

WEEK 7

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# 2012 EFL 2012

November 25, 2012

**EAST**

York	6	1	0
Viriden	5	2	0
Commonwealth	5	2	0
Mohave	2	5	0
Charleswood	0	7	0

**WEST**

Death Valley	7	0	0
Chino	4	3	0
Los Angeles	3	4	0
Iowa City	1	6	0
Mission Viejo	1	6	0

**NORTH**

Durham	6	1	0
Markham	4	2	1
Cowtown	4	2	1
Pickering	2	5	0
Viriden	1	6	0

**SOUTH**

Scarborough	7	0	0
Garland	4	3	0
Gwinnett	3	4	0
South Carolina	3	4	0
Sebastian	1	6	0

Scarborough running back **Ray Rice** (right) is in a race against the clock to carry the ball into field goal range for **Sebastian Janikowski** before time expires. Rice reached the Viriden 30 with 4 seconds left to set up the game-winning field goal as the Blue Eagles rose to 7-0. In other EFL action, the Mustangs needed overtime to unhorse the Knights as did Commonwealth in their contest against expansion sister, Twin Cities. **Drew Brees** continued his run at TD pass record. (More Inside)

# BIRDS FLY HIGH!

## RAY RICE



*Who was slick  
in Week Seven?*

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



**Matt Ryan**  
QB  
Garland  
Mustangs

35 of 54, 362 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT,  
he took on Blue Shield by himself.



**Calais Campbell**  
DE  
Scarborough  
Blue Eagles

7 tackles, 3 sacks, 1 PD, 1 Hur, 1  
FF, 1 Safety was the difference.





7-0-0

22



## GAME OF THE WEEK



5-2-0

20

**“SUPER 7” IS IN THE BAG!**  
**UNBEATEN EAGLES SACK STAFFORD 8 TIMES**  
**TO SQUEEZE OUT DRAMATIC ROAD WIN**

## EAGLE OF THE GAME

Calais Campbell

7 Tackles, 3 Sacks, 1 PD, 1 H, 1 FF

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Scarborough	10	0	0	12	-	22
Virren	0	10	0	10	-	20

## VIOLATOR OF THE GAME

Matt Stafford

25 of 40, 291 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT

**GAME SUMMARY:** A tense struggle between two first-place teams reached its climax with 4 seconds left. With Scarborough trailing 20-19, kicker **Sebastian Janikowski** lined up at the Virren 38 yard line to attempt a 48-yard field goal that would decide the outcome. His kick had enough leg but started wide right, prompting early cheers from Virren fans in the end zone seats, before tailing gradually to the left and slipping inside the right upright. The game was over, in dramatic fashion, and the Blue Eagles remained unbeaten after 7 weeks; but it was not an easy road. The two teams battled to a 10-10 tie after 2 quarters, each taking advantage of turnovers to score their points. Scarborough took the early lead on a field goal following an interception of **Matt Stafford** by **Antonio Cromartie**. Then on Virren's next possession, **Calais Campbell** swept by right tackle **Jeff Otah** and sacked Stafford, forcing a fumble that was recovered by **Bart Scott** at the Virren 15 yard line. A 4-yard TD run by **CJ Spiller** put the Eagles in front 10-0. But the Violators launched a counter-strike after the Blue Eagles turned the ball over on downs at the Virren 35. **LaDainian Tomlinson** finished off a 6-play drive by taking a screen pass 21 yards for a TD to put the Violators on the board. The home team then tied it up after **Nick Barnett** picked off **Aaron Rodgers** and returned it 20 yards to the Scarborough 31. The Violators couldn't move the ball from there but kicker **Lawrence Tynes** nailed it down the center from 49 yards for 3 points. After a scoreless 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, Virren took the lead on a 27-yard field goal by Tynes; but Scarborough answered by moving the ball 80 yards in just 4 plays, highlighted by passes of 24 yards to **Greg Little** and 40 yards for a TD to tight end **Heath Miller**. Scarborough stretched their lead to 6 points on Virren's subsequent possession when Campbell notched his 3<sup>rd</sup> sack of the game for a safety. The teams then exchanged 2 punts each before the Violators went on the offensive in a big way by driving 97 yards in just over 3 minutes, ending with a 2-yard dive into the end zone by Tomlinson for a 20-19 lead. The Blue Eagles took over at their 24 yard line with 1:22 left and 2 time outs. A dink-and-dunk drive ended on an 8-yard screen pass to Ray Rice and a timeout at the Virren 30 to set up the dramatic kick.

## QUOTE OF THE GAME

“Boy, that was a tough one! What a kick by Jani! They fought hard but we violated those Virgins!” – *Blue Eagles owner, Chris Dickinson.*

“This is the kind of team we need to find a way to beat. I was proud of our effort, but that team knows how to win, how to make something happen when the chips are down. They have a fearsome defence.” – *Virren coach, Lance Barrate,* replying to questions about Virren's post-season potential.



## FANS' THUMB UP

Josh Freeman's poise in the

## FANS' THUMB DOWN

Virren offensive line



## FAN RATING



11-23-2012 Temp: 61 Wind: Calm None MVP: Aaron Rodgers

1 8:03 Scarborough	FG Janikowski 38 (4-0-0:55)	3-0
1 6:30 Scarborough	TD Spiller 4 run (Janikowski) (2-15-0:46)	10-0
2 12:33 Virren	TD Stafford 21 pass to Tomlinson (Tynes) (6-65-3:46)	10-7
2 1:05 Virren	FG Tynes 49 (4-0-1:03)	10-10
4 14:57 Virren	FG Tynes 27 (12-73-5:28)	10-13
4 12:46 Scarborough	TD Rodgers 40 pass to Miller (Janikowski) (4-80-2:11)	17-13
4 11:52 Scarborough	Safety Campbell	19-13
4 1:29 Virren	TD Tomlinson 2 run (Tynes) (8-97-3:10)	19-20
4 0:00 Scarborough	FG Janikowski 48 (8-46-1:18)	22-20

	SBE	VV
First Downs	16	21
Rushes	24-94	19-98
Passes	33-22-227	40-25-291
Sacked	1-6	8-67
Fumble	1	1
Penalties	8-50	7-45
Turnovers	1	2
Missed Tackles	6	5
Blitzes	20	35
Time	27:56	32:04
Third Down	4-12	5-15
Fourth Down	0-1	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/1/1	2/1/1
Net Offense	315	322



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



**MONARCHS**

1-6-0

0

0

0

0

0

**0**

OT

**Ray Mauualuga**  
17 Tackles, 1 PD, 4 Stuffs



**GLADIATORS**

3-4-0

7

0

14

0

0

**21**

**Ben Roethlisberger**  
18 of 26, 210 yards, 3 TDs

**Nate Burleson** took a short slant from **Ben Roethlisberger** 56 yards to the Monarchs' 5 yard line to set up a 3-yard TD pass to tight end **Ed Dickson** to open the scoring. The Glads rode that 7-point lead until their first possession of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter when Dickson finished an 83-yard drive with his second TD catch of the day on a 12-yard short cross. On Mission Viejo's subsequent possession, Gwinnett safety **Troy Polamalu** intercepted **Colt McCoy** at the Monarchs' 41 yard line, leading to Dickson's third TD of the afternoon – a 20-yard catch-and-run to finish off the day's scoring.



