD

Aaron Williams picked off **RGIII** in Ravens territory to set up a 9-yard TD run by **Tevin Coleman** to make it 7-3, Mohave. After a Mohave FG made it 10-3, the Ravens put together two long TD drives on their next two series, scoring on an 8-yard pass to **DeAndre Hopkins** and a 7-yard pass to **Alshon Jeffery**. **Andrew Luck** was picked off by **Daryl Smith** to start the 2nd half, setting up a FG, but Luck came back and scrambled for a 4-yard TD to trail 20-17. **RGII** went 8 of 9 for 78 yards and a TD on Beaufort's next series to make it 27-17 then the teams traded FGs before a late Mohave TD in the 4th.



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!



CUBS

7-3-1

6	10	14	6	0	36
OT					

Jerick McKinnon
12 Carries, 151 yards, 2 TDs



PATRIOTS

10-1-0

0	0	0	13	0	13
OT					

Peyton Manning
23 of 36, 264 yards, 1 INT

An opening Iowa FG drive and a **Knile Davis** lost fumble on the ensuing kick return to set up two **Greg Zuerlein** FGs and a 6-0 Cubs lead. The Pats went three-and-out on their next two series then the Cubs found the end zone after a 32-yard draw by **Jerick McKinnon** set up a 1-yard TD run by **Russell Wilson**. The Pats wasted an **Aqib Talib** interception when **Peyton Manning** was sacked by **Mario Williams** on 4th & 1 at the Cubs 6. An interception and 56-yard return by **Casey Hayward** set up a 1-yard McKinnon TD run then a 71-yard TD run by McKinnon made it 30-0 Cubs in the 3rd quarter.



SWORDFISH

0-11-0

7	3	7	0	0	17
OT					

Odell Beckham Jr
7 Catches, 91 yards, 2 TDs



T-LIZARDS

10-1-0

7	14	14	7	0	42
OT					

Drew Brees
13 of 17, 216 yards, 6 TDs

The Swordfish scored first when **Andy Dalton** found **Odell Beckham Jr** for a 27-yard TD pass to cap an 80-yard opening drive. It was all Durham after that. **Darren McFadden** powered a TD drive with 7 carries for 61 yards to set up a 9-yard TD pass from **Drew Brees** to **Eric Decker** to tie it. Brees followed that with TD passes of 31 yards to **Josh Gordon** and 65 yards on a bomb to **TY Hilton** to lead 21-10 at half time. In the 2nd half, interceptions by **Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie**, **Devin McCourty** and **Tyrann Mathieu** set up three more Brees TD passes to make it 6 in total in just 13 completions.



SPARTANS

6-5-0

21	21	2	6	0	50
OT					

Matt Forte
29 Carries, 139 yards, 4 TDs



BLUE EAGLES

6-5-0

7	10	7	3	0	27
OT					

Aaron Rodgers
29 of 51, 333 yards, 2 TDs

Philip Rivers topped off the opening drive with a 28-yard TD pass to **DeMaryius Thomas** to trigger an avalanche of scoring for the visitors. **Mike Adams** forced an **Aaron Rodgers** fumble on Scarborough's first possession to set up the first of 4 **Matt Forte** TD runs on the day. Forte carried on the onslaught with 10 carries for 51 yards and a TD to make it 21-7 after 1 quarter. Rivers hit Thomas again for a 47-yard TD then found him for 30 yards on their next series to set Forte's 3rd TD run. Trailing 42-17 at half time, the Eagles could not rally against a Spartan defence in full 'prevent' mode.

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



MUSTANGS

10-1-0

0

14

0

10

0

OT

24

Arian Foster

147 rush yds, 70 rec yds, 2 TDs



CORN KINGS

5-6-0

0

7

3

0

0

10

Joe Flacco

18 of 38, 174 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT

A 49-yard end-around by **Jeremy Kerley** put the Kings at the Mustangs' 3, but an end zone interception by **Josh Norman** foiled the early scoring chance. Cowtown broke the deadlock with a 98-yard TD drive capped by a 6-yard TD pass from **Joe Flacco** to **Steve Smith Sr.** The Aurora offence woke up after that. **Matt Ryan** checked down to **Arian Foster**, who sliced through the 'D' for a 50-yard TD then found Andre Holmes for a 34-yard TD pass to make it 14-7 at half time. The teams traded FGs before a 91-yard Aurora TD drive, ending in a Foster 2-yard TD run, broke it open for the visitors.



TRIUMPH

8-3-0

7

14

7

10

0

OT

38

Jay Cutler

25 of 35, 291 yards, 3 TDs



KNIGHTS

4-7-0

0

0

3

0

0

3

Brandin Cooks

8 Catches, 78 yards

Nigel Bradham intercepted **Teddy Bridgewater** to set up a 6-yard TD pass from **Jay Cutler** to **Antonio Brown** to give the Triumph a 7-0 lead. **Da'Norris Searcy** picked off Bridgewater on LA's next series to set up a 2-yard Cutler TD run then **Tre Mason** broke a 32-yard sweep to set up Cutler's second TD pass to Brown to make it 21-0 Triumph by half time. **Mike Glennon** replaced Bridgewater at QB, but could not made headway against the Triumph defence. **Darius Slay** made a pick in the 3rd quarter to set up Cutler's 3rd TD pass and the Triumph ran out the clock with **Johnny Manziel**.



REGULATORS

5-6-0

14

10

0

7

0

OT

31

Tony Romo

24 of 32, 265 yards, 2 TDs



NORTH STARS

3-8-0

0

0

10

9

0

19

Eli McSmith

19 of 28, 309 yards, 2 TDs, 2 INTs

Joe Haden picked off **Eli Manning** on the game's first series to set up a 36-yard TD pass from **Tony Romo** to **Keenan Allen**. The Stars punted and the Regs came back with a 64-yard TD drive, finished off by Romo's 1-yard scramble. A Star's drive to the Regs' 21 yard line was stopped by **Luke Keuchly**'s interception, leading to a 79-yard march that ended on a 19-yard TD catch by **Jerricho Cotchery**, for a 24-0 Regs lead. Markham's **Colt McCoy** came in at QB and hit **Brandon Marshall** for a 20-yard TD to start a string of 19 points, but the Regs finished it off on **Frank Gore**'s 2-yard TD run.

