

PLAYOFF EDITION

2013

Conference Finals



EFL
ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

2013

Conference Finals

February 9, 2014



EAST

WEST

NORTH

SOUTH



CHINO CONVICTS

24



GARLAND MUSTANGS

14

CHARLESWOOD PATRIOTS

38

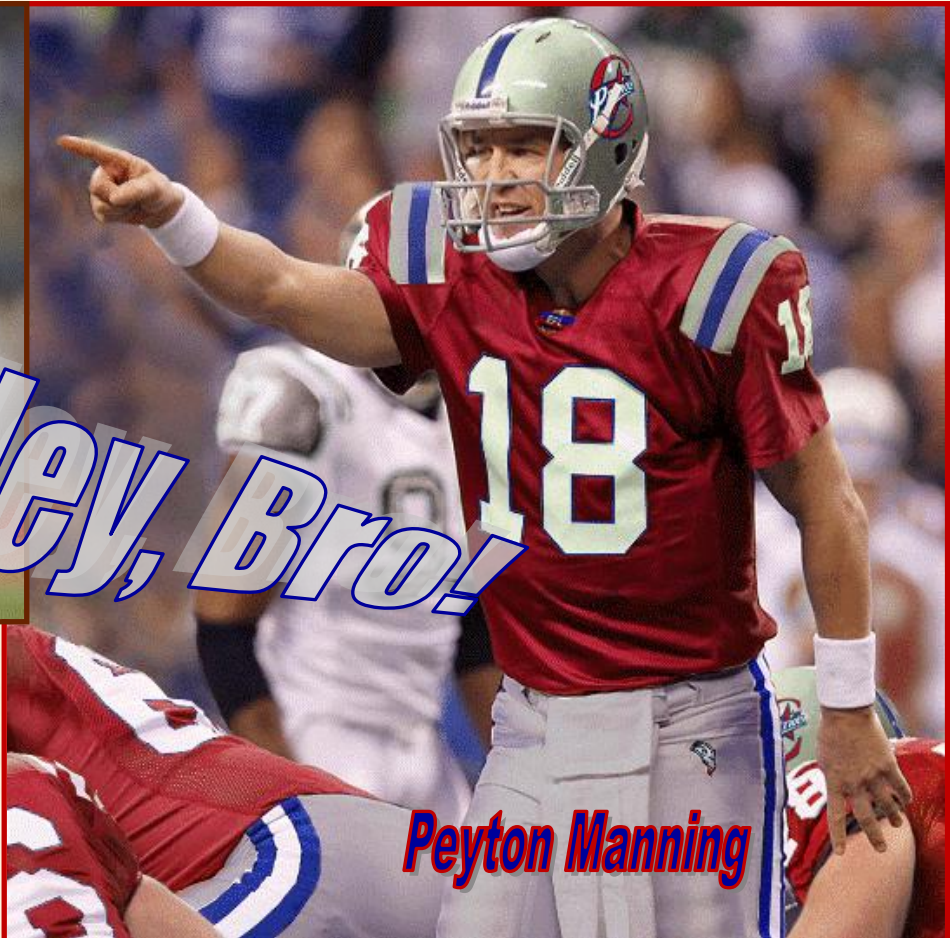
MARKHAM NORTH STARS

24



Eli Manning

Hey, Bro!



Peyton Manning

Sibling rivalry will be center stage in Los Angeles two weeks from now when the Brothers Manning compete for the EFL's top prize. Eli earned a return flight to the big game by knocking off Garland while older brother Peyton threw 5 TD passes against Chino to put his team on a plane to the West Coast.



Who was slick in the Conference Finals?

"BRYLCREEM" THE EFL'S FIRST SPONSOR



Peyton Manning
QB
Charleswood
Patriots

22 of 26, 254 yards, 5 TDs. Made all the big throws to advance to Final.



Kevin Williams
DT
Charleswood
Patriots

1 Tackle, 1 Sack, 2 QB Hur, 1 FC. Recovered fumble turned game.



10-8-0

24



PACIFIC-ATLANTIC

FINAL



13-5-0

38

PATS GUN DOWN CONS!

PEYTON MANNING THROWS 5 TD PASSES / A.P. MISSES SECOND HALF

CONVICT OF THE GAME

Chris Johnson

18 Carries, 97 yards, 2 TDs

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Chino	7	10	0	7	-	24
Charleswood	14	10	7	7	-	38

PATRIOT OF THE GAME

Peyton Manning

22 of 26, 254 yards, 5 TDs

GAME SUMMARY: While winter temperatures outside in Winnipeg hit near record lows, inside the friendly and warm confines of Patriot Place a sellout crowd clad in red charged the atmosphere with electricity as the red hot Patriots took the field for their 5th Conference Final appearance in their seven year history. Their opponent, the Chino Convicts, could not claim such an impressive achievement, but could boast a league title, something that had eluded the Pats despite their regular and post-season successes. The crowd sensed that a different fate might be in store for their team this time, if they could just get by the Convicts. They were soon quieted by the opening drive. In moving 70 yards, the Convicts converted 4 3rd downs, including a 3rd and goal from the 6 that **Cam Newton** took in himself on a draw play to give Chino a 7-0 lead. The Pats responded by sending their workhorse, **Adrian Peterson** into the line three times to draw the defenders in and set up **Peyton Manning** for completions of 14 and 38 yards, the second to **Michael Crabtree** for a TD to even the score. On the ensuing kickoff, Chino return man **Trindon Holliday** looked about to break a big one but kicker **Garret Hartley** angled him out of bounds and stripped the ball in the process. The Pats recovered and drove quickly down the field with Peterson touching the ball on every play, finishing a 55-yard drive with a 7-yard TD catch to give the Pats a 14-7 lead. The Convicts drove back behind the running of **Chris Johnson**, who finished off a 71-yard drive with a 9-yard TD run to tie it at 14. With the momentum swinging their way, Chino successfully executed an onside kick and took a 17-14 lead 8 plays later on a 43-yard **Dan Bailey** FG. The Pats kept their composure and drove back into the Chino end zone on 8 plays, scoring on an 11-yard TD pass to **Jason Witten**. On their next series, the Convicts became the first of the teams to punt, setting up a long FG drive for the Pats that burned up the rest of the 1st half and gave them a 24-17 lead, but also lost them Peterson to injury. Charleswood got the ball to start the 2nd half and drove the field, with **Kendall Hunter** in the backfield for the injured Peterson, scoring on a 10-yard pass to Witten, his second TD catch of the day. The Convicts drove back to the Charleswood 26 but turned the ball over on downs when Newton was stuffed on 4th and 2. The Pats ground out 73 yards and took time off the clock with Hunter then capped off the drive with a 19-yard TD pass to Crabtree, Manning's 5th TD pass of the game. Trailing by 3 touchdowns in the 4th quarter, the Convicts needed to score quickly and they did, going without a huddle to cover 52 yards in just over 2 minutes and finishing with a 1-yard TD run by Johnson. The Convicts stopped the Pats on their next drive, the first time they had done so all day, but after converting a 4th down at mid-field, Newton was picked off by corner **Desmond Trufant**, who returned it into Convicts' territory. The turnover was end for Chino and the rest of the game played out with Pats fans celebrating in the stands.