**CONVICTS**

4-3-0

3

3

7

7

0

**20**

OT

**Cam Newton**  
185 yds pass, 82 yds rush, 2 TDs



**SPARTANS**

2-5-0

0

6

7

3

0

**16**

**Robert Griffin III**  
16 of 31, 200 yards, 39 yds rush

A battle of field goals ended in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter when **Chris Johnson** capped off Pickering's first trip to the Chino red zone with an 8-yard TD run to give his team a 13-6 lead. Chino's special teams and defence responded to set up a short field for **Cam Newton**, who scrambled 25 yards to the Pickering 4 yard line then tied the game with a 4-yard TD pass to **Greg Olsen**. After a Spartans FG, Chino regained the lead on an 88-yard TD drive that ended with Newton running it on a 5-yard bootleg. **Julius Peppers** sacked **Robert Griffin** in the Chino red zone with 11 seconds left to help preserve the win.



**T-LIZARDS**

6-1-0

10

7

7

7

0

**31**

OT

**Reggie Bush**  
16 carries, 115 yards, 1 TD



**PATRIOTS**

0-7-0

0

3

7

0

0

**10**

**Mark Barron**  
7 Tackles, 1 Stuff, 2 INTs, 1 TD

Two lost fumbles in the first half by the Patriots deep in their territory led to a pair of early TDs for the Thunder Lizards, while a pair of **Philip Rivers** interceptions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter led to just a lone Charleswood field goal, giving the visitors a 17-3 lead at half time. Rivers connected with **Calvin Johnson** for a 26-yard TD pass to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and the game looked well in hand for Durham. But Pats' rookie safety **Mark Barron** picked off Rivers and returned it 30 yards for a TD to make it briefly look like a game until **Reggie Bush** broke through with a 9-yard TD run put the game away in the 4th.





# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



## HELLFIRE

2-5-0

0

10

7

7

0

24

OT

Andrew Luck

23 of 33, 244 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT



## REGULATORS

3-4-0

7

0

14

7

0

28

Tony Romo

17 of 22, 181 yards, 4 TDs, 1 INT

An interception by Mohave corner **Chris Houston** set up a 5-yard scramble for a TD by **Andrew Luck** to give the Hellfire a 10-7 lead in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. They added another TD on an 11-yard run by **Mike Tolbert** that capped off a time-consuming 82-yard drive to start the 3<sup>rd</sup>. But **Tony Romo** re-gained control for the Regs by leading consecutive scoring drives, with TD passes to **AJ Green** and **Brandon Pettigrew** to take a 21-17 lead. A 4<sup>th</sup> & 14 conversion led to the go-ahead TD for Mohave on a 5-yard pass to **Jimmy Graham**, but Romo hit Green for a 5-yard TD with 2:28 left for the win.



## TRIUMPH

1-6-0

14

7

0

3

0

24

OT

Jay Cutler

19 of 24, 213 yards, 2 TDs



## COLONIALS

5-2-0

7

7

7

3

3

27

Josh Freeman

21 of 31, 219 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT

A 36-yard pass to **Vincent Brown** on the opening play signalled a strong start for the Triumph and after 2 possessions they were leading 14-0. The Colonials stayed close on a sneak across the goal line by **Josh Freeman** and a 1-yard TD pass to **Lance Moore** on either end of a **Jay Cutler** TD pass to **Dennis Pitta** to trail Twin Cities 21-14 at the half. A Freeman 2-yard scramble for a TD tied the game for Commonwealth in the 3<sup>rd</sup> then the teams traded FGs in the 4<sup>th</sup>. **Kevin Burnett** picked off Freeman late in the 4<sup>th</sup> to force OT. But the Colonials got the ball first and drove 60 yards for the winning FG.



## CORN KINGS

4-2-1

14

3

7

10

0

34

OT

Joe Flacco

21 of 33, 247 yards, 3 TDs, 1 INT



## CUBS

1-6-0

0

0

3

7

0

10

Donald Brown

25 Carries, 98 yards, 1 TD

On the Cubs' second play, **Corey Webster** picked off **Russell Wilson** and returned it 41 yards for a TD for a 7-0 Cowtown lead. Iowa City's offence could not generate any movement early in the game, allowing the Corn Kings to build up a 24-0 lead before **Greg Zuerlein** broke the goose egg in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter with a 40-yard FG. The Cubs stuck to the ground game and scored a major on a 4-yard run by **Donald Brown** early in the 4<sup>th</sup> to pull within 14 points. But **Joe Flacco** completed 7 of 9 straight pass attempts, connecting with **Malcolm Floyd** for a 40-yard TD to put the game out of reach.



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



## MUSTANGS

4-3-0

0	7	7	3	3	20
					OT

**Matt Ryan**  
35 of 54, 362 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT



## KNIGHTS

3-4-0

3	3	3	8	0	17
					OT

**Alex Smith**  
26 of 39, 257 yards, 1 TD

After holding off the Mustangs' offence and cashing in on a pair of **Chris Carpenter** FGs, the Knights' D let **Laurent Robinson** free for a 32-yard catch-and-run TD to give Garland a 7-6 lead at the half. A turnover by **Matt Ryan** early in the 3<sup>rd</sup> set up an LA field goal to give them back the lead, but a 1-yard TD pass to **Dustin Keller** put the Mustangs back in front. **Robbie Gould's** FG extended the Garland lead but a 3-yard TD pass to **Roddy White** and good 2-point convert tied it at 17. Garland got the ball first in OT, and a 44-yard pass to Robinson set up Gould's game-winner from 21 yards out.



## UNDERTAKERS

7-0-0

7	7	7	17	0	38
					OT

**Drew Brees**  
19 of 25, 253 yards, 4 TDs, 1 INT



## SWORDFISH

1-6-0

0	0	7	7	0	14
					OT

**Pierre Thomas**  
14 Carries, 63 yards, 2 TDs

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter the Swordfish were still in the thick of it after **Willis McGahee** fumbled and lost the ball at the Sebastian 43. That set up a 6-yard TD run by **Pierre Thomas** that shrunk the Undertakers' lead to 14-7; but McGahee broke a 23-yard run on Death Valley's next possession to kick-start a drive that led to a 19-yard TD pass from **Drew Brees** to **Aaron Hernandez** to re-gain a two-score advantage, 21-7. A turnover on downs by Sebastian set up Brees' 4<sup>th</sup> TD pass of the day and a 28-7 lead. A couple of late picks of **Andy Dalton**, one returned for a TD, sealed the win.



## NORTH STARS

4-2-1

7	0	0	0	0	7
					OT

**James Starks**  
15 Carries, 90 yards



## EXCALIBURS

6-1-0

7	9	7	7	0	30
					OT

**Tom Brady**  
20 of 28, 262 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT

Markham struck on their first possession with a 12-yard TD pass from **Eli Manning** to **Jordy Nelson** to take a 7-0 lead; but on their next, York's **Jason Babin** sacked Manning and forced a fumble at the Markham 17. Three plays later, **Brandon Jacobs** was across the goal line from 1 yard out to tie the game at 7. The Stars' attack never got back on track while the Excaltors' took off under **Tom Brady**, who threw a 9-yard TD pass to **Victor Cruz** to put York in front 13-7 in the 2nd. **Marc Mariani** returned a punt 69 yards for a TD and Brady added another TD pass to give York an easy win.