WEEK TEN

STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Charleswood	10	1	0	0.909	309	28.1	201	18.3	9.8	5 1 0	4 0 0	6 1 0
Twin Cities	8	3	0	0.727	325	29.5	219	19.9	9.6	3 2 0	3 1 0	6 1 0
Carthage	4	7	0	0.364	318	28.9	303	27.5	1.4	2 4 0	2 2 0	2 5 0
Mohave	2	9	0	0.182	199	18.1	326	29.6	-11.5	1 5 0	1 3 0	1 6 0
Viriden	0	11	0	0	131	11.9	311	28.3	-16.4	0 6 0	0 4 0	0 7 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Beaufort County	7	3	1	0.682	292	26.5	244	22.2	4.4	4 1 0	3 0 1	5 1 1
Iowa City	7	3	1	0.682	309	28.1	218	19.8	8.3	4 0 1	2 1 1	5 1 1
Chino	6	5	0	0.545	258	23.5	248	22.5	0.9	2 3 0	2 2 0	4 3 0
Los Angeles	4	7	0	0.364	195	17.7	284	25.8	-8.1	1 5 0	1 3 0	2 5 0
Mission Viejo	4	7	0	0.364	243	22.1	284	25.8	-3.7	1 4 0	1 3 0	3 4 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	10	1	0	0.909	324	29.5	166	15.1	14.4	6 0 0	4 0 0	6 1 0
Pickering	6	5	0	0.545	298	27.1	263	23.9	3.2	2 3 0	1 3 0	3 4 0
York	6	5	0	0.545	271	24.6	248	22.5	2.1	4 2 0	2 2 0	4 3 0
Cowtown	5	6	0	0.455	238	21.6	290	26.4	-4.7	3 3 0	1 3 0	3 4 0
Markham	3	8	0	0.273	197	17.9	213	19.4	-1.5	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 4 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Aurora	10	1	0	0.909	340	30.9	238	21.6	9.3	4 1 0	4 0 0	7 0 0
Scarborough	6	5	0	0.545	242	22	287	26.1	-4.1	4 2 0	2 2 0	3 4 0
Gwinnett	6	5	0	0.545	302	27.5	258	23.5	4	3 2 0	2 2 0	3 4 0
South Carolina	5	6	0	0.455	246	22.4	281	25.5	-3.2	3 2 0	2 2 0	3 4 0
Sebastian	0	11	0	0	244	22.2	399	36.3	-14.1	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 7 0

PASSING

Rk	Player	Team	Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Brees	DTL	389	271	69.7	3043	4	1	65	26	6.7	110.7
2	Cutler	TCT	304	211	69.4	2579	8	2.6	73	23	7.6	109.5
3	Manning,P	CHP	345	238	69	2757	7	2	71	23	6.7	106.6
4	Roethlisberger	GWG	372	240	64.5	3009	5	1.3	72	24	6.5	105.5
5	Hill,S	BCR	229	160	69.9	1738	4	1.7	56	14	6.1	105
6	Newton,C	CHI	268	175	65.3	2410	7	2.6	69	17	6.3	104.2
7	Mariota	CAR	350	208	59.4	2898	8	2.3	66	27	7.7	102.3
8	Rivers,P	PIC	258	153	59.3	2207	5	1.9	74	18	7	102.3
9	Romo	SC	378	253	66.9	2665	5	1.3	56	23	6.1	102
10	Wilson,R	ICC	276	172	62.3	2143	3	1.1	56	16	5.8	101.2
11	Manning,E	MAR	200	132	66	1474	3	1.5	65	9	4.5	96.5
12	Brady,T	YOR	324	209	64.5	2194	4	1.2	87	16	4.9	95.4
13	Ryan,M	AUR	426	267	62.7	3317	8	1.9	62	20	4.7	94.6
14	Bridgewater	LAK	253	163	64.4	1827	6	2.4	62	14	5.5	94.4
15	Flacco	COW	404	243	60.1	2590	7	1.7	61	24	5.9	91.5
16	Tannehill	MVM	350	226	64.6	2258	6	1.7	47	14	4	89
17	Rodgers,A	SBE	417	251	60.2	2979	8	1.9	63	18	4.3	88.4
18	Dalton	SS	381	227	59.6	2654	16	4.2	81	19	5	79.9
19	Luck	MOH	415	236	56.9	2781	11	2.7	99	13	3.1	76.8

RUSHING

Rk	Player	Team	Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	McCoy,L	GWG	245	1246	5.1	40	9
2	Forte	PIC	225	1203	5.3	36	12
3	Bell,L	LAK	294	1125	3.8	25	5
4	Murray,D	CHI	266	1123	4.2	40	8
5	Lacy	CAR	203	1026	5.1	31	5
6	Lynch,M	YOR	225	985	4.4	33	9
7	Gore	SC	190	975	5.1	50	4
8	Gordon,M	TCT	155	919	5.9	44	9
9	Morris,A	COW	180	891	5	47	2
10	Anderson,C	SS	179	874	4.9	24	5
11	Miller,L	CHP	157	868	5.5	23	5
12	Foster,A	AUR	127	777	6.1	34	8
13	Stewart	BCR	156	756	4.8	73	3
14	Charles,J	VV	152	718	4.7	54	2
15	Ingram,M	VV	164	713	4.3	36	5
16	Bell,J	MVM	136	687	5.1	60	6
17	Hill,J	ICC	113	684	6.1	30	4
18	Ivory	MVM	138	683	4.9	70	9
19	Johnson,D	CHP	121	631	5.2	29	5
20	Yeldon	SBE	115	546	4.7	20	1

RECEIVING

Rk	Player	Team	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Brown,A	TCT	80	999	12.5	59	12
2	Maclin	GWG	71	1259	17.7	61	12
3	Johnson,A	CHP	67	676	10.1	20	2
4	Hopkins,D	BCR	65	748	11.5	45	8
5	Cobb	BCR	65	772	11.9	56	6
6	Fitzgerald	COW	64	715	11.2	61	11
7	Jones,J	MOH	64	1050	16.4	99	3
8	Kelce,T	CAR	62	658	10.6	41	7
9	Boldin	AUR	60	965	16.1	40	2
10	Bryant,D	CHP	60	962	16	71	13
11	Allen,K	SC	60	696	11.6	42	6
12	Graham,J	MOH	58	571	9.8	36	4
13	Decker	DTL	56	562	10	28	6
14	Johnson,C	DTL	52	890	17.1	65	10
15	Landry,J	GWG	52	573	11	31	6
16	Gronkowski	BCR	52	491	9.4	54	4
17	Jackson,D	SBE	52	801	15.4	49	4
18	Green,A	SC	50	702	14	54	5
19	Nelson,J	SBE	50	733	14.7	47	7
20	Evans,M	COW	49	636	13	48	4

