
A Passing Fantasy Issue 121

NFLBP Player Newsletter 2002 Week Sixteen

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WEEK FIFTEEN REVIEW

Oakland endured another nailbiter in their quest for a perfect season, the home team Patriots were well prepared but struggled to make the most of their redzone opportunities. The Raiders sealed the win with a fourth quarter touchdown and also guaranteed that this will be the last road game they play unless they reach the superbowl. Miami were also made to struggle by Denver, who mounted an 18 point fourth quarter comeback before losing out in overtime. The Bengals continued their recent good form with a sound thrashing of the Jets. New York snatched a late touchdown to make the score look a little more respectable but were never really in it. The Bills defense was once again in fine form, and once again made up for a terrible offensive performance, as the Browns were limited to just one field goal. Seattle's traditional run of late season form, after a slight blip last week, was resurrected in Baltimore. The Ravens secondary could find no way to contain the Seahawk receivers as they racked up over 500 yards. In Tennessee the Chiefs got themselves a playoff berth in a tense defensive struggle. Kansas City had the better of the game but two missed field goals kept the Titans in it right up till the end of the game.

The Rams made sure of NFC homefield advantage with a convincing victory over their only remaining rivals for the position in Philadelphia. The Eagles defense provided little opposition and their offense never really got into a flow. San Francisco slipped to another defeat against potential wildcard opponents Dallas. The Cowboys started fast and stayed well ahead throughout. Arizona

couldn't generate any offense, but thanks to their defense shutting down the Packers one play proved to be all the offense they needed – and 87 yard touchdown pass in the second quarter had them well in control. Tampa Bay were less than dominant in New York but did more than enough to beat the winless Giants and keep their momentum going in the run up to the playoffs. Carolina's offense decided to turn up and play this week and, 400 passing yards later, they found themselves well in front of the Lions. Detroit were far more consistent on offense, racking up 26 first downs, but couldn't match the big plays of the Panthers. New Orleans built a two touchdown first quarter lead in Chicago and were able to hold onto it despite being slightly outplayed by the home team for the rest of the game.

Offensive performance of the week goes to Seattle, because how often do you see 500 yards passing? Defensive performance of the week goes to Arizona who, apart from one play, played defense and did nothing else. Special teams performance of the week goes to Tampa Bay, good returns and four field goals.

WEEK 15 TOP PERFORMANCES

Martyn Williams

RUSHING OFFENCE

Team	Att	Yds	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Rams	35	185	5.29	2	0	96.79
Raiders	24	123	5.13	1	0	89.79
Cowboys	34	136	4.00	3	1	88.09

PASSING OFFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Saints	20	30	66.67	375	4	0	4	149.31
Panthers	17	27	62.96	414	4	1	3	130.79
Rams	17	27	62.96	257	2	0	1	118.90

RUSHING DEFENCE

Team	Att	Yds	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Lions	21	10	0.48	0	2	2.38
Jets	21	108	5.14	0	2	25.71

Cards 28 80 2.86 0 1 43.93

PASSING DEFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Rams	15	32	46.88	157	0	1	3	48.57
Bucs	18	32	56.25	218	1	3	5	48.70
Browns	18	28	64.29	161	0	2	5	49.85

PREDICTIONS STANDINGS**Darren Birtchnell**

Martyn Williams	13.38	(13)
Darren Birtchnell	13.30	(10)
Rob Crowther	12.36	(11)
Dave Pinder	11.50	(2)

ST LOUIS POST-DESPATCH**Coach Williams Mid-Week Press Conference**

"So that is the third aim achieved, for the second season running the NFC road to the Super Bowl will run through St Louis, and that feels good. I was very happy with the team performance on Sunday in Philadelphia, with the NFC West secure I decided to stick with our base gameplan, with only a few minor tweaks to take into account the Eagles defensive philosophy. This ensures that we still have some surprises in store for any playoff meeting with the Eagles, but we also know that our basic gameplan is fundamentally sound against them. Next up is the visit of the 49ers - Coach Devine's team have been a little under par this season, as two defeats in the last two weeks has confirmed, but they still have a good coach and are one of the better teams in the league - just look at their record. Many people would consider this game to be meaningless, but how wrong they would be! NO game between the Rams and 49ers is meaningless, this one even less so considering a 49ers win will stop us sweeping the NFC this season. I know that Coach Devine won't let his players overlook that fact. Despite this though I have experimented quite significantly with the offensive gameplan for this game, after all a loss would only hurt our pride! Therefore don't be entirely surprised if we lose on Sunday. But I'm not going to let that bother me, I'm off to book a week in the sun during bye week. What will you be doing Coach Devine...?"