QUOTES OF THE GAME

"I was pleased with our execution on offence. Any time you score 5 touchdowns against a defence like the one we faced today it's a good day. But don't overlook the defence; they made the stops when we needed them in the 2nd half." — *Charleswood coach, Jason Findlay.*

"We took too many penalties and we turned the ball over. I thought the second holding call on Phil (Loadholt) was a little much, personally." — *Chino coach, Rob Nazar*

"This is the playoffs, man! If you can't go hard on every play in the playoffs you should go home. I went hard on every play and I let the quarterback know I was there." — *Patriots' defensive MVP, Kevin Williams.*



ANGRY FAN



titter

HAPPY FAN



Quentin San Pedro @QSP

Cam usually gets all the credit and all the blame, but this loss is on the defence that couldn't make a stop.



Charlie Wood @Cwoodbannersun

This is the best offence I have ever seen take the field for the Pats and that is saying something!

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2012 Chino (1-1)	7	10	0	7	24
2012 Charleswood (2-0)	14	10	7	7	38

Scoring Summary

1 9:47	Chino	TD Newton 6 run (Bailey,D) (13-70-5:07)	7-0
1 6:43	Charleswood	TD Manning 38 pass to Crabtree (Hartley) (5-67-3:00)	7-7
1 2:59	Charleswood	TD Manning 7 pass to Peterson (Hartley) (7-55-3:37)	7-14
2 14:06	Chino	TD Johnson 9 run (Bailey,D) (7-71-3:53)	14-14
2 10:54	Chino	FG Bailey 43 (8-27-2:58)	17-14
2 6:59	Charleswood	TD Manning 11 pass to Witten (Hartley) (9-60-3:55)	17-21
2 0:10	Charleswood	FG Hartley 24 (14-73-5:35)	17-24
3 8:01	Charleswood	TD Manning 10 pass to Witten (Hartley) (11-72-6:52)	17-31
4 14:03	Charleswood	TD Manning 19 pass to Crabtree (Hartley) (10-73-5:18)	17-38
4 11:48	Chino	TD Johnson 1 run (Bailey,D) (8-52-2:09)	24-38

Chino Convicts

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	25	In	Td	Sk	Rate
Newton	32	20	176	0	1	0	1	64.1

Rushing	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	10	Lg	TD
Johnson	18	97	5.4	8	3	24	2
Newton	8	42	5.3	3	2	12	1
Jones,M	1	13	13.0	0	1	13	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	25	Lg	TD
White	5	0	6	54	10.8	3	0	20	0
Olsen	4	0	7	34	8.5	2	0	16	0
Avant	3	0	3	29	9.7	3	0	13	0
Johnson	3	0	6	15	5.0	1	0	8	0
Woodhead	2	0	4	4	2.0	0	0	2	0
Jones,J	2	0	5	23	11.5	2	0	12	0
Wright	1	0	1	17	17.0	1	0	17	0

Fumbles	No	Rec	TD
Holliday	1	0	0

Kick Returns	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Holliday	4	112	28.0	47	0
Martin	2	34	17.0	24	0
English	1	4	4.0	4	0

Punt Returns	No	Fc	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
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Kicking	Fg	Lg	Xp	Pts
Bailey	1-1	43	3-3	6

Punting	No	Yds	Avg	Tb	20	Bk	Lg
Lechler	1	36	36.0	0	0	0	36

Charleswood Patriots

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	25	In	Td	Sk	Rate
Manning	26	22	254	1	0	5	1	147.0

Rushing	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	10	Lg	TD
Peterson	14	89	6.4	5	3	16	0
Hunter	14	57	4.1	3	2	14	0
Miller	5	5	1.0	1	0	4	0
Manning	1	2	2.0	0	0	2	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	25	Lg	TD
Witten	7	1	10	64	9.1	5	0	11	2
Crabtree	6	0	6	98	16.3	5	1	38	2
Holmes	4	0	5	45	11.3	4	0	15	0
Hartline	3	0	3	34	11.3	2	0	14	0
Peterson	2	0	2	13	6.5	1	0	7	1

Fumbles	No	Rec	TD
Williams,K	0	1	0

Kick Returns	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Hunter	1	24	24.0	24	0
Jones,J	1	22	22.0	22	0
Rice	1	0	0.0	0	0

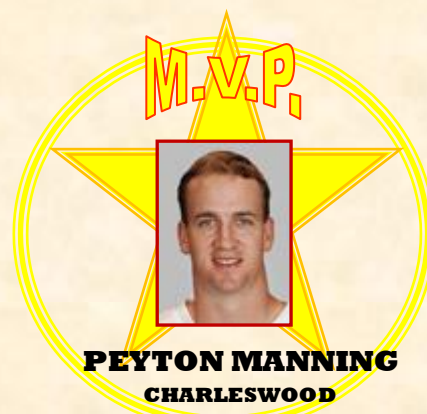
Punt Returns	No	Fc	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
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Kicking	Fg	Lg	Xp	Pts
Hartley	1-1	24	5-5	8