KICKING

Rk	Player	Team	FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts
1	Folk	AUR	26	20	76.9	5	1	50	100
2	Dawson	DTL	23	20	87	5	0	49	96
3	Parkey	BCR	23	22	95.7	10	2	54	96
4	Zuerlein	ICC	24	20	83.3	7	0	49	91
5	Gostkowski	TCT	20	17	85	7	0	48	89
6	Brown,J	MAR	28	24	85.7	9	3	56	89
7	Succop	CHP	19	17	89.5	5	1	51	87
8	Scobee	PIC	17	15	88.2	6	2	53	80
9	Bailey,D	CHI	21	18	85.7	12	5	53	80
10	Novak	COW	21	17	81	8	3	53	76
11	Suisham	GWG	16	14	87.5	6	0	47	76
12	Hauschka	CAR	15	10	66.7	6	2	51	70
13	Murray,P	LAK	17	16	94.1	11	5	53	69
14	Nugent	SBE	13	13	100	3	0	43	68
15	Tucker,J	SC	13	12	92.3	6	0	47	66
16	Walsh	YOR	17	11	64.7	3	1	54	65
17	Vinatieri	SS	13	13	100	6	1	50	64
18	Janikowski	MOH	15	13	86.7	6	3	57	61
19	Crosby	VV	14	13	92.9	8	1	52	51
20	Carpenter	MVM	9	7	77.8	5	1	55	51



BEIJING RED DRAGONS



PYINGYANG SUN



SEOUL CALM



TAIPEI SHARKS

CHRISTMAS BREAK

STANDINGS - WEEK 3

ASIA	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Seoul	2	1	0	0.667	78	26	51	17	9	1 0 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Taipei	2	1	0	0.667	48	16	43	14.3	1.7	2 0 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Pyongyang	1	2	0	0.333	46	15.3	57	19	-3.7	1 1 0	1 2 0	1 2 0
Beijing	1	2	0	0.333	54	18	75	25	-7	1 0 0	1 2 0	1 2 0



SHARKS

2-1-0

-

-

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[Star Player]

[Stats]



SUN

1-2-0

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[Star Player]

[Stats]

Week Four game upcoming.



RED DRAGONS

1-2-0

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[Star Player]

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CALM

2-1-0

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[Star Player]

[Stats]

Week Four game upcoming.



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad



NEW YORK – So, how old is Christmas? As the son of a semi-devout family of Congregationalists, who as a youngster attended Sunday school as part of the ritual of appearing devout, I always assumed it came with the birth of Christ. I was never explicitly *told* that the holiday known to us as “Christmas” began with the birth of Christ, but with all the stories revolving around Mary and Joseph, the Three Wise Men, the Little Drummer Boy, a bright star, and King Herod’s soldiers all converging on the manger to witness the Christ Child’s birth (or murder him as the soldiers were instructed), I think I can be forgiven for connecting the dots to arrive at that conclusion.

The convergence of many cultures in North America along with the secularization of our society and the arrival of the Information Age began the process of lifting the veil from our indoctrinated Christian view and exposing us to a better understanding of our traditions. It turns out that “Christmas” is just the Christian version of a worldwide winter festival that has been observed by pagan cultures since ancient times. It seems that, in the West, early Christians actually superimposed ‘Christmas’ onto the Roman *Saturnalia*, a winter harvest festival that marked the winter solstice and the arrival of the Sun, not “Son.” Among other things, the holiday celebrated Saturn, a deity who was believed to have ruled over a long lost Golden Age of abundance. The festival lasted about a week and featured banquets, gift-giving, societal role-reversal (with Masters serving Slaves at a great feast) and the mandatory temple sacrifices of animals (but not reindeer).

Mixed in with the Saturnalian revelry came other traditions borrowed from lands conquered by the Romans. The Celtic and Germanic tribes brought the Yule Log, mistletoe and fir trees into the mix. Somehow, Santa Claus got thrown into the Christmas holiday soup, although the origins of that character have nothing whatsoever to do with Christ or *Saturnalia*. “Santa” was actually a common name in Asia Minor for Nimrod, an ancient king who assumed deity-like stature in legend as a fire god who came into your house through the chimney and toasted whole families – being naughty in ancient times brought harsh punishment. The character we now know as Santa Claus, worshipped by millions of children, is actually a Frankenstein-like composite of various real and mythical historical characters, including a kind Greek Bishop named *Saint Nicholas*, the English anthropomorphic “Father Christmas,” the folkloric Dutch *Sinterklaas* and the Norse God *Odin*.

The reindeer were introduced fairly recently with the 1823 poem “The Night Before Christmas” by **Clement C Moore**. He gave us their names and their mission – to pull Santa’s sleigh loaded with gifts – but little else was known about them, allowing subsequent writers to adorn the already baroque Santa legend with new characters like *Rudolph*. Of course, the question of who actually made all of these gifts eventually came up, prompting writer, **Louisa May Alcott** to theorize that they must have been made by *Christmas Elves*. This idea made enough sense that the popular magazine *Godey’s Lady’s Book* published a picture on the cover of its 1873 Christmas Edition of Santa surrounded by industrious elves and toys. Illustrator for Harper’s Magazine, **Thomas Nast**, elaborated on the Santa-Elves partnership in 1879 with detailed drawings of Santa’s Workshop at the North Pole, specifically the Magnetic North Pole. The image caught on and is entrenched in contemporary pop culture, although virtually all Nordic countries today claim to be the real host country for Santa’s Workshop.

So there, my friends, is a fleeting overview of the main influences that led to our current Christmas hodgepodge: a prehistoric multi-cultural pagan festival with religious overtones presided over by a devilishly jolly, kind and wicked old man who runs a sweat shop in the arctic and whips his animals so hard they actually fly! Happy *Saturnalia*!

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING.....

With images of “Santa” Nimrod coming down the chimney to char me to a cinder, I’m not sure I really want Santa to visit me this year – I can’t say I’ve been on my best behaviour. Damn secularists, ruining my innocent, long-loved Christmas traditions with inconvenient and disturbing historical facts!

When Santa comes this year, in just a few days, most of the EFL teams will be hoping they are on Santa’s ‘Nice’ list. Certainly every team needs *something*, even the darn near perfect Mustangs! Most teams need several things and a needy few need almost everything, starting with the basics. But if each owner/GM could ask Santa for one thing....and one thing only, this is what each might ask for:

Dear Santa.....