# BODY COUNT



## WEEK SEVEN INJURY REPORT



<b>CHARLESWOOD</b>	David Wilson, RB – OUT; Barrett Ruud, LB – OUT (2 games); Sidney Rice, WR – OUT (3 games); Adrian Peterson, RB- OUT (3 games); Jon Beason, ILB – OUT (Season)
<b>CHINO</b>	Michael Boley, LB – OUT; Quincy Black, OLB – OUT (2 games); James Harrison, OLB – OUT (2 games); Aqib Talib, CB – OUT (2 games)
<b>COMMONWEALTH</b>	Marcus McNeill, T – OUT; Emmanuel Sanders, WR – QUESTIONABLE; Andre Smith, T – OUT (3 games)
<b>COWTOWN</b>	Todd Heap, TE – PROBABLE; Alphonso Smith, CB – DOUBTFUL
<b>DEATH VALLEY</b>	Jerel Worthy, DE – PROBABLE; Janoris Jenkins, CB – OUT; Mario Manningham, WR – OUT (2 games); Alshon Jeffery, WR – OUT (3 games); Jimmy Smith, CB – OUT (4 games); Gerald McCoy, DT – OUT (7 games)
<b>DURHAM</b>	Devin McCourty, CB, OUT; Corey Wootton, DE – OUT (4 games)
<b>GARLAND</b>	Darrius Heyward-Bey, WR - DOUTBFUL; Will Smith, DE – OUT (2 games); Peyton Hillis, RB – OUT (2 games); Deji Karim, RB – OUT (2 games); Quinn Johnson, FB – OUT (8 games)
<b>GWINNETT</b>	Jaiquawn Jarrett, S – OUT (2 games); Ahmad Bradshaw, RB – OUT (4 games)
<b>IOWA CITY</b>	Brandon Harris, CB – OUT (3 games); Mario Williams, OLB – OUT (9 games)
<b>LOS ANGELES</b>	Colin Brown, C – DOUTBFUL; Sion Fua, DT – OUT (3 games); Nick Miller, WR – OUT (6 games); Sam Young, T – OUT (Season)
<b>MARKHAM</b>	Trent Cole, DE – QUESTIONABLE; Roscoe Parrish, WR – OUT (7 games)
<b>MISSION VIEJO</b>	Michael Brockers, DE – OUT (4 games); Jonathan Vilma, LB – OUT (5 games)
<b>MOHAVE</b>	Bruce Irvin, DE – QUESTIONABLE; Daniel Thomas, RB – QUESTIONABLE; Benjamin Watson, TE – OUT (2 games); Aaron Williams, CB – OUT (5 games)
<b>PICKERING</b>	Joe Adams, WR – QUESTIONABLE; Kerry Rhodes, S – OUT (2 games); Darren McFadden, RB – OUT (5 games); T.I. Ward, S – OUT (6 games); Miles Austin, WR – OUT (6 games)
<b>SCARBOROUGH</b>	DeSean Jackson, WR – QUESTIONABLE; LaMarr Woodley, OLB – OUT (3 games); Justin Tuck, DL – OUT (3 games); Kris Dileman, G – OUT (8 games)
<b>SEBASTIAN</b>	Patrick Robinson, CB – PROBABLE; Louis Murphy, WR – OUT; Leonard Hankerson, WR – OUT (8 games), Kenny Britt, WR – OUT (Season)
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>	Justin Durant, LB – OUT (2 games); Shareece Wright, S – OUT (5 games); Bradley Fletcher, CB – OUT (6 games); Brandon Spikes, ILB – OUT (8 games); Patrick Chung, S – OUT (9 games); Brandon Graham, DE – OUT (Season)
<b>TWIN CITIES</b>	Matt Roth, DE – OUT (2 games); Jerry Hughes, DE – OUT (3 games); Ray Lewis, ILB – OUT (4 games); Antoine Winfield, CB – OUT (9 games)
<b>VIRDEN</b>	Brandon Meriweather, S – OUT (3 games); La Ron Landry, S – OUT (5 games); Prince Amukamara, CB – OUT (7 games); Shawne Merriman, DE-LB OUT (9 games); Eric Berry, S – OUT (Season)
<b>YORK</b>	Anquan Boldin, WR – OUT (2 games); Danieal Manning, CB – OUT (2 games); Donald Washington, S – OUT (2 games); Rashean Mathis, CB – OUT (4 games); Donald Jones, WR – OUT (4 games)



# STATS



## WEEK SEVEN

## STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
York	6	1	0	0.857	219	31.3	95	13.6	17.7	3 1 0	3 1 0	5 1 0
Viriden	5	2	0	0.714	236	33.7	179	25.6	8.1	3 1 0	4 0 0	5 1 0
Commonwealth	5	2	0	0.714	175	25	150	21.4	3.6	3 1 0	2 2 0	4 2 0
Mohave	2	5	0	0.286	138	19.7	239	34.1	-14.4	3 1 0	3 1 0	0 1 0
Charleswood	0	7	0	0	106	15.1	232	33.1	-18	0 4 0	0 4 0	0 6 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Death Valley	7	0	0	1.000	279	39.9	165	23.6	16.3	3 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
Chino	4	3	0	0.571	162	23.1	133	19	4.1	1 2 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Los Angeles	3	4	0	0.429	204	29.1	152	21.7	7.4	1 3 0	3 1 0	3 3 0
Iowa City	1	6	0	0.143	130	18.6	170	24.3	-5.7	1 3 0	0 4 0	1 5 0
Mission Viejo	1	6	0	0.143	74	10.6	229	32.7	-22.1	1 2 0	1 3 0	1 5 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	6	1	0	0.857	198	28.3	130	18.6	9.7	3 0 0	3 1 0	5 1 0
Cowtown	4	2	1	0.643	180	25.7	128	18.3	7.4	2 1 0	2 1 1	3 2 1
Markham	4	2	1	0.643	153	21.9	131	18.7	3.1	2 0 1	2 1 1	4 1 1
Pickering	2	5	0	0.286	140	20	167	23.9	-3.9	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 4 0
Twin Cities	1	6	0	0.143	122	17.4	172	24.6	-7.1	1 2 0	0 4 0	1 5 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Scarborough	7	0	0	1.000	207	29.6	92	13.1	16.4	3 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
Garland	4	3	0	0.571	172	24.6	123	17.6	7	2 1 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Gwinnett	3	4	0	0.429	162	23.1	164	23.4	-0.3	1 3 0	1 3 0	2 4 0
South Carolina	3	4	0	0.429	102	14.6	169	24.1	-9.6	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 4 0
Sebastian	1	6	0	0.143	71	10.1	210	30	-19.9	0 4 0	1 3 0	1 5 0

## PASSING

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Brees	DVU	265	193	72.8	2598	3	1.1	54	32	12.1	138.5
2	Stafford	VV	224	162	72.3	2201	5	2.2	55	20	8.9	123.8
3	Brady	YOR	200	134	67.0	1941	4	2.0	75	14	7.0	113.4
4	Luck	MOH	163	113	69.3	1341	4	2.5	52	11	6.7	106.4
5	Smith,A	LAK	242	165	68.2	1805	4	1.7	51	15	6.2	103.8
6	Newton,C	CHI	181	119	65.7	1370	2	1.1	75	10	5.5	102.2
7	Cutler	TCT	176	115	65.3	1245	2	1.1	36	9	5.1	98.3
8	Rodgers,A	SBE	230	155	67.4	1799	4	1.7	73	10	4.3	98.1
9	Rivers,P	DTL	218	138	63.3	1947	10	4.6	53	16	7.3	97.4
10	Ryan,M	GDM	296	192	64.9	2218	6	2.0	81	12	4.1	92.4
11	Flacco	COW	245	139	56.7	1717	7	2.9	76	16	6.5	88.4
12	Wilson,R	ICC	154	96	62.3	1280	5	3.2	66	6	3.9	88.1
13	Vick	CHP	99	63	63.6	732	3	3.0	71	4	4.0	86.8
14	Roethlisbe	GWG	234	148	63.2	1510	11	4.7	80	14	6.0	82.0
15	Manning,E	MAR	193	113	58.5	1562	8	4.1	57	7	3.6	79.4
16	Romo	SC	215	141	65.6	1497	11	5.1	65	9	4.2	78.4
17	Gabbert	MOH	73	40	54.8	448	2	2.7	49	3	4.1	75.6
18	Freeman,J	COM	211	131	62.1	1482	11	5.2	61	8	3.8	74.0
19	Weeden	CHP	108	62	57.4	716	3	2.8	50	2	1.9	72.1
20	McCoy,C	MVM	120	70	58.3	614	3	2.5	44	3	2.5	69.9



