
A Passing Fantasy Issue 114

NFLBP Player Newsletter 2002 Week Eight

ed Robert Crowther

Apologies to all for the lack of a newsletter last week, I just ran out of time. An electronic version of the last issue (along with all the otehr back issues) will be available at my website soon, just so all the contributions don't go to waste. Before I get on with all the usual stuff, welcome back to Ben Hilliar, formerly coach of the Bears and now looking to turn the Browns around. Good luck in keeping up with the Bengals! Thanks to Martyn and Darren for contributing this time, as we are now at the halfway point of the season I was wondering if anyone out there has any thoughts about how their season has gone so far? The address for contributions is:

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WEEK SEVEN REVIEW

The Patriots are still looking a little shaky but managed to hold onto their first half lead in Kansas City despite not scoring in the second half. Miami continued their unbeaten run with a comfortable victory over the struggling Seahawks. Tennessee got two early touchdowns then added a field goal in the second quarter before the Jets' defense got a grip on them, unfortunately New York didn't even get close tot he endzone. The Buffalo offense exploded with three touchdowns in the second quarter in Baltimore and that proved to be more than enough for the win. Cincinnati hit the half century mark in Denver thanks to a great all round performance. Oakland ran the Browns into the ground and never looked like giving up their early lead.

Philly bounced back from their week six defeat, building an early lead in New Orleans then doing just enough to ensure the Saints' comeback attempts came up short. The Panthers returned to winning ways despite managing only eight first downs against Dallas. Chicago's poor season continued, despite holding Arizona to less than 200 yards of total offense they came up short in the fourth quarter. Detroit snatched victory against the Giants with 13 fourth quarter points. Green Bay travelled to San Francisco and shut down the 49ers' offense, building a comfortable enough lead to survive the fourth quarter comeback. St Louis returned to winning ways despite being made to work a bit harder than usual by Tampa Bay.

In a generally lacklustre week for offenses the Bengals stand out with their 51 points, not a lot of yards but taking advantage of every opportunity that defense and special teams gave them. Defensive performance of the week goes to Green Bay for completely shutting down the 49ers for most of the first three quarters and basically winning them the game. Special teams performance of the week goes to Oakland, who's offense spent most of the day starting in field goal range and didn't do much to improve the kicker's chances.

WEEK SEVEN TOP PERFORMERS

RUSHING OFFENCE

Team	Att	Yards	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Rams	35	140	4.00	3	0	101.79
Raiders	47	159	3.38	3	0	89.95
Giants	20	67	3.35	1	0	84.25

PASSING OFFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Bengals	21	34	61.76	223	5	0	3	120.47
Eagles	16	27	59.26	131	3	0	3	108.72
Bills	15	33	45.45	220	3	0	2	98.04

RUSHING DEFENCE

Team	Att	Yards	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Bills	26	49	1.88	0	2	18.46
Ravens	17	48	2.82	0	1	32.21
Cardinals	32	108	3.38	0	2	33.13

PASSING DEFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Titans	21	41	51.22	160	0	2	6	40.70
Bills	17	43	39.53	184	0	1	6	43.17
Bengals	21	40	52.50	182	0	2	5	43.96

STATS CORNER

RUSHING OFFENCE

Team	Att	Yards	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Rams	218	865	3.97	7	0	80.18
Patriots	203	852	4.20	8	2	79.32
Raiders	231	1118	4.84	7	3	77.33
Buccaneers	239	932	3.90	10	4	75.37
Dolphins	205	774	3.78	8	4	72.23
Saints	314	1149	3.66	7	2	71.53
Eagles	273	1046	3.83	4	2	68.86
Bengals	174	774	4.45	5	5	66.87
Packers	265	913	3.45	4	4	63.22
Cardinals	293	714	2.44	7	4	62.41

PASSING OFFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Dolphins	145	248	58.47	1904	16	3	18	99.26
Patriots	142	229	62.01	1667	14	4	20	97.19
Bucs	120	196	61.22	1604	12	5	19	96.98
Broncos	99	174	56.90	1504	11	6	22	92.22
Rams	123	211	58.29	1571	12	5	16	90.77
Raiders	106	184	57.61	1415	15	9	14	88.93
Cards	90	149	60.40	995	5	1	9	88.63
Bengals	150	249	60.24	1766	20	12	23	88.53
Titans	143	251	56.97	1612	15	5	19	87.94
Saints	114	187	60.96	1559	7	6	13	86.73

TURNOVERS

Team	T/O +/-
Arizona Cardinals	15
St Louis Rams	10
New England Patriots	9
Miami Dolphins	7
Kansas City Chiefs	5
Buffalo Bills	5
Oakland Raiders	4
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	3
Philadelphia Eagles	3
New Orleans Saints	2