STATS CORNER**Martyn Williams****RUSHING OFFENCE**

Team	Att	Yds	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Patriots	444	1869	4.21	16	5	77.33
Rams	514	2155	4.19	15	4	76.25
Raiders	442	2137	4.83	14	11	71.90
Dolphins	449	1611	3.59	14	8	69.00
Saints	590	1925	3.26	15	6	68.90
Bucs	559	1990	3.56	17	10	68.52
Lions	582	1665	2.86	24	14	66.27
Eagles	547	2119	3.87	8	9	64.49

PASSING OFFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
Rams	289	465	62.15	3864	33	10	34	103.19
Raiders	240	416	57.69	3412	39	17	41	98.56
Bengals	344	564	60.99	4374	44	21	64	95.72
Bucs	245	400	61.25	2906	25	12	49	91.73
Dolphins	279	495	56.36	3694	29	12	44	89.57
Patriots	302	497	60.76	3448	24	10	48	89.34
49ers	233	391	59.59	2541	25	13	43	86.28
Cards	207	342	60.53	2375	11	7	21	83.65

TURNOVERS

Team	T/O +/-
St Louis Rams	18
Arizona Cardinals	16
Miami Dolphins	12
New England Patriots	12
Kansas City Chiefs	9
Philadelphia Eagles	8
San Francisco 49ers	7
Oakland Raiders	6
Detroit Lions	6
New Orleans Saints	6
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	6

RUSHING DEFENCE

Team	Att	Yds	AvgR	TD	Fm	Rating
Chiefs	304	865	2.85	5	14	45.28
Eagles	403	1116	2.77	8	18	46.95
Cards	495	1539	3.11	5	19	47.89
Lions	442	1237	2.80	9	14	53.80
Dolphins	419	1494	3.57	6	14	54.35

Raiders	463	1670	3.61	3	11	56.25
Bills	413	1402	3.39	10	14	57.21
Patriots	395	1341	3.39	8	11	58.65

PASSING DEFENCE

Team	Cmp	Att	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	Sk	Rating
49ers	259	479	54.07	2878	7	19	43	60.52
Rams	248	462	53.68	3074	11	23	44	61.73
Bills	255	506	50.40	2883	16	17	75	64.36
Bengals	270	494	54.66	3135	14	22	61	64.96
Raiders	280	516	54.26	3491	15	23	55	66.61
Dolphins	268	492	54.47	3367	17	18	38	72.26
Bucs	250	430	58.14	3305	16	18	56	77.52
Patriots	297	512	58.01	3754	15	16	50	77.72

WEEK SIXTEEN PREVIEW

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

Dolphins at Patriots – New England have been playing much better recently and, even though they're only playing for pride, they must be favourites at home to reverse their early season defeat. PATRIOTS BY 3

Bills at Jets – Buffalo have been winning with defense but might struggle to shut down the New York offense on their home turf, and the Bills' offense is ill equipped to take up the slack. JETS BY 3

Browns at Bengals – Cincinnati have been rampant in recent weeks, hard to see Cleveland even slowing them down. BENGALS BY 14

Titans at Ravens – Playing for pride, Tennessee have looked a far better team than Baltimore this season. TITANS BY 7

Chiefs at Seahawks – The Seattle pass offense looks to be in full flow at the moment, and the strength of KC is their run defense, a mismatch? SEAHAWKS BY 7

Broncos at Raiders – Oakland's quest for perfection continues. Denver have given them problems in the past but have

looked poor this season, so the Raiders enter the game with confidence (but hopefully not too much confidence...).

Cowboys at Eagles – Dallas need a win to be sure of the wildcard place, but may struggle to beat the aggressive Philadelphia defense. EAGLES BY 7

Giants at Cardinals – Two teams which are led by their defenses. Arizona have been far more decisive on offense but need to score something like 40 points to have any chance at the wildcard. CARDS BY 7

Bucs at Packers – Tampa have been well worth their division title this season. They've looked a bit frail on defense at times but Green Bay don't seem to be the team to exploit that. BUCS BY 10

Bears at Lions – Chicago nearly pulled it off last week, the new coach seems to have given them a better direction and it can only be a matter of time before they start winning. BEARS BY 3

Saints at Panthers – New Orleans have been far more consistent and, unless the 'good' Carolina show up, should win easily. SAINTS BY 10

49ers at Rams – San Francisco have been a bit of a disappointment this season, they could start making up for that here but I suspect the Rams are too good for them. RAMS BY 7

RC – Lock – Bengals, Shock – Bears, Blowout – Eagles, Shootout – Dolphins at Patriots, Slugfest – Giants at Cards

MW – Patriots by 3, Bills by 3 (Slugfest), Bengals by 17 (Lock, Blowout), Titans by 7, Seahawks by 3, Raiders by 17, Eagles by 10, Cardinals by 10, Buccaneers by 13, Lions by 10, Saints by 3 (Shootout). Shock – 49ers.

DB – Patriots by 1 (Shock), Bills by 6 (Slugfest), Titans by 7, Chiefs by 3, Raiders by 14 (Lock, Blowout), Eagles by 6, Cardinals by 10, Bucs by 6, Lions by 4, Saints by 3, Rams by 8. Shootout - Browns @ Bengals