....hi, it’s **Rich Liotta** here, Aurora Mustangs. I’ve been good, Santa – really good. Perfect, actually – well, perfect last year anyway. This year I have been close to perfect. If it wasn’t for that little snot-nosed kid from Hawaii I’d....oops, sorry, Santa, I didn’t

mean to speak badly about anyone, let alone a young kid who probably doesn't have a clue how he did what he did to my team back in Week 7. Anyway, Santa, I don't need much, but the one thing I need doesn't come in a store. I really, really need a magical amulet of protection for Matt Ryan. It seems I couldn't decide which of my 9 kick returners I wanted to keep so I kept them all and forgot about a back-up quarterback. I swear, if you get me that amulet, I'll never do that again! Preferably it would be small, made of an enchanted ruby set in gold, to keep Mustangs colours.

...I am **Neil Shannon**, owner of the Beaufort County Ravens - America's Team. I am new to the EFL and blessed with a pretty good team that I am getting the most out of. Frugal by nature and used to doing more with less, I am not a needy person. But self-reliance can only go so far when building a roster. I need a quarterback, Santa. Not for this year - it's too late for that - but for the future. RGIII is a nice guy to hang out with, but he is one cuckoo prima donna on the football field. It's just a matter of time before he gets killed out there - either by the other team or his own teammates.

...hey Santa! It's your biggest fan here, **Kenny Main**, Carthage Cannibals! I just want to thank you so, so much for giving me Marcus Mariota. Christmas came early this year, Santa, thanks to you. I feel a little bad for asking for something under the tree, but everyone should have something to unwrap on Christmas day, Santa. So, if you're passing through Manitoba on your way to Samoa, could you please bring me back Lavonte David? The Patriots won't miss him, trust me, but I sure miss him here!

...it's **Jason Findlay** of Charleswood. Thank you for granting my wish to get my Peyton Manning back. Last year was terrible, Santa. I learned my lesson, that's for sure. Now that the cold is arriving and the season is winding down Peyton is complaining about his bones being sore. He looked a little stiff against those Cubs last week. A case of 24 rejuvenation potions would make him feel brand new again. Being thousands of years old yourself, Santa, I am pretty sure you have a dozen extra potions lying around the workshop. I know you're probably not allowed to give them out, but just this one time? Pretty please?

...**Rob Nazar** here, head Warden of the Chino Convicts. I don't ask for much Santa, because I usually take what I want. But one thing a Convict can't do too well is influence a jury. Santa, I'm asking you to send a lawyer elf down to Houston to help cut a deal for my man, Adrian Peterson. I need him back. DeMarco Murray isn't quite cutting it. Look, the kid was naughty, alright? AP made a mistake, he should have let you handle it with the coal-in-stocking thing, but he deserves a second chance.

...this is **Jim Coghlin**, coach of the Corn Kings. I know you're good to me every year, Santa, and I appreciate it. I'm sure it was one of your elves who whispered in Hal's ear to pick Justin Gilbert in the 2014 draft so I could avoid a huge mistake and get Mike Evans instead. Hal doesn't believe in you and you showed him <wink-wink>. So this year all I am asking for is health and happiness, with emphasis on the health part, of my players specifically. Injuries are killing me, Santa. Please help!

...it's **George Kaldis** of the Thunder Lizards. I know I exaggerate a lot, Santa, but it's not an exaggeration to say that the right side of my team's offensive line is the weakest in football at run blocking. Yet, for some reason Santa, when the actual games start, I keep sending my running backs to the right side. I guess I'm just so stubborn, I can't help myself, but it really hurts the run game. So, what I need for Christmas is a magic healing elf to keep Drew Brees really healthy down the stretch.

...**Dave Birdsall**, Gwinnett Gladiators here. I know I haven't written to you since I was 6 years old; when I left you those chocolate chip cookies and those carrots for Rudolph on the kitchen table and you brought me that bright green *Hasbro* Inchworm, when I really wanted a *Tonka* construction truck set. I never recovered from that, you know. Anyway, you have a chance to make it up to me by granting Big Ben the strength of "Ten Grinches" for the rest of the year. I've tried to build a team around him, but in the end it always comes down to him and him alone.

...hi Santa, it's **Deron Redding** of the Cubbies. I am told that writing to you is like praying to an idol, so I am reluctant to really get into this "wishing" thing. But just in case you are actually the personification of the Almighty, whose only begotten Son was born on this day, I am praying that you find a good home for Colin Kaepernick. I know I was selfish for keeping him, but I didn't know if Russell would work out or not. Now he's looking sad and less than confident, so I don't need him anymore.

...hi Santa, it's **Jeff Dohrn** of the glamorous LA Knights. To be honest, if I had known granting me my wish for an EFL Title back in 2011 was going to cost me three seasons of football hell, I might have reconsidered. But things seem to be finally turning around for my team. Since I have so much money tied up in duds like CJ Spiller and Mike Glennon, it would help me get back to respectability quicker and save money if you could send me a Draft Elf to make the right picks in the 2016 draft.

...good evening Santa, it's **Darrin Jones** of the never-say-die North Stars. I know I'm hard to buy for at Christmas - not because I have everything but because I never know what I want. I make so many trades I've lost track of the bottom line. This year I thought I was rebuilding, but I may have snuck in a couple of 1-year upgrades by the trade deadline, just to keep the division honest. This year I'm asking you to surprise me with something I need, since I don't have a clue what it is.

...greetings, Santa, you may rise and accept the petition of His Majesty King **Chris Ferraro**, rightful holder of the Mission Viejo Monarchs franchise. The favour I ask is not born of weakness on my part nor that of my subjects, but of a desire to serve God and Orange County to the best of my mortal skill. King Arthur had his magic sword, I would like a magic sceptre - a Staff of Power to rain spells of befuddlement and immobilization on my opponents, yes! And a small shiny sword as well, please.

...it's **Bobby Elder** of the Hellfire. I admit, I've been a pretty bad boy when it comes to taking care of my team. About the only thing I do really well is draft talent and that alone is just not going to cut it in this league. There's no correcting me on this; I'm set in my ways. I wasn't going to write to you at all, until I read somewhere that you might actually be a retired Fire God with a nasty edge. As coach of a team called the 'Hellfire' I was intrigued by that. So, if it's true, and you used to be a Fire God, please flame the shit out of the other teams in my conference so I can actually make the playoffs again. If you're not that Fire God guy, then send me the coal - I know where to stick it.

