

Written by Patrick Mayo

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Below, we explore what should happen in this week's NFL games. Of course, in the NFL, only half of what should happen actually does happen, but playing the percentages gives you the best chance of winning. Remember, think twice before benching a stud based on match-ups! We list the Vegas odds spread in parentheses and the Over/Under number in brackets.

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SUNDAY NIGHT (6:40pm ET)

Minnesota @ New Orleans (-4) [53]

The bright lights of the Superdome will provide us with some old fashion drama Sunday night. Favre and Brees will lead two high-powered offenses into battle to determine the NFC representative in the Super Bowl. This should be one hell of a game.

The Saints may be favored in this game, but this is a real toss up. This game will be will come down to how effective the Vikings' defense line can be. After weeks of looking worn down, the Williams' Wall was in full force after getting a week off to rest. Their ability to stop the formidable Cowboys' running game allowed Jared Allen to wreak havoc in the backfield. If they're able to get this kind of pressure on Brees, it will be over quickly. New Orleans will need to establish some semblance of a running game to alleviate some of the pressure off Brees, so he can pick apart a weak Vikings' secondary. If Reggie Bush can run with the authority he showed last week, running the ball won't be a problem.

The Saints may be a juggernaut offensively, but Minnesota is no slouch when it comes to putting points on the board. Eventually Adrian Peterson is going to be unleashed, and this could be the week. The Saints have serious problems stopping the run, and there's no one better than AD to take advantage of that glaring flaw. The best way to limit the impact of Peterson will be for the offense to put up some early points and put the game in the hands of Favre. This isn't a foolproof plan though, Favre's been close to unbeatable all year long. With his cadre of capable receivers, Favre can exploit the match-ups he wants. Sidney Rice showed everyone the kind of

NFL - 2009 Fantasy Football Conference Playoffs Week 20 Spread Pick'em Preview (MIN @ NO)

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impact he can have last week, when he exploded for three touchdowns. The Saints will have to dial up blitzes all day long to clog up Favre's passing lanes and force the meltdown we've been waiting for all season long.

It's funny to think that six weeks ago this was the match-up everyone wanted to see, but each subsequent week, no one believed it would happen, and we all changed our expectations. Well, the game is here, and we'll just have to enjoy it. I like this game to be high-scoring, with a big play from the Saints' defense to be the difference.

NO 27, MIN 24 (Pick: Minnesota +4, under 53)□

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