## RUSHING

			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Rice,R	SBE	136	691	5.1	70	3	11	McGahee	DVU	90	455	5.1	66	1
2	Turner,M	YOR	136	676	5.0	43	7	12	Tolbert	MOH	98	431	4.4	18	3
3	Jones-Drew	COW	149	664	4.5	23	4	13	Stewart,J	MAR	80	417	5.2	18	2
4	Jackson,F	COM	139	661	4.8	35	5	14	Tate,B	VV	75	388	5.2	27	1
5	Brown,D	ICC	91	594	6.5	72	5	15	Newton,C	CHI	65	367	5.6	25	6
6	Martin,D	TCT	115	539	4.7	55	1	16	Mathews,R	DVU	73	340	4.7	36	0
7	Sproles	LAK	65	480	7.4	34	1	17	Jackson,S	CHI	78	335	4.3	52	1
8	Williams,D	MAR	73	464	6.4	73	6	18	Thomas,P	SS	73	326	4.5	31	3
9	McCoy,L	GWG	110	463	4.2	25	5	19	Wells,B	VV	75	318	4.2	15	2
10	Johnson,C	PIC	112	457	4.1	36	2	20	Bush,R	DTL	75	310	4.1	22	3

## RECEIVING

			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Graham, J	MOH	49	551	11.2	52	3	11	Witten	CHP	35	371	10.6	50	2
2	White, R	LAK	46	561	12.2	48	3	12	Welker	MAR	35	470	13.4	43	1
3	Johnson, C	DTL	45	735	16.3	48	7	13	Johnson, A	DVU	32	573	17.9	53	9
4	Jones, J	VV	45	766	17.0	35	7	14	Cruz	YOR	32	727	22.7	75	8
5	Fitzgerald	COW	44	608	13.8	43	7	15	Jennings, G	SC	32	463	14.5	65	1
6	Bowe	DTL	43	570	13.3	53	7	16	Marshall, B	SBE	31	384	12.4	44	3
7	Gronkows, R	DVU	42	707	16.8	54	5	17	Burleson	GWG	31	295	9.5	56	2
8	Smith, S	LAK	40	554	13.9	51	6	18	Gonzalez	LAK	31	291	9.4	36	3
9	Nicks, H	MOH	37	676	18.3	51	7	19	Davis, F	VV	30	353	11.8	31	2
10	Wallace, M	ICC	36	747	20.8	66	6	20	Washington	GDM	30	386	12.9	53	0

## KICKING

			FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts
1	Janikowski	SBE	20	15	75.0	5	2	52	67
2	Carpenter	LAK	16	14	87.5	5	4	57	64
3	Tynes	VV	12	11	91.7	4	0	49	62
4	Gostkowski	COM	16	14	87.5	5	0	48	61
5	Gano	DVU	12	9	75.0	3	3	55	61
6	Crosby	DTL	15	12	80.0	4	2	52	58
7	Gould	GDM	15	13	86.7	5	0	48	58
8	Akers	MAR	18	14	77.8	6	0	49	57
9	Bailey,D	CHI	15	12	80.0	5	1	51	54
10	Zuerlein	ICC	16	13	81.3	7	2	51	52
11	Walsh	YOR	12	8	66.7	2	0	44	51
12	Kasay	COW	10	9	90.0	2	1	52	46
13	Scobee	PIC	11	10	90.9	4	2	58	44
14	Bironas	TCT	8	8	100.0	3	1	53	38
15	Brown,J	GWG	7	5	71.4	3	1	52	36
16	Vinatieri	SS	10	10	100.0	1	0	42	35
17	Cundiff	MOH	5	4	80.0	2	0	48	30
18	Rackers	MVM	12	8	66.7	6	2	59	30
19	Longwell	SC	8	6	75.0	2	0	46	30
20	Folk	CHP	6	5	83.3	1	0	47	28



## INTERCEPTIONS

										No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD											No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Barron	CHP	3	112	37.3	45	2	11	Sherman	DTL	2	23	11.5	20	0											2	37	18.5	27	1
2	Webster	COW	3	97	32.3	41	1	12	Newman	VV	2	0	0.0	0	0											2	66	33.0	52	1
3	Brown,T	MAR	3	21	7.0	9	0	14	Witherspoo	PIC	2	22	11.0	22	0											2	56	28.0	31	0
4	Griffin,M	SBE	3	34	11.3	19	0	15	Smith,D	CHI	2	64	32.0	43	0											2	0	0.0	0	0
5	Weddle	GDM	3	42	21.0	42	0	17	Jenkins,J	DVU	2	85	42.5	57	1											2	22	11.0	18	0
6	Polamalu	GWG	3	33	11.0	33	1	16	Matthews	DVU	2	0	0.0	0	0											2	0	0.0	0	0
7	Phillips,K	COW	2	55	27.5	35	1	19	Cromartie	SBE	2	85	42.5	57	1											2	22	11.0	18	0
8	Kerrigan	COW	2	0	0.0	0	0	18	Martin,S	MVM	2	0	0.0	0	0											2	22	11.0	18	0
9	Barnett	VV	2	55	27.5	35	1	19	Cromartie	SBE	2	85	42.5	57	1											2	22	11.0	18	0
10	Chancellor	DTL	2	0	0.0	0	0	20	Revis	SBE	2	22	11.0	18	0											2	22	11.0	18	0

## SACKS

1	Peppers	CHI	9	8	Barnes,A	GWG	6	15	Sheard	PIC	5
2	Babin	YOR	8	9	Johnson,M	YOR	5	16	Abraham	MAR	4
3	Suggs	SBE	8	10	Kelly,T	DTL	5	17	Suh	SBE	4
4	Pierre-Pau	ICC	7	11	Tuck	SBE	5	18	Taylor,P	CHP	4
5	Atkins	YOR	6	12	Cole,T	MAR	5	19	McDonald	PIC	4
6	Ware,D	VV	6	13	Campbell,C	SBE	5	20	Smith,A	VV	4
7	Allen,J	DTL	6	14	Avril	GDM	5	21	Anderson,M	COW	4

## TACKLES

1	Laurinaiti	GWG	78	8	Hawthorne	COM	56	15	Martin,S	MVM	49
2	McClain,R	MOH	73	9	Smith,D	CHI	55	16	Sheard	PIC	49
3	Pierre-Pau	ICC	62	10	Conner	SS	55	17	Kuechly	SC	48
4	Cushing	GDM	62	11	Jackson,D	LAK	54	18	Hall,D	GDM	48
5	Mayo	DVU	62	12	Lofton	DTL	54	19	Chaney	SS	47
6	Johnson,D	COW	61	13	Washington	PIC	53	20	Henders,EJ	SC	47
7	Barnett	VV	58	14	Burnett,K	TCT	50	21	Dorsey	SC	46