...salutations, Santa, my fellow Greek. Can I call you Nicky? It's **Gus** here, the one with the long Greek surname. Look, I know



Spartans coach **Gus Konstantakos** “accidentally” elbows a cameraman in his glee at his team’s Week 11 offensive onslaught. Defensive coordinator **General Pausanias** looks on impassively in the background – he had a little to worry about on 50-point scoring day for the Spartans.

you visit every home and every country, but we Greeks have to stick together. Real Greeks, I mean. George isn’t as Greek as I am – he’s more of an American than a Greek. I actually married a Greek! Anyway, forget about George and I’ll cut to the chase. I think my Spartans can win this thing, this year, if I had any kind of defence. Reindeer flying powers for my secondary would help a lot, but if that’s not practical, getting the refs to back off the PI and facemask calls would be great. Can you do that?

...it’s me, **Chris Dickinson**, owner of the Blue Eagles. I’ve had to change residences several times this year, for my safety, so I hope you know where to find me on Christmas Eve. Sorry, I can’t write the address down for you in case this letter falls into the hands of some of my so-called “fans.” As you know, I’ve made mistakes in every possible area, except maybe the draft. But it doesn’t matter how much talent I draft or trade for, nothing seems to click on game day. I even hired Rex Ryan to fix things and now the defence is worse than ever. Anyway, I admit I am no Jim Heaton when it comes to general managing or coaching. But I can come close, if you’d just send me Jim Heaton’s old playbook for Christmas. He’s not using it anymore.

...this is **Russ Lemmon** of the Sebastian Swordfish. Where do I begin, Santa? You know I need everything, except a no. 1 wide receiver and perhaps a quarterback (I’m willing to give Andy and Jameis a shot at the job next year). How did my team get in this sorry state? Well, it isn’t my fault, Santa, unless you blame me for hiring Ozdoltorps to be my GM in the first place. Look, the guy came highly recommended and he knows his Fantasy numbers. With my brilliant coaching and his eye for talent, I thought it was a match made in heaven. Obviously, I was wrong. I need a new GM, Santa, or a complete makeover for the one I have.

...it’s Hal....**Hal Corson** of the Regulators. It’s been a very long time since I last wrote; you probably don’t remember. I was the kid who wanted that bright red ‘Radio Flyer’ wagon for Christmas that you didn’t bring me. I was good all year and you repaid me with an itchy wool sweater and an orange in my stocking. You probably didn’t notice, but I stopped believing in you then. So, I feel a little stupid writing to you now in my time of need. I am a little depressed at how my team is performing. I was sleep-coaching for the first 9 weeks of the season before that wake-up call against the Knights. Now, I feel like my old self again and the team is winning. I just hope it’s not too late. If you could just turn back time, Santa, to the 3:17 mark of the 4th quarter of Week 9 and let me do that over.

...I am **Guy Williams** of the Twin Cities Triumph. I don’t normally need your help, Santa, since I take care of business pretty well in all areas. I don’t make many trades since I have everything well planned when it comes to the draft, free agency, and my money situation. I am, possibly, the best GM and coach I know. So, why haven’t I won a championship already? If I believed in a Higher Power I would swear that ‘It’ is keeping me humble by saddling me with Jay Cutler. He looks so good at times, yet when it is *the* time, he does something awful to deprive me of my rightful place on the podium of greatness. I’m making a big leap here, but if you have a link to the Higher Power, let It know I get the message. I won’t rub it in people’s faces when I win multiple championships.

...uh, it’s **Lance Barrate**, owner/GM/coach of the worst team in the EFL – yes, even worse than Sebastian, *much* worse. I am not asking for sympathy, since I deliberately set out to rebuild my team by ditching most of it assets. I am not asking you for players either, since I have tons of draft picks and good future prospects on my current roster. What I am asking you for is a body-double to stand in for me on the sideline from here until the end of the season. Coaching this team is not coaching, it is torture.

...it’s **Jay Hammond**, coach of the York Excaliburs. I don’t believe in you, Santa, and never did. I was the kid who stayed up all night Christmas Eve trying to catch you and guess what! I saw who the real Santas were at an early age. So, I’m not sure why I’m writing this letter at all....maybe it’s the ninth beer in two hours talking, while I prepare my game plan to shove Marshawn-fucking-Lynch down Gus’ throat. Look, I’m willing to concede that maybe you’re some kind of spirit. I believe in those, having consumed enough of them. So, if you’re a spirit, inebriate my opponents into a stupor on game day please. Thanks, Santa.

ATTACK OF THE SPARTANS

It is ironic that a culture best known for its heroic defence would be the namesake of a team without any defence. This year’s edition of the Pickering Spartans is all offence with its few defensive successes attributable to crafty coaching and the discipline instilled in the unit by stoic Defensive Coordinator, **General Pausanias**. It is for reason of a poor defence that few analysts, if any outside of the Pickering city limits, had the Spartans pre-picked for a playoff spot in the Can-Am Conference. But if the season were to end today, the Spartans would be in the post-season, seeded third, and commanding respect for an offence that went berserk in a 50-27 Week 11 blowout of the Blue Eagles at Bluffs Stadium in Scarborough.

Poor **Chris Dickinson**; just when he thought he could emerge from hiding again after 3 straight victories, **Gus Kostantakos’**

team comes into his own house and lays down a bloodthirsty beating on his team. It was shocking to watch for more than the spectacle of seeing the Blue Eagles looking completely dazed and confused for the first 30 minutes. The wild behaviour of the Pickering coach shocked children and brought on a response that nobody had expected in a Pickering victory.

In addition to everything going wrong for the Blue Eagles, everything went right for the Spartans – a little *too* right. The Spartans scored any way they wanted in the 1st quarter – they passed for a TD, ran for a TD, and capitalized on a turnover by their defence to take a 21-7 lead after 15 minutes. “Yes, YES! That’s it! Never Surrender, Spartans! Attack, attack!” Gus bellowed from the sideline after **Matt Forte** bowled his way through the flailing Eagles line for the third touchdown.

Attack, the Spartans did. **Philip Rivers** threw a beautiful deep ball to **Demaryius Thomas** that went for a 47-yard touchdown to make it 28-7 early in the 2nd quarter. “Ahhhaaarrrr! Ahhhhaaarrrr!” roared Gus, as he threw his arms back violently and “accidentally” elbowed a cameraman in the face who had encroached a little too closely on the volatile coach’s personal space. “This is Spartan football! Never surrender! DESTROY the enemy without mercy!”

When the Blue Eagles retaliated with a touchdown to **Jordy Nelson** to halve the Spartans lead, Gus became highly agitated. “How DARE they do this to you!” he screeched at the defence. “Vengeance, Offence, vengeance! Give me VENGEANCE!” he screamed at the offence. They delivered with an excruciating 80-yard drive that ended with Forte pounding it through the middle of the Blue Eagles line. “HA HA HA HAAAAAAAAAH!” a bawling chortle turned into a thunderous coughing fit as an overheated Gus struggled to contain his excitement and bloodlust.