Punting	No	Yds	Avg	Tb	20	Bk	Lg
Huber	2	67	33.5	2	0	0	35

Defense	Tkl	Sk	Def	Stf	Hur	FF	INT
Manualuga	11	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Dunbar	10	1	0	3	0	0	0-0
Bethea	6	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Alonso	6	0	0	1	0	0	0-0
Verner	5	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Finnegan	4	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Harrison	4	0	0	1	0	0	0-0
Peppers	3	0	0	1	1	0	0-0
Ngata	2	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Pollard	1	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
Campbell	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Wolff	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Sanford	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0

Defense	Tkl	Sk	Def	Stf	Hur	FF	INT
Jackson	7	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
Wilson	7	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Johnson,L	6	0	1	1	0	0	0-0
Harris	5	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Pickett	4	0	0	0	3	0	0-0
Taylor	4	0	0	2	1	0	0-0
Delmas	4	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
Trufant	3	0	0	0	0	0	1-26
Barron	3	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
McFadden	3	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Williams,K	1	1	0	0	2	0	0-0
Hartley	1	0	0	0	0	1	0-0
Gholston	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Jones,J	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Phillips	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Hosley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Hankins	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Werner	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Redding	0	0	0	0	2	0	0-0



5 TD passes, 254 yds passing, 147 QB rate. Made Chino pay for run keys.

	CHI	CHP
First Downs	23	27
Rushes	27-152	34-153
Passes	32-20-176	26-22-254
Sacked	1-5	1-7
Fumble	1	0
Penalties	8-56	1-5
Turnovers	2	0
Missed Tackles	7	5
Dropped Passes	0	1
Bad Passes	0	0
Passes 25+	0	1
Runs 10+	6	5
Blitzes	21	9
Time	24:56	35:04
Third Down	8-13	9-12
Fourth Down	1-4	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	3/3/0	5/4/1
Net Offense	323	400



12-6-0

14



15-3-0

24

STARS OUTSHINE 'STANGS! BIG PLAYS ON OFFENCE STUN GARLAND DEFENDERS!

MUSTANG OF THE GAME

Matt Ryan

20 of 27, 195 yards, TDs, 1 INT

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Garland	0	0	7	7	-	14
Markham	0	7	7	10	-	24

NORTH STAR OF THE GAME

Eli Manning

13 of 21, 18 yards, 3 TDs, INTs

GAME SUMMARY: On a breezy day cold afternoon in Markham the defending Champion Markham North Stars charged onto the field to a thunderous ovation from a standing room only crowd at the Dawg Pound to face their Southern rivals, the Garland Mustangs, for the right to advance to the EFL's 7th Gale Sayers Game. Despite a Markham victory over these Mustangs during the regular season, many had predicted a more difficult game for the home team this time, citing a revenge motive and better defensive personnel in favour of Garland. But the roar of the partisan crowd said differently, and they would not be disappointed by a stop by the Stars' defence on 3rd and 1 on the Mustangs' opening possession of the game. Markham took possession after the punt and moved to the Garland 40 where they gambled on 4th and 1. **Patrick Peterson** made the first of 2 interceptions of **Eli Manning** in the 1st half, but **Nick Folk** missed the 47-yard FG attempt that would have given the visitors the lead. The Stars took over and drove to the Garland 29 where a short dump off by Manning was turned into a 29-yard TD by **DeAngelo Williams** – the only scoring play of the 1st half. Looking to catch the Stars off guard, Garland attempted an onside kick to begin the 2nd half, but a Markham bounce went into the arms of **Dekoda Watson**, giving the home team great field position at the Garland 49. Manning made short work of a run-focused Garland defence by connecting with **Jordy Nelson** behind tight coverage for a 30-yard TD pass. Garland had no immediate answer, going three-and-out and punting to the Markham 30. The North Stars gained a 1st down before being shut down and having to punt for the first time in the game. The Mustangs took over at their 19 yard line and managed to cross mid-field before running into a 4th down and 6 at the Markham 44. With time ticking down in the 3rd, the Mustangs went for it and got their biggest play of the day to that point, a 24-yard pass to **Brandon Lloyd**. Two plays later **Matt Ryan** connected with Lloyd from 14 yards out for a TD to narrow the Markham lead to a single TD. Perhaps looking to capitalize on the momentum, Garland attempted another onside kick but this time it went too far and Markham recovered at their 48. A pair of runs by Williams, for 11 and 13 yards, helped put **Shayne Graham** in position to boot a FG to increase the Stars' lead to 17-7. Garland took over at their 20 and proceeded to execute their best drive of the day, mixing in passes and runs over the course of 11 plays and surviving a Ryan fumble to score on a 5-yard TD pass to **Anquan Boldin** to pull within 3 points. But the Markham running attack took control on the ensuing drive as Williams and **Armando Allen** combined for 62 yards on just 4 carries to set up a 25-yard TD pass to **Marques Colston** to make it 24-14 for the home team. The kickoff was downed in the end zone, putting the ball at the Garland 20. With little time remaining, Ryan fired an out pass to **Jeremy Kerley**, but **Antonio Cromartie** was beside him and picked it off. The first takeaway of the game for Markham allowed the Stars run out all but a few seconds of the game and send them to the Final in LA.

QUOTES OF THE GAME

"It didn't seem to matter how many games we won this year, our offence didn't get the respect it deserved. I hope you in the Media finally give Eli and the whole platoon some credit for making big plays against a great defence today. But if you don't, that's fine too. We'll continue to get the job done." – *Markham Coach, Darrin Jones.*

"This is not the ending we'd hoped for, that we'd expected. We'll have to sit down and think about the future. Somebody needs to get fired, for sure, not sure who yet." – *Mustangs' owner, Haus Beauregard.*

"Nobody expected us to win today, but we showed them what championship football is all about!" – *Stars' corner, Charles Tillman.*



ANGRY FAN



titter

HAPPY FAN



Granny Gee @ggee2

This is a very sad end for our Mustangs. I hope and pray it is not the end for Garland as a football town as well.