## KICK RETURNS

		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Sproles	LAK	24	737	30.7	82	0	11	Karim	GDM	10	233	23.3	35	0
2	Sherels	SS	24	728	30.3	76	0	12	Gates,C	ICC	26	604	23.2	43	0
3	McKnight	MAR	26	770	29.6	82	0	13	Hester,D	DTL	16	371	23.2	52	0
4	Scott,D	SBE	19	543	28.6	100	1	14	Tate,B	MVM	34	777	22.9	52	0
5	Stroughter	CHP	41	1160	28.3	104	1	15	Cobb	DVU	22	495	22.5	35	0
6	Harvin	PIC	15	411	27.4	40	0	16	Weems	COW	20	449	22.5	35	0
7	Ginn Jr.	TCT	25	659	26.4	40	0	17	Banks	MOH	36	808	22.4	47	0
8	Logan	GWG	28	688	24.6	42	0	18	Lefeged	VV	16	318	19.9	29	0
9	Washington	COM	27	640	23.7	35	0	19	Mariani	YOR	16	308	19.3	32	0
10	Cribbs	CHI	18	424	23.6	36	0	20	Boykin	PIC	13	246	18.9	32	0

## PUNT RETURNS

			No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD				No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Jones, J	CHP	15	1	273	18.2	75	2	11	Weems	COW	24	4	249	10.4	17	0
2	Arenas	SC	9	4	147	16.3	31	0	12	Logan	GWG	13	8	128	9.8	27	0
3	Mariani	YOR	13	4	210	16.2	69	1	13	Tate, B	MVM	12	3	112	9.3	18	0
4	Sproles	LAK	17	6	265	15.6	84	2	14	Jackson, D	SBE	14	11	126	9.0	23	0
5	Crayton	MAR	7	4	95	13.6	40	0	15	Peterson, P	GDM	17	2	153	9.0	26	0
6	Ginn Jr.	TCT	16	2	206	12.9	25	0	16	Cribbs	CHI	19	3	168	8.8	13	0
7	Bess	DTL	9	11	114	12.7	23	0	17	Sherels	SS	8	3	65	8.1	13	0
8	Cobb	DVU	12	7	149	12.4	62	1	18	Thomas, M	PIC	7	3	52	7.4	15	0
9	Washington	COM	16	2	189	11.8	19	0	19	Edwards, A	ICC	18	3	132	7.3	41	0
10	Banks	MOH	10	2	117	11.7	23	0	20	Adams, J	PIC	13	5	92	7.1	15	0



# AROUND THE



*With Spats McChad*

NEW YORK – With 36 days remaining in 2012, it's not too late for Armageddon and fulfilment of the Mayan prophecy. I know I said last week that Armageddon might never come; but after perusing the headlines this week I am not sure we are going to get off so easy. With rockets from Gaza hitting Tel Aviv, Israeli bombardment of Gaza, the conflict in Syria degenerating into a grinding bloodbath, talk of a possible nuclear-armed Iran, and with Death Valley unbeaten after 7 games, the signs point to something unpleasant happening just in time for Christmas. The only sign that things might be returning to normal was the 30-7 stomping of Markham by York this week; but can we really take that as a sign that the North Stars will defy all probability and once again go 6-10? I don't think so. In any case, there is no point in devoting my Christmas budget to buying a rifle and stocking up on canned goods; and it's too late for a crash course in lighting a fire with sticks or stones. Whatever happens...happens, as they say. Enjoy life, enjoy football, and enjoy your turkey leftovers from Thanksgiving.

## ***NO TURKEY ON THE FIELD***

Fittingly, the first game of the EFL Thanksgiving Classic took place in Commonwealth – home (or close to the home) of the first American Thanksgiving in 1607. Many people think the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock in modern Massachusetts were the first to celebrate the great feast in 1621, but in fact they were not. They can merely be credited with starting the tradition of wearing a ridiculous-looking conical hat, shooting wild turkeys, and sharing their feast with Indians. The first Thanksgiving was not so romantic and involved the starving colonists eating whatever could be found – sturgeon, eel, oysters, heron and racoon to name a few of the delicacies. The colonists in Jamestown were at war with the local Indian tribe, so *they* weren't invited.

In a season of unforeseen success, **Will Blandford** added to his young franchise's notable achievements by convincing the EFL schedule-makers to further showcase the EFL's expansion with a Thanksgiving Classic between his Colonials and another expansion team. Laden with symbolism – the association of Thanksgiving with the first colonies; the pioneering-like quality that characterizes expansion; the rudimentary talent on the teams mirroring the basic tools of the early settlers – the match-up between the Commonwealth Colonials and the Twin Cities Triumph had everything going for it but really good players on the field. Future Hall-of-Famer **Ray Lewis** was out due to injury and Championship-winning QB, **Josh Freeman** was warding off the “one year wonder” tag despite a 4-2 record and a questionable supporting cast.

Much to the surprise of the estimated 14 million TV viewers the Triumph and the Colonials put on a memorable show and gave the country some extra dessert with an overtime period to decide the outcome. Twin Cities looked determined from the outset to take a giant chip off the monument to expansion-team-building currently being erected in honour of Blandford in Charlottesville, VA. Triumph owner **Guy Williams**, the health nut with a taste for VuQo vodka (it's made with coconut), has stated to the Minneapolis press that he feels he has built the strongest expansion team, both currently and for the future. There are many in the mainstream media who agree with him, including **Benny Clamp** of ABC's weekly TV magazine ‘Crush’, who has a “man-crush” on Williams for drafting tackle **Matt Kalil** with the #4 pick in last year's rookie draft. But it was the Commonwealth Colonials that boasted a 4-2 record and a playoff position heading into the Week Seven Thanksgiving Classic, not the 1-5 Triumph.

After jumping out to a 14-0 lead, Williams watched with consternation as the Colonials patiently chipped away at the Triumph lead and stayed within striking distance by sticking with the ground game despite frequent flags from the officials and no real big-gainers. Eventually, Freeman tied the game at 21 on a 2-yard scramble on Commonwealth's first possession of the second half. Having lost their lead, Twin Cities seemed determined to regain the initiative, no matter what. They drove back in tiny chunks, going for it with **Isaac Redman** barely converting a 4<sup>th</sup> & 1 at mid-field to keep the drive alive. After three more plays the Triumph once again faced 4<sup>th</sup> down, but needing 3 yards this time for a first at the Commonwealth 43 yard line. They could have punted it in an attempt to hem in the Colonials inside their 20 yard line, but they were in no mood for compromise. (Davey Seal does not back down). **Jay Cutler** pitched the ball to **Doug Martin** and **Domata Peko** stopped him one yard short of the line of gain. Commonwealth marched back and kicked a field goal then the Triumph responded with one of their own to tie the game at 24. The earlier decision to go for it on 4<sup>th</sup> and 3 was subsequently forgotten in the ensuing drama of Triumph linebacker **Kevin Burnett** intercepting Freeman at the Twin Cities 12 to thwart a late Commonwealth drive and force overtime.

The Colonials won the toss and marched the ball 60 yards into field goal range. **Stephen Gostkowski** nailed a 30-yarder





Garland's **Laurent Robinson** provided the big play punch in the Mustangs' road upset over the Knights. It was an important win for the under-rated Texas franchise seeking their first playoff berth and another close and disappointing loss for last year's Champions.

for the win, immediately triggering the celebrations and lamentations on both sides. Few commentators mentioned the failed 4<sup>th</sup> down conversion at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and those who did merely questioned the choice of play, not the decision to go for it.

Let me be the first and perhaps only commentator, to go on the record as declaring that that decision marked the turning point of the game. With plenty of time remaining in a tie game, going for it on 4<sup>th</sup> and 3 at the opponent's 43 carried undue risk and uncertain reward. Gaining the first down guaranteed nothing, but failing to gain it guaranteed great field position for a Colonial offence that had proven it could gain a couple of first downs when needed. Commonwealth took advantage and re-set the momentum in their favour. It was a subtle shift, lost in the mania of the many dramatic

moments that followed, but a shift nonetheless – a pivot point at which the Triumph stopped being the front-runner and became the chaser.