The Blue Eagles kicked a field goal to make it 35-17 then attempted an onside kick that failed. This seemed to inflame Konstantakos even more. “They shall PAAYYYY for their impudence!” he thundered. “Onward, Spartans! Slaughter them all! Let their women and children drown in the blood of their fighting men this glorious day! KKIIIIILLLLL THHEEMM ALLL!”

As the Spartans marched down the field, dutifully moving down the Eagle defenders on their way to their sixth touchdown of the first half, the blood-frenzied Pickering coach was hyper-ventilating on the sideline, bellowing incoherently. **General Pausanias** looked concerned and motioned for **Captain Thrombos**, head of the Spartan Emergency Response Team. Security started to gather, but kept its distance as they assessed the situation. The fans started booing, prompting Gus to rush the stands waving his clipboard like a maul and yelling: “Unworthy Scarberians! Behold the slaughter of your heroes! Witness the Glory of SPAAARRTTAAA! HAHAA! HAHAA! ARRRRGGGGHGHGHGH - !” About 8 seconds into the final “argh” a blast was heard from the Pickering bench. Gus’ eyes bugged out as he suddenly stopped bellowing. A gurgle issued from his throat as his eyes rolled back in his head and he crumpled forward onto the field, a big dart with blue feathers sticking out of his right buttock.

It was an unanticipated, but necessary deployment of the Gus Gun. Things had gone too well for the Spartans, triggering a latent bloodlust buried deep in Konstantakos’ DNA from a time when slaughtering the enemy when you had the chance meant better survival chances for one’s tribe the future. It wasn’t pretty, but the Pickering coach was shut down by his own men before he could do anything fine-worthy. The brilliant but crazy Gus will coach another day.

AROUND THE EFL

Week Eleven was probably the worst of the year so far for excitement. The TV converter certainly got a workout in my house as I flipped from channel-to-channel desperately looking for some entertainment. Although I usually touch at least a little on every game, I cannot bring myself to waste my time with all of them. Only two games were even remotely close and one of those, Aurora’s 24-10 plodding victory over Cowtown, never really felt in doubt despite the Mustangs’ difficulty extending their lead to two scores. If it wasn’t for 10 flags on the Mustangs, the Corn Kings would not have been in the game.

One game that did tweak my interest was the 38-31 York victory over Gwinnett at Camelot. You never know what you’re going to get out of the Gladiators, but this was one of those match-ups that seemed favourable to them, even on the road. I was confident they would win outright, but the Excaliburs got an exciting performance out of **Tom Brady**, who went deep without fear and was accurate at every distance to give some pop to a normally wishy-washy offence. But the highlight of that game was an 80-yard punt return touchdown by **De’Anthony Thomas** to start the 3rd quarter that gave the Swords a two-score edge that helped keep them in front of the Glad’s attack, which struggled to find the end zone despite success moving the ball between the 20s. It was Thomas’ 4th punt return for a TD this year, and it prompted CBS commentator **King Solomon Wontcots** to declare it “record-setting” in his exuberant post-play pontification. Something tweaked in the back of my mind when I heard it; I knew it had been done before but I couldn’t recall who had done it. It prompted me to do a little quick research.

Thomas’ TD tied an EFL regular-season record dating back to 2007, when **Adam ‘Pacman’ Jones** returned 4 punts for scores with Chino in the regular season. Pacman wasn’t finished with that, however. He also returned 3 in Chino’s post-season Championship run, with all 3 coming in their quarter final victory over the Thunder Lizards. Thomas has his work cut out for him to equal that feat! As impressive as it is to return four punts to the house in a single season, it is not as uncommon as you might think. Pacman’s regular season record was tied in 2009 by the Cubs’ **Reggie Bush**, again in 2011 by Virden’s **Mike Thomas**, and also in 2012 by Garland’s **Patrick Peterson**. None of those regular season co-leaders were able to duplicate Pacman’s impressive post-season encore.

Finally, it was shocking to see the Patriots completely mauled 36-13 at Patriot Place by the Iowa City Cubs in the much-hyped PAC Championship Preview. It took the high-octane Pats offence until the 5:15 mark of the 2nd quarter to gain their first 1st down. The Pats missed guard **Kelechi Osemele** as the Cubs defensive front four totally dominated the trenches. Iowa coach, **Deron Redding** is a drafting magician who pulls running backs out of his hat instead of rabbits. This week’s star was previously unknown second-year back, **Jerick McKinnon** of Georgia Southern. He rushed for 151 yards and 2 touchdowns on just 12 carries.

BUG THE BOOKIE!

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




















Your source for fantasy and on-line betting solutions



RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 11:

67-39-4

PLAYOFF PICTURE AT A GLANCE

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

JIMMY'S WEEK TWELVE PICKS

GAMES TO WATCH

YORK @ SOUTH CAROLINA (line – EXCALIBURS by 1)

INJURIES: York – Vincent Brown (PROBABLE), Kurt Coleman (OUT), Jonathan Goodwin (OUT); South Carolina – Keenan Allen (OUT), Dontay Moch (OUT).

With three teams separating them from a playoff berth, the Regulators cannot afford another misstep if they intend to play a meaningful game in Week 16. With York currently holding on to the 4th seed due to a tie-breaker over the Gladiators, they know

they have to keep winning to control their own fate. It would too dramatic to call this a “must-win” game for either team, when so much of their competition is close and unpredictable, but the outcome could hold the key to a tie-breaker down the road. Both teams come in riding two-game win streaks, with York knocking off impressive wins over Iowa and Gwinnett and the Regs overcoming the Ravens and North Stars. South Carolina appears to be waking from a half-season slumber; if they play to their potential, they have the guns to win a battle at home against a York team that has yet to show it can move the ball with consistency. The Swords are 10th in points scored thanks largely to 6 special teams touchdowns and a pick-six. Strip away De’Anthony Thomas, and York might be looking at a 4-7 record instead of 6-5. The Regs are missing Keenan Allen for this one, which will tell against a sturdy York defence that bent a lot against the Glads last week but allowed just two red zone opportunities. Safety, Kurt Coleman is out for the Swords, which isn’t critical, but noteworthy since he is the first York defensive starter to miss a game this season. The Swords’ special teams unit is a major factor in any analysis and cannot be discounted, but if the Regs can find a way to take away that weapon, expect them to punch hard enough to stay one score in front of York from start to finish. **PICK: SOUTH CAROLINA**