Big Gretta @Row54

Get the flat bed ready people, I'm coming to LA!

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2012 Garland (1-1)	0	0	7	7	14
2012 Markham (2-0)	0	7	7	10	24

Scoring Summary

2 13:22	Markham	TD Manning 29 pass to Williams (Graham,S) (7-63-4:14)	0-7
3 13:42	Markham	TD Manning 30 pass to Nelson (Graham,S) (3-49-1:12)	0-14
3 0:47	Garland	TD Ryan 14 pass to Lloyd (Folk) (11-81-6:51)	7-14
4 12:08	Markham	FG Graham 36 (7-34-3:27)	7-17
4 4:59	Garland	TD Ryan 5 pass to Boldin (Folk) (11-80-7:09)	14-17
4 2:03	Markham	TD Manning 25 pass to Colston (Graham,S) (6-87-2:51)	14-24

Garland Mustangs

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	25	In	Td	Sk	Rate
Ryan	27	20	195	0	1	2	1	103.2

Rushing	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	10	Lg	TD
Foster	22	85	3.9	5	1	12	0
Forte	9	51	5.7	3	1	15	0
Ryan	1	-2	-2.0	0	0	0	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	25	Lg	TD
Foster	6	0	6	53	8.8	2	0	23	0
Forte	4	0	5	31	7.8	1	0	13	0
Lloyd	4	0	6	61	15.3	4	0	24	1
Boldin	2	0	5	16	8.0	2	0	11	1
Kerley	2	0	3	18	9.0	1	0	9	0
Dreessen	1	0	1	8	8.0	0	0	8	0
Casey	1	0	1	8	8.0	1	0	8	0

Fumbles	No	Rec	TD
Ryan	2	1	0
Foster	1	0	0
Brown	0	1	0
Unger	0	1	0

Kick Returns	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Phillips	1	18	18.0	18	0
Edelman	1	15	15.0	15	0

Punt Returns	No	Fc	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Peterson	1	0	6	6.0	6	0

Kicking	Fg	Lg	Xp	Pts
Folk	0-1	0	2-2	2

Punting	No	Yds	Avg	Tb	20	Bk	Lg
Koch	4	206	51.5	2	0	0	62

Defense	Tkl	Sk	Def	Stf	Hur	FF	INT
Watt	8	0	0	1	0	0	0-0
Hall	6	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Bowman	5	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Weddle	4	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
Henderson	3	0	0	1	0	0	0-0
Peterson	2	0	1	0	0	0	1-6
Spencer	2	0	1	0	1	0	0-0
Avril	2	0	0	0	1	0	0-0
Wilfork	2	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Franks	2	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Dahl	2	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Walden	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Smith	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Dansby	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Young	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Selvie	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Thomas	0	0	0	0	0	0	1-0

Markham North Stars

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	25	In	Td	Sk	Rate
Manning	21	13	182	3	2	3	0	89.8

Rushing	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	10	Lg	TD
Williams,D	13	92	7.1	7	6	20	0
Allen	8	47	5.9	2	2	23	0
Harvin	2	15	7.5	1	1	17	0
Jones	2	6	3.0	0	0	3	0
Manning	1	3	3.0	0	0	3	0
Michael	2	0	0.0	0	0	0	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Avg	FD	25	Lg	TD
Colston	5	0	6	67	13.4	3	1	25	1
Nelson	2	0	3	49	24.5	2	1	30	1
Harvin	2	0	4	13	6.5	0	0	7	0
Miller	2	0	3	17	8.5	1	0	12	0
Williams,D	1	1	3	29	29.0	1	1	29	1
Leach	1	0	2	7	7.0	0	0	7	0

Fumbles	No	Rec	TD
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Kick Returns	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Harvin	1	13	13.0	13	0
Irving	1	0	0.0	0	0
Watson	1	0	0.0	0	0

Punt Returns	No	Fc	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
Parrish	2	0	19	9.5	13	0

Kicking	Fg	Lg	Xp	Pts
Graham	1-1	36	3-3	6

Punting	No	Yds	Avg	Tb	20	Bk	Lg
Podlesh	1	45	45.0	0	1	0	45

Defense	Tkl	Sk	Def	Stf	Hur	FF	INT
Cromartie	8	0	0	0	0	0	1-8
Jackson	8	0	0	1	0	0	0-0
Ninkovich	6	0	0	1	0	2	0-0
Tillman	6	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Cole	5	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
Williams,D	4	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Byrd	3	0	2	0	0	0	0-0
Reed,E	3	0	1	0	0	0	0-0
Abraham	2	0	0	0	1	0	0-0
Woodley	2	0	0	0	1	0	0-0
Cyprien	2	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Canty	1	1	0	0	1	1	0-0
Campbell	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Irving	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Rogers	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Hayden	1	0	0	0	0	0	0-0
Babineaux	0	0	0	0	1	0	0-0



Threw 3 TD passes of 25 or more yards to out-duel Ryan and go to title.

	GDM	MAR
First Downs	20	17
Rushes	32-134	28-163
Passes	27-20-195	21-13-182
Sacked	1-11	0-0
Fumble	3	0
Penalties	3-20	2-12
Turnovers	1	2
Missed Tackles	5	8
Dropped Passes	0	1
Bad Passes	2	2
Passes 25+	0	3
Runs 10+	2	9
Blitzes	10	6
Time	34:25	25:35
Third Down	5-12	3-9
Fourth Down	2-2	0-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/2/0	1/0/1
Net Offense	318	345



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – Many of you have written to ask me why I appear to be holed up in New York this year. It's the economy, folks. Whenever I broach the subject of a trip to, for example, Samoa, for an in-depth piece on the nascent football market in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, Mr. Finchley reminds me that I am lucky to have a job at all in this economy. And that economy, that I'm lucky to have a job in, dictates frugality in expenditures to maximize the amount of revenue that goes into the profit column for the syndicate to which I belong.