### SECONDS

The late afternoon Thanksgiving game featured Garland on the road at LA. The sliding Knights were a shaky 3-3 heading into the contest, losing close but winnable games. Like Garland, they were looking up at two teams outside their division in the race for a wildcard playoff berth. Both teams needed a win, but if you were a person with no knowledge of the standings, listening to announcers **Phil Winterall** and **Bill Badden** would lead you to think that only one team's post-season was at stake.

"The Knights are hoping to turn things around today, Bill. What do they need to do to against this Garland team to give their playoff hopes a boost?" Winterall asked as the team captains met at mid-field.

"LA needs to score points, Phil, and they need to keep the Mustangs off the scoreboard," Badden replied.

"The Mustangs have a stable of running backs, Bill, but none are in the top 35. Can they get their running game back on track against this Knights' defence that leads the league in stopping the run?" Winterall countered.

"The Knights need to get on the board first, Phil. They need to control the line of scrimmage and they need to hang on to the ball; you know, not turn it over. They have to get this crowd into the game. It's a bad crowd when things aren't going so well, here in LA." Badden blathered in reply. The dialogue continued in this vein, with Winterall asking questions and Badden churning out mindless replies that focused almost exclusively on the Knights and **Jeff Dohrn**. I don't know what Badden does during the week before broadcasts, but it seems like he didn't know, and nobody had told him, that the Mustangs are contenders this year.

This was a great game to round off Turkey Day in the USA. It had a little of everything – a thrilling touchdown pass from **Matt Ryan** to **Laurent Robinson**; a forced fumble and an interception by LA's **D'Qwell Jackson**; plenty of drive-killing penalties by the Knights' offence; over 90 pass attempts; and two extraordinarily long field goal tries by **Chris Carpenter**, one of which (57 yards) he made. Like all good games, it went down to the wire, with both teams surviving tense moments as time wound down in the final quarter. Having hit one earlier from 57 yards, Carpenter tried another field goal from 58 yards that just missed as time expired to send the game into overtime.

Garland got the ball first to start the extra period beginning at their 18 yard line. It was a prime time opportunity for LA's tarnished 'Blue Shield' to step up, get their offence the ball, and rehabilitate their rep. With the crowd chanting and clapping "D-Fence, ^ ^ D-Fence ^ ^!" (is there another chant out there somewhere, or is this the universal one?) and the LA glitterati making as much noise as possible with their mouths frozen in camera-ready smiles and their hands occupied with cocktail glasses, Ryan went to work. He connected with **Arian Foster** for a 22-yard pass along the sideline and then again two plays later with a 10-yard pass. Then he plunged the knife through the chink in the Knights' armour. Unable to find his primary receiver, Ryan dumped the ball off to an uncovered **Laurent Robinson**, who slipped by two tacklers and raced 44 yards to the LA 5 yard line where he was tripped up by **Charles Woodson**. In a mildly controversial move, **Doug Shirley** did not elect to try the field goal right away. He ran a play up

the middle and center **Max Unger** was flagged for holding, sending the ball back to the 15. Over the next three plays, they got 12 of those yards back, bringing the ball to the Knights' 3 yard line before a third down pass attempt sailed incomplete. Facing 4<sup>th</sup> and goal, Shirley sent out kicker **Robbie Gould**, who could hardly miss from that distance, to end the drama with a 21-yard boot.

It was an uplifting and important win for Garland since it was their first against a team with a .500 record heading into the game. But the Media, in its insensitive way, saw fit to return the post-game conversation to Shirley's decision to run a full set of plays once Garland had reached "gimme" field goal range at the 5 yard line. Did he have confidence in **Robbie Gould**? Did he have confidence in long-snapper **Samson Satele**? Was a pass to the back of the end zone on 3<sup>rd</sup> down prudent? Why risk a turnover in that situation? Why not kick the field goal right away from the 5 yard line? Those were the questions put to **Doug Shirley** in an attempt to get some off-the-cuff remark, *anything* remotely controversial, to spice up the staid *Garland Gazette*.

Shirley is a difficult interview for most reporters. His true answer can be found in the way he says things, not necessarily *what* he says, and this is difficult to translate into print. Because he is also very subtle, the tone does not always come across on video either. His answers to the above questions, in order, are as follows, with my translation in brackets:

"Yes, I have confidence in Robbie." [Yes, he has confidence in Robbie Gould]

"Samson has shown he can get the job done." [No, I don't have confidence in Samson Satele]

"Yes, it was the best play in that situation." [Look at the tape and then talk to me, idiots]

"I trust that Matt knows how to execute the play." [Turnover wasn't on my mind, why would it be on yours, you miserable dork?]

"I felt we could score a touchdown there." [I wanted to stick it to the Knights on national television because nobody takes my team seriously]

Garland is like Markham – suddenly relevant after being losers for so long. The Mustangs appear to have most of the pieces necessary to knock off the top tier teams, but they still haven't realized their potential. Their prime time win over the 2011 Champions could be a landmark victory in their "coming of age" when we look back at this season 9 weeks from now.

#### **NEWTRALIZED**

Does anyone else see a white flag in Pickering coach **Gus Konstantakos**' recent comments to hack reporter **Aristedes Kalogiannis** that his Spartans have been "reduced to playing the spoiler," and that the "Spartans will regroup in the off-season, but for this year....?" I am willing to stand corrected on this, but it sounds to me as if the volatile Pickering owner has already reached the 4<sup>th</sup> or the 5<sup>th</sup> stage of the Five Stages of Grief. Not being a psychiatrist, I am not sure if his words signify Depression or Acceptance, but they certainly aren't the Defiance of his comical "Never Surrender" mantra.

The Spartans were victimized by the kind of quarterback they hope **Robert Griffin III** will become. **Cam Newton** was the leading passer and the leading rusher on his team, scoring a touchdown through the air and on the ground to carry the Convicts to a 20-16 win. It's a good thing Newton came to play because without him the Convicts would be in a cage match with Mission Viejo for worst offence in the league. As an example, the Convicts set up their first points of the game – a long field goal by **Dan Bailey** – on a 15-play, 40 yard drive, averaging just 2.6 yards per play. That's as sluggish as it gets without having to punt.

Konstantakos' reaction to the 20-16 'Newtralization' of his team by Chino's stud quarterback is an uncharacteristic departure from his persistent combativeness over 4½ years of ruling New Sparta with an iron fist. In fact, the sudden deflation of the puffed up, pompous Pickering owner is shocking and disturbing. The silver lining is that his minion, Kalogiannis, has quieted with the downturn in fortune; how do you put a positive spin on a five-game losing streak – especially when you're a moron?

Well, let me do your job for you, Aristedes. The Spartans are far from dead, but are experiencing the inevitable growing pains that come with breaking in a rookie quarterback. The rest of the team is pretty good in my eyes. Despite an unhelpful showing from running back **Chris Johnson**, Pickering and their rookie QB had a chance to win it at the very end, churning out a 14-play drive that netted just 40 yards but put them inside the Chino red zone with 24 seconds remaining in the game, 2 timeouts, and needing a touchdown to win. But a one-man effort by the indomitable **Julius Peppers** led to a sack of Griffin and a loss of 8 yards on a critical 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10 at the Chino 11 yard line. Two desperation throws into the end zone ended a close game. Flash forward to the identical situation next year and Griffin probably avoids that sack and makes the play to win the game. Such is the fine line between winning and losing in this sport.