COWTOWN @ PICKERING (line – SPARTANS by 5)

INJURIES: **Cowtown** – Derek Carrier (OUT), Ronald Darby (OUT), Cecil Shorts III (OUT), Cedric Ogbuehi (OUT), Julius Thomas (OUT); **Pickering** – Roberto Garza (OUT);

The Spartans’ terrifying domination of Scarborough last week has the league buzzing about a late-blooming super offence in Pickering reminiscent of the one Philip Rivers led in Carthage. But despite its recent striking power – an average of 39 points per game over the past four weeks – it is not a pass-heavy attack. With Golden Tate and Demaryius Thomas on the wings the vertical threat is there, but the real engine of the offence has been Matt Forte, who has averaged 6.8 yards per carry and gained over 500 yards over that four-game span. At their current pace, the Spartans don’t need much more than a token defence to stay flush. But at some point the offence is going to come down to earth and when it does the defence will have to step up. That may happen this week. The Corn Kings attack has leveled off after some dramatic spikes and dips over the first eight games of the season. Injuries have hurt, but more problematic has been the play of the offensive line, which has not been able to handle a determined pass rush. The play of Joe Flacco has dropped off as a result and the return of rookie phenom Todd Gurley hasn’t picked up the slack. The Spartans’ defence could be a tonic for Cowtown’s offensive woes as much as their offence could make a bigger dent in the battered Corn King defence. Not allowing anomalies to exert undue influence on my predictions, I think the Spartans are unlikely to score 50 points again. With their playoff future practically hanging in the balance, expect Cowtown to blaze away. **PICK: COWTOWN**

CHARLESWOOD @ CHINO (line – PATRIOTS by 1)

INJURIES: **Charleswood** – Kelechi Osemele (OUT); **Chino** – Cam Newton (PROBABLE), Michael Schofield (OUT), Victor Cruz (IR).

The Patriots were embarrassed on their home turf last week by an unknown second-year running back and an unmovable Cub defensive line. There is no doubt it influenced the Vegas line here, which is surprisingly thin considering the unknown status of Cam Newton. The Convict MVP is listed as ‘Probable’ for this game and it is hard to imagine Rob Nazar wanting to go with Kirk Cousins at QB after he broke a heavy sweat posting 17 points against Virden last week. This is not a critical game for the Pats, but they would prefer staying as far ahead of the ever-threatening Triumph as possible. Chino is on the outside of the playoff bracket at the moment but can still get inside with a strong showing down the final five-game stretch. With their first loss out of the way the pressure of perfection is off Peyton and Co., at the same time that opponents are bolstered by the humbling manner of their only loss. The Convicts have not had a dominant offence, but one that has shown the ability to do a bit of everything well enough to keep defences honest. If Cam is back, expect them to crank up the attack and gamble for the big turnover. **PICK: CHINO**

GAMES OF NOTE

AURORA @ SCARBOROUGH (line – MUSTANGS by 5)

INJURIES: **Aurora** – Kevin Pierre-Louis (OUT); **Scarborough** – Landon Collins (PROBABLE), Chris Canty (OUT), Dont’a Hightower (OUT).

Before the Blue Eagles got their wings blown off last week this was shaping up to be one of the games to watch. Ticket pre-sales were higher than for any other game on the Scarborough home sked. The fear that the Blue Eagles are turning into Buzzards again

has caused the line to balloon slightly from its original 3 points, with the possibility of more movement before game day. What can I say? The Mustangs are looking slightly tired these days, but a weary band of Aurorans is a lot more dangerous than a dizzy, spastic Scarborough squad mentally scarred from the trauma of once again falling flat on their faces from great height. Last week's 50-point debacle resulted from a toxic brew consisting of bad luck, inspired offensive play by the Spartans, and moments of pure stupidity from the Scarborough defence. This is a big game for Scarborough, with playoff implications, and they cannot afford another disaster. Nevertheless, this one is lining up to be another potential butt-kicking. Despite loads of talent, the Eagles are just one game over 500 and looking like an easy mark. Expect the pass-heavy Aurora offence to test the Eagle corners deep, early and often, and for them to pass that test more than they fail it. Expect the Blue birds to guess wrong on almost every play. And finally, expect Aaron Rodgers to get picked off at least twice trying to come from behind. **PICK: AURORA**

BEAUFORT COUNTY @ LOS ANGELES (line – RAVENS by 1)

INJURIES: Beaufort County – Vontaze Burfict (QUESTIONABLE), Gerald McCoy (QUESTIONABLE), Nick Fairley (DOUBTFUL), Shaun Hill (OUT), Ryan Mathews (OUT), Stevan Ridley (OUT), Frank Alexander (IR), Jairus Byrd (IR); Los Angeles – Cortland Finnegan (OUT), Andrew Norwell (OUT), Brian Orakpo (OUT), Bryan Stork (OUT).

RGIII survived the hellish Hellfire pass rush last week and played like the no. 2 overall pick that he is. He certainly outperformed the no. 1 overall pick of that same draft, but in fairness to Andrew Luck, the Ravens defence can be a tough nut to crack. On the topic of cracking nuts, Teddy Bridgewater got his busted painfully last week against an unforgiving Triumph defence that doesn't quite measure up to this Raven crew. Nevertheless, the LA quarterback will have to do better this week to spare us another appearance by Mike Glennon in relief. No doubt it will be tough slogging for the Knights offence, so the Blue Shield will need to step up to keep this game close. The Knights will want to put this game in the hands of RGIII – a high risk strategy with potential big reward if the temperamental Ravens QB loses his composure. The line between stunning success and spectacular failure is a fine one in RGIII's world. If the Ravens get half of their injured defenders back the Knights will probably not score an offensive touchdown, but if the Knights defenders get penetration on RGIII, they may not have to. Expect a low-scoring slugfest with the better team squeezing out a 'W'. **PICK: BEAUFORT COUNTY**

MISSION VIEJO @ IOWA CITY (line – CUBS by 11)

INJURIES: Mission Viejo – Dwayne Bowe (OUT), Timmy Jernigan (OUT), Kevin White (OUT), Jerod Mayo (IR); Iowa City – None.