On this point he is not in complete denial of reality. Travel budgets in most professions are being slashed or eliminated entirely. It is no surprise, therefore, that when I can access any number of media pool feeds of post game pressers, as well as EFL Sunday Ticket, EFL Red Zone, and EFL Game Film with the 'EFL Network Elite' cable package, not to mention my innumerable "inside sources" spread across the continent, my boss might not see the necessity of me actually travelling to a game venue and reporting in the old style. In fact – as he pointed out to me recently when I attempted to convince him to allow me to travel to Micronesia to dig up reliable history on the mysterious Ricky "Coco" Main – why would he not hire somebody *already in* Micronesia instead of me to the digging? When I pointed out that there was nobody readily available already there, he told me he didn't "give a sh%t about Ricky Main anyway" and the discussion ended.

The reality of the struggling North American economy is forcing all of us to re-think what is absolutely necessary in order to get our jobs done. Many of us are finding out that with some creativity we can do more with less, or at least as much as we did before. Fortunately, that kind of cost-cutting thinking has not extended to anything to do with the EFL Championship Game. Like the Super Bowl before it, spending on the pinnacle event of the one sport that is purely and undeniably American continues to rise in defiance of the laws of economics. As a result, I just received (one week later than usual) my plane ticket to LA and a prized ticket to the EFL's signature event – the Gale Sayers Game. *Thank God!*

BACK TO NORMAL

When **Juan "Wooden Nose" Faltua** took a job with the Chino Convicts at the conclusion of the regular season as assistant to the assistant Assistant Trainer, Chino beat reporter **Quentin San Pedro** took note. "*The Convicts are serious about returning to the big game this year,*" he wrote in his column, "*Deadly serious.*"

Faltua, a supervisor with the *Diablos*, a local "security" company reputed to be connected to the Mexican Mafia that does work at Convicts' games, is whispered to have met with referee **Walt Coleman** at an Iowa City *Jack Astor's* on the eve of Chino's wildcard game against the Cubs. Nobody can verify it, of course, but a cell phone video posted on *YouTube* by **Marvin Ormeister**, a local restaurant review "Blogger" who posts something he likes to call "atmosphere video" to accompany his food reviews, clearly shows Coleman in the background entering the *Jack Astor's* alone. He is followed shortly thereafter by a shadowy-looking figure in black with what appears to be an unnaturally long proboscis. Later, a bus boy is overheard on the audio in the background telling a waitress, "The Mexican guy with the wooden nose seated at table 5 would like a glass of water."

Whatever may or may not have happened at that *Jack Astor's* on the eve of the quarter final game between the Convicts and the Cubs, it certainly appeared that the refs "let them play" on Chino's game-winning TD drive, a drive that saw **Jason Pierre-Paul** mugged, cut down at the knees, and tripped at least once by un-agile left tackle **Phil Loadholt**. There is also no dispute that Coleman personally placed the game ball down in front of **Riley Reiff** prior to the failed game-winning field goal attempt by **Greg Zuerlein** – a ball that holder **Bryan Anger** would later say "felt harder and heavier than usual." The ball was never officially recovered, having been lost in the shuffle between ball boys at the end of the game.

Six days later, the eve of the Pacific-Atlantic Conference final was marred by the grim discovery of a body outside the Fort Garry Hotel in Charleswood. A man described by police as "middle-aged Hispanic, medium height, wearing a black coat and black denim jeans" was found shot to death in a dark corner of the parking lot. The body may have been dumped there as nobody in the area reported hearing any gunshots. It was later identified through the long wooden nasal implant as Faltua, but Winnipeg Police were not releasing any further information on the circumstances or the investigation. Similarly tight-lipped was the Convicts' management, releasing a simple statement that said: "Juan was beloved by all at Diablo Security. His sense of humour and wooden nose will be missed."

Coincidentally, it turns out that referee **Bill Leavy**, a former San Jose police officer, was staying at the Fort Garry Hotel with an old friend from the Iowa State Troopers, **Rhett “Magnum” Canning**, who works part-time as a security consultant and has been hired in the past by EFL officials concerned about fan violence.

How, or if, this is connected to Faltua’s sudden demise is unknown and it would be unfair to speculate. However, it would be fair to say that the Convicts seemed to run afoul of the refs the following afternoon while dropping a 38-24 decision to Charleswood at Patriot Place. The Convicts racked up 8 penalties to just one for the Pats, while a critical fumble by Chino’s **Trindon Holliday**, recovered by the Pats’ **Kevin Williams**, looked to have occurred after Holliday was out of bounds. **Rob Nazar** threw the red challenge flag on that play, but Leavy simply picked it up and pocketed it before



What if they’d won? An enraged fan smashes the front window of a bus in Chino on Sunday night after the Convicts dropped a 38-24 decision to the Patriots in Charleswood. The Pats won fair and square, which caused a small riot after the game by Chino fans furious that **Rob Nazar** was unsuccessful at paying off the referees.

signalling play to resume. A furious Nazar ran on to the field to protest but withdrew quietly following a very brief exchange with Leavy, who never did, it appears, return the red flag to the Chino coach.

Obviously there is a mystery to be revealed here, probably at a much later date after the statute of limitations has expired, but in terms of what transpired on the field of play the players performed as many had expected them to. The Patriots were able to move the ball on the ‘Lockdown Crew’ as many had predicted. Unforeseen, however, was the inability of the Chino defence to stop the Charleswood offensive juggernaut at all, or at least hold them to field goals. The Pats scored on their first six possessions, 5 of those touchdowns. Punter, **Kevin Huber** did not appear until the fourth quarter, when the Pats were in preservation mode on offence. **Peyton Manning** was on fire and demonstrated to all doubters that he could be effective with **Adrian Peterson** out of the line-up. The Pats’ offensive MVP was lost for the second half following a freak injury at the end of the 2nd quarter, leaving **Kendall Hunter** to carry the load late in the game.