#### **PLAY-OFF PRE-SEASON**

There is a brush-fire of confidence spreading in Virden. 'Their Week Seven game against Scarbrough was billed 'PLAYOFF PRE-SEASON' by local Media, who saw this as a preview of the 2012 Championship. The Violators are among the big surprises of the 2012 season due to the respectable play of their defence, which was not highly regarded, and the sudden blossoming of their homegrown offence. "Blossoming" is probably not the right word when describing Virden's attack. "Eruption" is likely more appropriate, given that **Marquis de Sade**, Violator beat reporter for the *Virden Eviscerator*, went much further by writing, "*The Violators can torture their victims in many ways, but prefer to deal the most decisive blows by the hand of young Matthew. This happens quickly and is unfelt at first, but the damage is debilitating and renders those who oppose them powerless against the horrors to come from Ben, Beanie and the "Blountest" of instruments. It is thrilling to watch, yes, quite thrilling and exciting.*"



Setting aside the sick mind of the author, de Sade's point about a balanced attack at all levels wounding then dismantling a defence through the surgical quick strikes of the passing game followed by a heavy dose of pounding on the ground is well-taken. **Matt Stafford** is second only to **Drew Brees** in passer rating. In any other year he would have 'MVP' written all over him. But in spite of the gaudy numbers, in his Week Seven showdown with Scarborough's **Aaron Rodgers** he seemed to carry an adolescent insecurity in the face of his veteran opponent's mature self-assuredness. To put it simply; he looked like a kid next to Rodgers – a really, really talented kid; but still a kid. Their basic passing stats compare well with each other – both threw a TD and a pick while gaining over 200 yards – but Stafford was sacked 8 times. Getting dumped that often behind the line of scrimmage kept the Virden offence from pulling away and opened a window of opportunity for Scarborough to come back.

The beauty of football amidst all its violence is that little things can make such a big difference. Scarborough trailed 20-19 with 26 seconds left in the game while facing 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4 at the Virden 43. A 5-yard pass to **Ray Rice** earned a first down then, with 10 seconds left, Rice took a pass from Rodgers and fought through converging defenders, sliding almost imperceptibly away from an attempted big hit from linebacker **Nick Barnett**, to reach the 30 yard line with just 4 seconds on the clock. The 8 yards was the difference between a makeable 48 yard field goal and a 56-yarder that would have been challenging even for the big leg of **Sebastian Janikowski**. With the game on the line, the Blue Eagles' kicker wobbled a twister just inside the right upright to down the Violators at the sound of the gun. It was a heck of a game between two very different, but equally impressive teams, played in a play-off atmosphere at **TERRORDOME**. The best "pre-season" game I have ever seen!

#### **AROUND THE EFL**

**Philip Rivers** was the surprise starter for the Dinosaurs in their Week Seven tilt at Charleswood. He made things a little more interesting than expected by throwing four interceptions against an apathetic Pats' defence that blitzed just one time all game. Sensational rookie safety **Mark Barron** snagged his third interception and second "pick-six" of the season to provide the lone highlight for the Patsies in a 31-10 loss. The decision to go with Rivers was, according to **George Kaldis**, "out of an abundance of caution" to ensure that **Matt Schaub** is fully recovered from his ankle injury suffered on opening day. The Durham coach's caution was in stark contrast to Rivers' lack of it. Unforced errors have plagued Rivers throughout his career and it is fitting that on the eve of returning to the bench he would remind fans of why he was going there.

One week after **Darrin Jones'** team made their "statement" by trouncing South Carolina, **Jay Hammond's** team made an even bolder "statement" by clobbering the North Stars with surprising ease. The 30-7 final in favour of the surging Swords was not even as close as the score indicates. After marching his team up the field with precision and hitting **Jordy Nelson** for a 12-yard touchdown pass to open the scoring, **Eli Manning** fell into a stupor reminiscent of the bad old days of **Mark Sanchez**. The York defence played a big role in making him that way, forcing four Manning fumbles resulting in two turnovers. The pressure from **Jason Babin** seemed to rattle him and he was off target all day, completing just 9 of 21 pass attempts. The Excaliburs went on to score 30 unanswered points before calling off the dogs on their final possession. York coach **Jay Hammond** summed up his feelings with his customary bluntness: "After painful losses to Markham in the last two years, it feels great to put the shoe on the other foot and *stomp on their face!* The team came ready to play."

In the Deep South, embattled Regulators' quarterback **Tony Romo** bounced back from a personal low last week with a 4-touchdown pass performance in a 28-24 win over the team that gives up touchdown passes like no other. Romo made the most of his opportunities, finishing with 181 passing yards and a game day QB rating of 121.4, a mere 17.4 points *below* the average QB performance against the Hellfire "defence" this year. So, to put it in perspective, Romo played a below-average game against an atrocious defence, but still out-performed rookie protégé **Andrew Luck**. The Regulators' pass defence doesn't have much over Mohave's, so Luck's single touchdown pass, interception, 3 sacks, and game day QB rating of 88.4 has to be considered a mediocre outing under the circumstances. The kid is still learning and still recovering from the sight and shock of a blitzing **Tamba Hali** bearing down on him and sacking him for a 12-yard loss in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

It was an obvious attempt to play possum and it didn't fool anyone; but the Swordfish were still powerless to stop it. Death Valley began their Week Seven game with 11 straight carries by half back **Willis McGahee** as Sebastian doggedly lined up in pass-defending formation. McGahee chugged out 61 yards in those 11 carries, setting up a dinky 2-yard TD pass to full back **Owen Marecic** to open the scoring. Passing to Marecic after running 11 straight times was a clear message from **Coach Worthley** to **Coach Lemmon** that said, "We can do anything we want to you and you can't stop it." Coach Lemmon's team replied with a pair of touchdowns, their first major scores since Week Three, against the much maligned Death Valley defence to some face in a 38-14 loss.

In other blowouts this week, Cowtown's offence did not look very sharp but still managed to handle the Cubs 34-10 at Joe Ferguson Stadium. The defence, on the other hand, bottled up **Mike Wallace** and **Donald Brown** quite nicely, holding the Cubs' deep-strike offence to a single meaningless touchdown in garbage time. Things just keep getting worse for Deron Redding's Cubs as they fall to 1-6. Meanwhile, in Gwinnett, **Ben Roethlisberger** did not give the game away against Mission Viejo, throwing 3 touchdown passes to **Ed Dickson** in a lazy 21-0 shutout. The Glads are crawling back into relevance with 3 consecutive victories after 4 losses to start the season. Check in next week as **Professor McChad** grades this team, and others, in his annual mid-term report card.