This game is noteworthy as a potential revenge game for the bitchy upset the Cubs suffered in Week One at the hands of these same Monarchs. Not to mention that Mission Viejo is technically still in the playoff hunt, albeit pulling up the rear hoping one of the front-runners suffers a broken leg. If Ferraro's minions can pull off an improbable season sweep of the Cubbies with a victory on the road I'll kiss the Royal Seal. But while I don't expect the Pretenders to win, I think this can still be a close game, especially if Deron Redding sits some of his starters again, like he did on opening day. While the Monarchs cannot be taken seriously as a playoff contender, they cannot be taken lightly as an "any-given-Sunday" opponent, as proven by their Week One triumph. One of the things the Monarchs do well – stopping the run – could pose a stumbling block for the Cubs' preferred game plan, which is running the ball. The Mission Viejo offensive front is pretty strong too, and won't be easily pushed around by the powerful but quickly tiring Cubs defensive front. If Russell Wilson starts clicking, this could easily become a blowout. But if the Cubs stay overly conservative, this could very well turn into a nail-biter. **PICK: MISSION VIEJO**

HOLIDAY LEFTOVERS

DURHAM @ MARKHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 9)

INJURIES: Durham – Ahmad Bradshaw (OUT), DJ Hayden (OUT). Markham – Jordan Reed (OUT), Max Unger (OUT), Chris Long (IR).

No Durham-Markham match-up should ever be tagged as a "leftover" but with these two teams on opposite ends of the North pole (get it?) and little more than an extra week of playoff life at stake for the fading North Stars, an upset would remain little more than a curiosity. It is a given that the Markham defence will be like a barnacle on the butt of Drew Brees for the entire game and that the offence will teeter forward like a drugged elephant until it either stomps over the goal line or veers off the field, but even with all of that annoying Markham-stuff, the superiority of the Thunder Lizards in nearly every facet of the game should outshine the Stars in the end. Will it be enough to beat the rather wide road spread? Brees doesn't need to pass often; he just needs to pass right. Trust the new American Sniper, league-leader in passer rating, to get the job done right. **PICK: DURHAM**

CARTHAGE @ VIRDEN (line – CANNIBALS by 7)

INJURIES: **Carthage** – Matt Slauson (PROBABLE), Andre Smith (DOUBTFUL), Justin Durant (IR), Greg Hardy (IR), Derrick Johnson (IR), Manti Te'o (IR), Jason Verrett (IR); **Virden** – Prince Amukamara (OUT), Trumaine Johnson (OUT), Daniel McCullers (OUT), Alex Carrington (IR), Eric Berry (IR), Kelcy Quarles (IR), Demeco Ryans (IR), Stephen Tulloch (IR), Aldon Smith (IR).

Both teams are banged up but Virden is missing half of its starting defence and many of its back-ups. With just three healthy D-linemen dressed the Violators will have to consider starting in a 2-4 nickel and staying in it against a Carthage offence that is going to want to drop a few bombs on the equally banged up Virden secondary. This has nothing but “ugly” written all over it, yet the spread comes in at a relatively restrained converted TD. This is because the Violators have somehow managed to keep themselves from being spanked, Scarborough-style, by employing game plans designed not to win, but to avoid the worst kind of beat-downs.

As pathetic as that is, it works, and it keeps Lance Barrate from being hunted down by angry fans. **PICK: Carthage**

MOHAVE @ TWIN CITIES (line – TRIUMPH by 13)

INJURIES: **Mohave** – Ronnie Hillman (OUT), Allen Robinson (OUT), Jimmie Ward (OUT), Donnie Avery (IR); **Twin Cities** – Kendall Wright (DOUBTFUL), LaAdrian Waddle (OUT).

The Hellfire are showing signs of life about 9 weeks too late to save their season but early enough to torch other team's plans. The Convicts will be cheering for Mohave this week as they try to catch the conference wildcard competition. But the Triumph have little interest in a wild card berth, except as a consolation prize. They are gunning for the East Division and feel they have a shot of they run the table. Do not expect any kind of letdown from Guy Williams, who is well aware that the risk of a Jay Cutler interception increases exponentially with kind of pass rush Mohave is capable of delivering. For the Hellfire, they have nothing to lose at this point. Expect Andrew Luck to wing the ball freely with little regard for where it goes. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

SEBASTIAN @ GWINNETT (line – GLADIATORS by 16)

INJURIES: **Sebastian** – Darrin Walls (DOUBTFUL), Jadeveon Clowney (IR), Paul Posluszny (IR), Jamell Fleming (OUT), Chandler Jones (OUT), Alex Mack (OUT); **Gwinnett** – Dominic Raiola (QUESTIONABLE), Mike Iupati (DOUBTFUL), Rey Mauluga (OUT);

The Glads are outside the edge of the playoff circle after dropping a game to York last week. They now need help to make it in, something that should be in ample supply with so many other teams gunning for the Sword and Spartans. The Glads have lost critical tie-breakers to three of their four rivals for a wildcard spot with a game outstanding against Pickering in Week 15. Needless to say, they need to pick up an extra win somewhere, making this match-up against the Fish close to a must-win. The last time these teams met, Sebastian pushed the Glads into OT. Gwinnett won't be taking any chances this time. **PICK: GWINNETT**



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FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – With each week the pressure mounted on Florida to complete what would have been the league's first ever perfect season. The Mustangs would know what that felt like. The Dragons did not look like a perfect team in Week 11 of the 2009 EFL season, but they were good enough to keep the pressure on for another week, nosing past the LA Knights 16-14 in a classic struggle between great defences. The Dragons only offensive TD was set up by a **Michael Griffin** interception that was returned to the Knights' 9 yard line. **DeAngelo Williams**

brought it across the goal line on the next play to give Florida an early lead. The Knights, not known for offence, drove 98 yards for their first TD and 64 yards for their second, but otherwise could hardly move against the Florida “Firewall.” **Jason Elam** booted 3 FGs, the final one a 21-yard chip shot with 1:53 left that turned out to be the game-winner.

Meanwhile, the QB who led the Dragons to their Championship in 2008, **Tom Brady**, made a surprise appearance in a live game for the Winnemucca Outlaws. Brady, rumoured to be unhappy with the trade that had landed him on the league's worst franchise, had “caught a cold” and had been unable to play for his new team until that moment. His unexpected appearance lit up the chatter circuit but nobody knew what it meant. Brady threw a TD, by the way, in a 30-14 loss to Gwinnett, and now led the Outlaws in QB rating.

This was also the week of the first ever showdown between the Manning brothers: **Eli** of the Spartans and **Peyton** of the Patriots. It was anti-climactic. Eli's Spartans were totally overmatched by the elite Patriots. Eli completed just 5 of 13 pass attempts while his older brother threw for 311 yards and a pair of interceptions in an easy 24-10 Patriots win.