Cam Newton played the central role in the Convicts’ attack, but the focus on the Chino pivot went both ways, attracting the attention of the Patriots’ defenders as well as his offensive coordinator. Newton looked his best on the opening drive, completing 4 of 5 pass attempts and running for a touchdown on a quarterback draw to give his team an early 7-0 lead, but he became less effective as the game progressed. By the third quarter, with Chino already trailing 31-17, the Patriots were more than ready for him on a daring 4th-and-2 gamble at the Charleswood 26 yard line. Newton was stuffed for a loss by cornerback **Leonard Johnson**, who read the play all the way while linebacker spy **David Harris** backed him up. Trailing 38-24 in the 4th quarter, the Chino pivot tried too hard to make something happen and hurried a deep throw that Pats’ corner **Desmond Trufant** picked off to seal the game for Charleswood.

With the Patriots knocking off the Convicts in the Conference Final, things are back to normal in the PAC. For two years the fanatical Knights and the crazy Undertakers had battled for supremacy while the traditional powers of the East and West had watched helplessly, or slid off into the ditch trying to keep pace. It will be the Patriots’ third trip to the Final, a game they have yet to win. But Charleswood coach **Jason Findlay** isn’t worried: “I’m just glad to be back in the running,” he said.

DESTINY TWO-TIMER

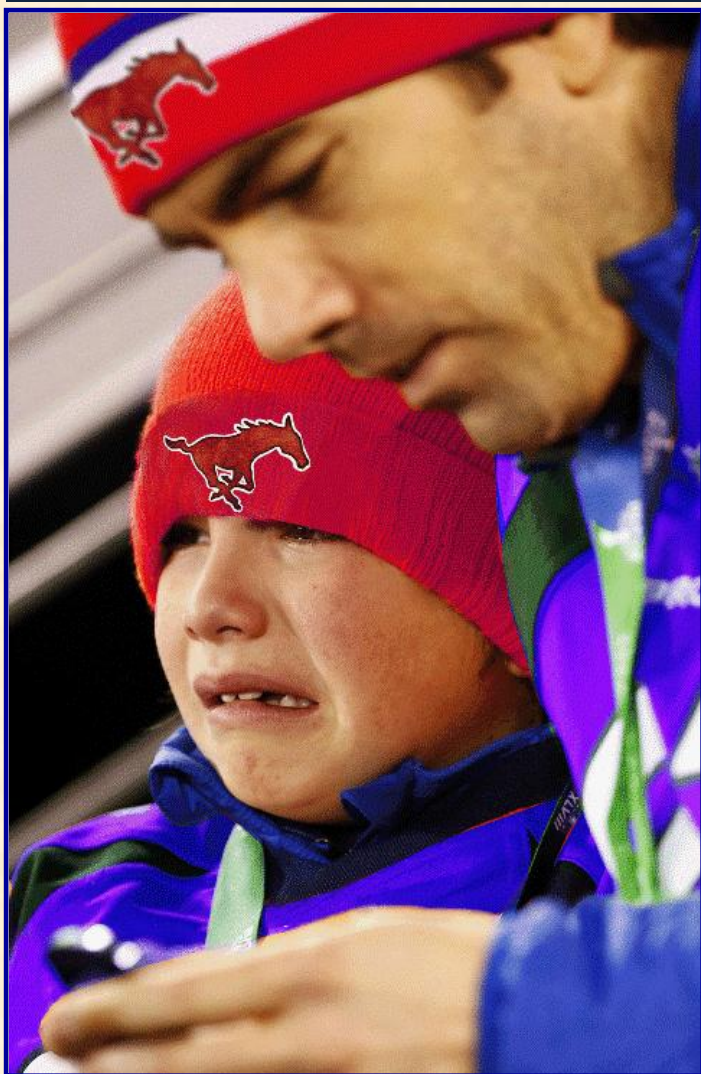
The Garland Mustangs were supposed to be this year’s Team of Destiny. All the signs, including the Chinese Year of the Horse in 2014 – the actual year that the 2013 Final would take place – pointed to Garland. But it turned out that all the signs were wrong. They were merely false signals in Destiny’s attempt to remain stimulating, riveting, and not so boringly predictable. I admit that I was fooled at the start. I bought into Destiny’s false advertising. When the eccentric **Doug Shirley** walked away and left his team in the hands of Destiny, I thought for sure that Destiny would take firm control of his team and guide it on an inexorable course to the ultimate football prize. Putting the team in the hands of a brain-damaged, violent, wild man like **Ricky “Coco” Main** seemed a cleverly artistic touch, and showed that Destiny had a sense of humour. But Destiny cannot pull the wool over Spats’ eyes so easily. I also noticed that, while Destiny was rambunctiously building its case for Garland, it was also smoothly paving the way for its real favourite, its “True Love,” Markham. Destiny is nothing if not a whore for the one that pleases her most, and obviously Markham’s race to the Championship in

2012, beating her other dalliance, Death Valley, was a ride that pleased her well. Destiny keeps no man; man must seize Destiny.

The fact that I had my secret doubts about the Mustangs' ability to upend last year's reigning champs does not mean that I thought they were the lesser team. As the Mustangs were last year, they remain talented underperformers this year (although the talent level has increased since then). But they are racing thoroughbreds ridden by Amateurs, the secret to unlocking their full fury still hidden after it had looked for a brief time as if their new coach had found the key. The Can-Am Conference Final demonstrated that **Ricky "Coco" Main** still had a lot to learn about the team he had inherited, and the team he was facing.

Building on the ground game success they had against Durham in the Quarter Finals, the Mustangs deployed a two-tight end formation with two running backs in the backfield to tackle the league's "next best" defence, after their own. A formation designed to run the ball, the Mustangs treated it like a pro set, attempting to pass and run equally. With twin sluggards **Joel Dreessen** and **James Casey** at tight end, and one of the best corners in the game covering their only wide-out, this offensive game plan did not pay off for them initially, or ever. While the Mustangs struggled to move the ball using offensive strategies that would have been innovative in 1935, the North Stars used relatively modern tactics to move, with some difficulty, against the best defensive personnel in the league. It took a broken play to get them on the scoreboard as **Eli Manning** checked down to **DeAngelo Williams** for a huge 29-yard catch-and-run to the end zone. On either side of that big play were interceptions by the studs of the Garland secondary, **Patrick Peterson** and **Earl Thomas**, but the torturously conservative Mustang offence failed to take advantage.