# BUG THE BOOKIE!

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

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**RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 7:**

**48-20-2**

### JIMMY'S WEEK EIGHT PICKS

#### **COMMONWEALTH @ GARLAND (line – MUSTANGS by 4)**

One cutting edge stats-based ratings agency has the Garland defence ranked No. 2 overall; although they are difficult to find near the top in any single conventional stats category. Critics point to inexperience at the corner position as a reason to drop Garland out of the discussion for the elite top three, but there is no denying they have one of the most sure-tackling units in the league. While Colonial QB, Josh Freeman has performed well with a weak supporting cast, cracking the 'Thoroughbreds' will be a formidable challenge. If he cannot meet that challenge, it could be a long afternoon for the expansion Cinderellas as nobody doubts that Matt Ryan will have a leisurely afternoon in the pocket picking apart a secondary unassisted by a consistent pass rush. Commonwealth have surprised before, but on the road facing a top tier defence, it will be no surprise if they don't surprise. **PICK: GARLAND**

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA @ MISSION VIEJO (line – REGULATORS by 8)**

This game presents an opportunity for the justifiably-impugned Monarchs' offence to score a touchdown or two against the shakiest starting corner pairing in the league. That's the good news for Mission Viejo. The bad news is that this game also presents an opportunity for the Regulators' Tony Romo to pad his passing stats against the worst defence in the league and in the process partially disguise, to the casual fan, his overall ineptness through seven weeks. Nobody holds expectations that South Carolina can challenge for a playoff berth in a brutally competitive conference, but many expect better things from their offence. Despite injuries to an already weak secondary, it has been the Regulators' 'D' that has stepped up in their 3 victories. Frank Gore has been strangely silent and, apart from a big pay-day against the Swordfish in Week 5, Greg Jennings has not shown the big-play ability of past seasons. Versus the league's patsies, look for razzle-dazzle from the Regulators' forgotten stars. **PICK: SOUTH CAROLINA**

#### **SEBASTIAN @ CHINO (line – CONVICTS by 9)**

The Swordfish got off the 'schnide' by scoring a couple of touchdowns last week to take some of the sting out of a walloping from Death Valley. The Convicts don't have the same powerful attack as the Undertakers – far from it – but they have a nasty defence that is capable of posting a shutout against teams with more offensive firepower than Sebastian. It looks like it will be a return to Adam Vinatieri field goals – if they are lucky – for the Swordfish offence. On the other side of the ball, the Chino offence may be a one-man band, but the Sebastian defence lacks the personnel to prevent Cam Newton from playing his tune. Patrick Robinson is 'probable' and, if available, will make things difficult on the below-ordinary Chino wide-outs. The downside is that good coverage downfield makes it easier for "crazy legs" Newton to run for first downs. Bad day or good day for Chino's offence, they should be able to scratch out at least 10 points while the 'Lockdown Crew' hooks the Fish and shuts them out. **PICK: CHINO**

#### **IOWA CITY @ SCARBOROUGH (line – BLUE EAGLES by 11)**

If the past three weeks are a reliable sign, the Cubs' descent into the basement of the league should be approaching freefall soon. A steady rain slowed play down for both teams last week and Iowa City still dropped a 34-10 decision to Cowtown. This week against the Blue Eagles' defence it will feel like playing in the rain again for Russell Wilson and Mike Wallace. If ever they needed their deep strike offence back, this is the game for it as Scarborough has held opponents to a suffocating 23.1% TD efficiency inside their red zone. The Cubs' defence will benefit from the return of Stephon Gilmore but unless Jean Pierre-Paul can get to Aaron Rodgers – the least sacked quarterback in the league – it won't mean much to the bottom line. The Cubs can turn around this unequal match-up if the league decrees that the Scarborough players must wear 25 lb ankle weights during the game. **PICK: SCARBOROUGH**



### **DEATH VALLEY @ PICKERING (line – UNDERTAKERS by 5)**

The Spartans clearly hoped for more from their rookie quarterback, Robert Griffin III, but have yet to see him play at the level needed to contend in the Division. Enter the Death Valley defence and a golden opportunity for the talented youngster to turn it around. The Undertakers are no longer the worst defence in the league, but their recent improvement has been due to facing Brandon Weeden and Andy Dalton in back-to-back weeks. The Spartans are smarting due to a five-game losing streak, but the losses have come against quality opponents and most have been close. The 7-0 Undertakers cannot afford to enter Thermopylae Stadium with the wrong attitude or they will get a rude awakening. Fortunately, while his wide receivers are blanketed by Jonathan Joseph and Joe Haden, Drew Brees has two pro-bowlers at tight end to dump the ball to in a pinch as well as a good pair of running backs. In a reversal of roles, expect the Undertakers to test the Spartan defensive line with McGahee and Matthews and for Griffin to air it out. **PICK: PICKERING**

### **LOS ANGELES @ GWINNETT (line – KNIGHTS by 1)**

This 2011 Championship re-match features two 3-4 teams that are both out of the playoff picture if the season were to end now. After reaching the pinnacle last year, both teams have been deeply humbled thus far and for one of them the suffering will continue. The team that can't hang on to the ball hosts the team that can't seem to take it away, and those traits explain where they are today. Which trait gains the upper hand in this game will determine the outcome. If Ben Roethlisberger can avoid throwing the ball to the Knights, it is possible he could throw all day to a solid quintet of wide receivers and scat back LeSean McCoy. Alex Smith and the LA offence must come prepared to score. Although small consolation after missing a shot at the Big One last year, the thirst for revenge and the home field will fuel a furious effort by the Gladiators. **PICK: GWINNETT**

### **MOHAVE @ TWIN CITIES (line – TRIUMPH by 4)**

Andrew Luck is heating up and with him the Hellfire attack, but nobody should expect a free pass for the No. 1 pick in the draft. The Triumph defence is ranked at the top of the bottom half, meaning they are in the middle of the pack. Ray Lewis is out – a significant loss – but Bobby Wagner has played with a high motor in his place and the drop-off has not been as bad as originally feared. Mohave's defence has been horrific with opposing quarterbacks throwing like Drew Brees against them. Jay Cutler may not have enough receivers to take full advantage of the opportunity but when he needs a rest, Doug Martin should be there to bail him out. In case you haven't picked up on it, I have a bias for Minneapolis in this one. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

### **YORK @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 1)**

This inter-conference battle of first-placed 6-1 teams has playoff race implications as both are fighting off stiff challenges in their divisions. The Thunder Lizards must be relieved that Matt Schaub is cleared to play this week; although available, they kept him out of action against Charleswood last week and Philip Rivers threw 4 interceptions to create some tension in an otherwise uninteresting game. The Excaliburs have jumped to the top of the unofficial Power Rankings after smashing Markham in Week 7. Right now they look like the team to beat in the PAC, with the No. 1 ranked defence in the league and an offence second only to Death Valley's supernatural barrage. The Dinos have handled some good competition, but their rise to 6-1 has also been tarnished with inconsistency and a sense that they are barely getting by. The return of Michael Turner to face the team that cast him aside may prove more than an interesting footnote in the story of this game. **PICK: YORK**

### **VIRDEN @ MARKHAM (line – NORTH STARS by 2)**

The North Stars' 30-7 loss to York in Week 7 created a post-traumatic reaction in their fan base due to a very Sanchez-like performance by Eli Manning. This week, Manning faces his former team – a team that looks a lot stronger without him at the pivot position. If Eli can overcome the psychological impact of facing his former back-up, who is currently ranked ahead of him on the quarterback leader board, there is an opportunity for him to exploit a Violators' defence that surrenders almost 26 points a game. While Eli has been learning the ropes handling a new offence, the Stars' defence has been keeping Markham in every game until last week's debacle. Matt Stafford is showing a lot of poise in the pocket, but if Trent Cole (questionable) can go, he will find the pocket more uncomfortable than usual. The Stars are too good to lose two in a row. **PICK: MARKHAM**

### **CHARLESWOOD @ COWTOWN (line – CORN KINGS by 14)**

The Pats have had little to cheer about so far – correct that – *nothing* to cheer about so far, apart from the tantalizing performance of rookie safety Mark Barron. Sadly, there will be no new reason to cheer for Charleswood fans after their trip to Tillman Field is done. The hope for Pats bettors is that there is a wind and rain storm sufficiently violent to keep the Corn Kings from scoring 14 points; the dismal Pats' offence, missing Adrian Peterson, cannot score below 0 points, so in that scenario they can beat the spread. **PICK: COWTOWN**