RUSHING DEFENCE

Team	Att	Yards	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Cardinals	209	686	3.28	3	14	36.16
Chiefs	143	324	2.27	2	7	39.95
Eagles	194	461	2.38	3	6	50.10
Patriots	192	574	2.99	2	6	50.99
Raiders	201	770	3.83	0	6	51.73
Lions	210	556	2.65	4	6	54.07
Bills	182	554	3.04	5	7	54.48
Broncos	188	614	3.27	2	5	54.79
Seahawks	216	726	3.36	3	6	55.97
Giants	267	714	2.67	5	6	57.13

PASSING DEFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Bills	126	265	47.55	1328	5	11	37	51.58
Rams	129	239	53.97	1521	5	12	20	59.63
49ers	126	218	57.80	1389	4	8	19	67.62
Raiders	136	244	55.74	1611	7	10	25	68.53
Dolphins	129	236	54.66	1549	7	9	14	68.98
Bengals	146	254	57.48	1787	9	11	26	73.06
Patriots	137	241	56.85	1716	7	9	18	73.25
Jets	118	216	54.63	1190	8	5	23	73.26
Lions	118	215	54.88	1560	10	10	29	74.18
Giants	90	163	55.21	1220	8	7	20	77.75

WEEK EIGHT PREVIEW

Predictions and commentary from Martyn Williams, other predictions from Darren Birtchnell and myself.

Bills at Patriots – The Bills have won four straight and shut out their last two opponents, but that run looks likely to end here. Even though the Patriots have failed to impress these last three weeks, at home I would expect them to be too strong for the Bills. But wouldn't a Buffalo win make the East interesting?! Patriots by 13, Shock – Bills

Jets at Dolphins – The Jets should slowly begin to show improvement now that Coach Turner has had time to assess the situation - the OL has already seen a much needed FA addition. However, there is no way they will threaten the Dolphins in Miami. Dolphins by 17

Titans at Bengals – After a tough start to the year the Bengals look to be back after scoring 122 points in the last three weeks! The Titans are their closest rivals in the Central and need the win to stay in touch, but they've no hope of getting it. Bengals by 17, Lock, Blowout.

Ravens at Browns – The arrival of ex-Bears coach Ben Hilliar in Cleveland has at least brought some interest to this AFC Central basement battle. He should be able to make a big enough difference to get the Browns their first win of the year, but be warned it could be ugly. Browns by 3, Slugfest

Seahawks at Broncos – It is normally around now that the Seahawks start to beat everyone, and the Broncos look ripe for the taking after losing 51-0 last week – unfortunately for Seahawks fans they don't look a good enough team this year to be able to take advantage. Broncos by 7

Chiefs at Raiders – The Chiefs look to be back to their playoff form of before last season, but historically always struggle against the Raiders and that trend will continue given the Super Bowl

Champions form of late. Raiders by 14

Giants at Eagles – The Eagles will continue to make the NFC a two horse race between themselves and the Rams with a home win over the Giants, whose offence will struggle to move the ball against the Eagles tough D. Eagles by 12

Cardinals at Cowboys – By winning four on the trot the Cardinals have put themselves right in the thick of the NFC playoff picture, a position the Cowboys were in last season. If Dallas are to return to the post season this year they need to beat the Cardinals at home – a good game between the big play Dallas O and the stingy Cardinals D, with the D to win. Cardinals by 7

Bears at Packers – Coming off a shock victory in San Francisco last week the Packers confidence will be sky high, while the expected resurgence in Chicago's fortunes has failed to materialise. It won't be a classic but the cheeseheads won't care as they get their third win of the season. Packers by 6

Lions at Buccaneers – A big game for the Central division, if the Lions can win they will move two games clear, if the Buccaneers win then it is tied all square at the top. The Buccaneers have the better offence but will have to score a few to beat the Lions tally against a surprisingly weak Buccaneers D. Buccaneers by 7

Panthers at 49ers – 49er fans will be unhappy to see their team battling for second place in the West with the Panthers, but that is the position they find themselves in after a disappointing start to the season. Coach Devine should have the knowledge to beat the Panthers, and will certainly want to avenge the week 16 defeat that cost his team the division crown last season, but many believe that this could be a season of struggles in San Francisco as the balance of power firmly swings in the Rams favour. I'll still back the 9ers to win though. 49ers by 10

Saints at Rams – As per usual the Saints seem to be underperforming if you try and tie their stats up to their win loss record, and even though Coach Williams has never lost a game against his Mardi Gras rivals many of the games have been closer than is comfortable. Having said that the Eagles appear to be the only team in the NFC that can match the Rams at present, and the blue and gold surely start as favourites.

DB – Patriots by 14, Dolphins by 17 (lock, blowout), Browns by 7, Seahawks by 3, Raiders by 10, Eagles by 7, Cardinals by 4 (slugfest), Packers by 6, Bucs by 3 (shock), 49ers by 10, Rams by 14
Shootout - Titans @ Bengals

RC – Patriots by 7, Dolphins by 10 (Slugfest), Bengals by 14 (Blowout), Ravens by 1 (Shock), Broncos by 7, Eagles by 10, Cowboys by 3, Packers by 7, Bucs by 7 (Shootout), 49ers by 7, Rams by 14 (Lock)