After being shut out in the first half, but also holding the Markham offence to a single score, the Mustangs tried an onside kick to start the second half. It was unsuccessful, but pivotal. It was the kind of play that teams with bad defences might attempt when they are afraid that their opponent will ram the ball down their throats. But the Mustang defence is arguably the best part of the Garland team. Not giving them an opportunity to make Eli look like a buffoon was, in itself, a buffoonish move. Nevertheless, had it



This dad probably wishes he hadn't made the trip to Markham to expose his young son to Garland's elimination from the playoffs. The Mustangs' hoped for victory lap never occurred as the North Stars knocked them off their stride early, grabbed the lead, and never looked back.

worked, pundits with raised eyebrows would have praised the move as "bold" and nodded approvingly the way one does when somebody pulls off a crazy stunt that nobody in their right mind would have attempted but, because it was successful, has to be recognized as something that could only have happened because of that crazy person making the crazy call, thus making it a "brilliant move."

But since it didn't work, we can safely call it buffoonish and move on to the aftermath.

Three plays after the ill-fated onside kick, Eli caught the Mustangs gunning hard for Williams and threw a perfect fly to **Jordy Nelson** behind the Garland coverage for a 30-yard TD pass to make it 14-0 for Markham. It was the signature pass of 2013 for Eli – the perfect throw at the perfect time.

The Mustangs eventually moved out of their two-tight end formation and finally got on the board with a 14-yard TD pass from **Matt Ryan** to **Brandon Lloyd** in the final minute of the 3rd quarter to trail 14-7. Nearly three quarters of the game had elapsed before the Mustangs had decided to adopt a 21st century offensive game plan.

Back to the same 7-point deficit they had faced at the start of the 2nd half, the Mustangs repeated their earlier folly by trying another onside kick. While the first attempt had not gone far enough, this one went too far, and the result was the same – the North Stars recovered. The Stars converted the Mustangs' largesse into 3 points and a 17-7 lead, which was soon narrowed to 17-14 after an impressive 80-yard drive by the Mustangs ended with **Anquan Boldin** snaring a 5-yard TD pass from Ryan.

With less than five minutes remaining in the game, the North Stars hammered the Garland defence. Despite a relatively fresh Mustangs defence, the Stars mastered the line of scrimmage, allowing Williams to rip off 39 yards in 3 carries and back-up **Armando Allen** to bust a 23-yard run that eventually set up a 25-yard TD pass to **Marques Colston**. That major gave the North Stars a two-score lead with just 2:03 left in the game, a very difficult

situation for the visitors that turned out to be more than they could handle. After avoiding the turnover to that point, Ryan got picked off by **Antonio Cromartie** at the 1:59 mark, all but sealing the win.

The post-game jubilation in the stands at the Dawg Pound was matched in its impressive impact by a tearful, Gatorade-soaked, **Darrin Jones**, who blubbered nearly incoherently into the microphone of WOLF Network's **Erin Andrews**: *"I coach the best team in the GAME! You try us with a sorry team like Garland and that's what's going to happen! You all said we were going to get ours today, but we shut you all up. I LOVE these guys! Great game DAWGS! Eli is the BEST! AAHHHHhhhhh....!"* The unprecedented visceral outburst from Jones could be a sign that emotions on the North Stars' sideline were highly intense that day, or he is taking Adderall with the rest of his team.

MVP SEARCH

It is now time for members of the Affiliated Press (AP) to solemnly consider who, on both offence and defence, contributed the most to his team's success in 2013. Note how I included the word "success." Players who tried hard and got results in losing situations tend to get ignored in these types of polls, and rightfully so – if they were really so good their teams wouldn't be so awful. So, disregarding the high achievers on the league's most notable losers, I present some MVP considerations. First, on offence:

Adrian Peterson (CHP) – A.P. touched the ball more than any other non-quarterback in the league. His 2,399 total yards, including a league-leading 2,063 yards rushing, led the league and his 23 touchdowns topped all other running backs.

Andre Johnson (DVU) – A.J. was the face of the Undertakers' attack, the second-highest scoring offence, hauling in 103 passes for 2,190 yards and 28 touchdowns, both of which are EFL records. His potency failed to earn Death Valley a playoff berth, however.

Calvin Johnson (DTL) – As a member of the league's most proficient offence, **Megatron** set a new EFL record for receptions with 122, converting 20 of those into TD passes and gaining 1,924 yards.

Peyton Manning (CHP) – The highest-rated QB who started every game for his team this year threw for over 4,000 yards and 27 TDs in leading his team to a division title. This after spending an entire year on injured reserve. Impressive!

Cam Newton (CHI) – The second-highest rated QB who started all but one of his team's games this year threw for 3,319 yards and 28 TDs, but also rushed for 672 yards and 8 TDs to give him 3,991 total yards and 36 total touchdowns. He was a one-man show.

Alfred Morris (COW) – He led the league in yards per carry by a running back with 5.6, and came within 42 yards of the rushing title. His 15 touchdowns were impressive but his most impressive achievement was creating time in the pocket for Joe Flacco.

BEST OF THE REST: **Tony Romo** completed a remarkable 70% of his passes while throwing for 29 TDs, but his most impressive number was a 9-7 record for the Regulators. Road-grader **Evan Mathis** laid down 49 big blocks and surrendered just 1 sack all season to grade out as Pro Football Focal Point's #1 guard in football. The Markham running game would have been nowhere without him. **Drew Brees** captained the highest scoring offence in the league with a league-high 4,789 yards passing and 42 TD passes; but he also led the league in interceptions with 23.

On defence, the contest for M.V.P. is a little more controversial as sack-masters compete with cover-specialists for top-billing in a difficult deliberation:

J.J. Watt (GDM) – The Mustangs' behemoth came in third in sacks with 15, but also added 60 tackles, 21 QB Pressures, 14 run stuffs, 3 forced fumbles and an incredible 14 pass deflections. The best lineman and corner on his team, J.J. was a true force.

Aldon Smith (VV) – On a Virden defence that performed beneath expectations, Smith exceeded expectation with a record-tying 21 sacks, 56 tackles, 19 QB Pressures, 7 run stuffs and a phenomenal 7 forced fumbles, second in the league.

Von Miller (YOR) – The numbers for this defensive stud do not conquer any category, but 89 tackles, 12 run stuffs, 6 sacks, 4 forced fumbles, and 6 deflections show just how well-rounded he was despite facing routine double-teams.

Richard Sherman (DTL) – The Lizards' shutdown corner was so effective that opposing QBs attempted just 71 passes in his direction. He still managed 53 tackles, 4 interceptions, 13 deflections, and a measly 50.7% completion rate against.

Jo-Lonn Dunbar (CHI) – This free agent paid off with 146 tackles and a league-leading 19 run stuffs to go along with his 5 sacks, 7 pass deflections, 5 forced fumbles, 2 recovered fumbles, 1 interception and a fumble recovery for a TD. Little name, big time player.

Geno Atkins (YOR) – His 13 sacks lead all interior linemen by far, an impressive number. Add 52 tackles, 11 QB Pressures, 4 run stuffs, 3 deflections, 3 forced fumbles and 2 recovered fumbles and you have a dominant defender at the center of the line.

Casey Hayward (ICC) – He not only led the league in picks with 8, he also held opposing QBs to a paltry 45.3% completion percentage in a meagre 64 attempts, recovered 2 fumbles, and deflected 12 passes.

BEST OF THE REST: **Charles Johnson** of Death Valley came in second in sacks with 16 and 7 forced fumbles – a playmaker for sure – but his run defence was questionable. **Luke Kuechly** of South Carolina led the league in tackles with 163, and added 12 run stuffs and 3 fumble recoveries. Not a highlight-reel player, his steady contribution nevertheless made the Regulators' defence respectable. **Charles Tillman** of the North Stars played every single down this year and considering he had no rest he performed extremely well with 81 tackles, 8 deflections and just 80 attempts his way. Finally, Garland's **Eric Weddle** was so forbidding that he saw only 59 passes attempted his way, picking off 3, deflecting 8, and forcing 1 fumble.

FEARLESS PREDICTION: The sentimental part of me hopes for a Patriots' win because it is high time, after two appearances on the big stage, for a Charleswood victory. Sadly for Patriots fans, my sentimental side is very small (some have accused me of being heartless) and my intellectual capacity is very large. In other words, while my heart says Charleswood, my brain says Markham. Eli will beat older brother Peyton in the big game and make family reunions difficult from here on in.

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JIMMY'S CHAMPIONSHIP PICK

At 'Round Table Stadium' in Los Angeles

MARKHAM versus CHARLESWOOD (line – Pick'Em)

INJURIES: Markham – None. Charleswood – Jerraud Powers (OUT).

BACKGROUND: These teams did not face each other in 2013. Historically, Charleswood has a 3-1 series advantage in the regular season; they have never faced each other in the playoffs. The Manning Brothers have faced each other four times during the regular season with older brother Peyton winning all four. The brothers have not faced each other during the post-season. The Patriots ranked 3rd in the league in points scored with 490; the North Stars ranked 2nd in the league in points surrendered, giving up just 309. Charleswood's record in the Final is 0-2, while the North Stars won their only previous appearance in the Gale Sayers Game.

WHEN MARKHAM HAS THE BALL: The North Stars like to run the ball up the gut of their opponent to set up the pass. Don't expect that to change in this game. Markham is not only well-equipped to move the pile, they like the ability of Jordy Nelson and Marques Colston to make the opposition pay for cheating against the ground game, and they trust Eli Manning to make the plays in those situations. The North Stars like to run two formations – a basic 'pro' set and a 3-wide set with a single back. They are not reluctant to run from either formation, relying on their offensive line to make the blocks. Expect little different from the Markham offensive game plan than you saw during the regular season, especially here. The Pats have struggled to stop the run all year and the Stars will want to control the ball and keep it out of Peyton's hands.

WHEN CHARLESWOOD HAS THE BALL: The Pats run one of the league's most balanced attacks out of the 'pro' set, confident in the ability of their skill players to make the plays. Peyton Manning was the league's most efficient full-time quarterback, Adrian Peterson the league's most durable workhorse, Michael Crabtree a play-maker, and Jason Witten the best safety valve in the game. It is no wonder then that the Pats don't attempt to deceive an opponent with multiple formations – they line up and dare you to stop them. As well-stocked as they are at the skill positions, however, their offensive line has been relatively mediocre all season. In order to win the battle in the trenches against a Markham defence that was first in the league in yards-per-play allowed, the Pats will have to mix their play selection well. They will also wish to avoid obvious passing situations as much as possible since the Markham pass rush, and cover ability of their corners, have proven to be a deadly combo for the Stars' opponents. Conversely, if they can catch Markham guessing, the Pats have the tools to crack the defence wide open.

THE WAY I SEE IT: While this game is being billed as Eli versus Peyton, the difference will ultimately come down to the performance of those around them. This is an interesting match-up between an offensive powerhouse and a team that has survived largely by stopping their opponents. The Markham defence, an impressive balance of reliable run-stopping and lethal pass-defending, has dictated the pace of their opponent's offence in all but a small handful of games all year. It is no accident that the Stars have more takeaways (36) than any other team. It is also no accident that the Pats have turned the ball over less than any other team (15) with Peyton Manning reading the defence and avoiding traps and AP keeping defenders off balance. There is no question that the Stars' defenders will slow down the prolific Charleswood offence, but the same cannot be said for the Pats' defenders shutting down the DeAngelo Williams freight train. The ability of the Markham offence to control the ball will be pivotal to the outcome of this contest; if they can control the clock and come away with points in the process, the Pats will be forced to move away from their balanced game plan and that will play into the hands of the Markham defence. On the other hand, a mistake or two by younger brother Eli will be like gold in the hands of older brother Peyton. While neither brother is a stranger to the Big Game atmosphere if the EFL Final, Eli has won one while Peyton has been turned away twice. Expect the cheeky younger brother to play without fear while his defence shuts down AP and puts the game in the elder's hands. **PICK: MARKHAM**