

NFL - 2009 Fantasy Football Week 12 Recap

Written by Patrick Mayo

Monday, 30 November 2009 00:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 01 December 2009 16:39

Below, we explore what happened in this past week's NFL games.

ALERT! We updated our [Strength of Schedule Grid](#) on 11/30 to point out strong and weak schedules for the remainder of the 2009 season, so make sure you download it, print it, and keep it by your side to consult for every decision you make. Personally, I like to take a highlighter and highlight out the column for the current week each Monday as to easier see the remaining good and bad stretches.

Ask a question about your lineup in our [FORUM](#) . Leave a comment about this article down below.

THURSDAY (THANKSGIVING)

Green Bay 34, Detroit 12 [GB 34, DET 13 (Pick: Green Bay -12, under) fantasy]

The Lions got an early touchdown when Jordy Nelson's fumble on the opening kickoff led to a quick Calvin Johnson TD catch. After that, it was all Packers. Aaron Rodgers continued his huge fantasy season abusing the Lions' secondary; he finished with 348 yards and 3 touchdowns. Detroit had no answer for Donald Driver either. Driver seemed open on every play and his stats reflected it: 7 catches for 142 yards. It was another disappointing game from Greg Jennings, who is having one of the more unexpected bust seasons in recent memory. 53 yards against the Lions is just unacceptable. You really have to admire the toughness of Matthew Stafford. His left shoulder looked like it was just dangling from the opening snap, but it didn't stop him from getting some tough yards running the ball and taking a beating standing in the pocket. As tough as he was for playing, there was really no need to him in this game after the Lions got down by so much. Stafford is young and his health needs to be protected. Keeping him in was an odd "tactical" move by Jim Schwartz, considering the pounding he was receiving. Calvin Johnson is no where close to being healthy right now. Despite his touchdown grab in the first quarter, Johnson was hobbling around and only played in about fifty percent of the snaps.

Denver 26, New York 6 [NYG 34, DEN 24 (Pick: New York -6.5, over) fantasy]

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This one really caught me off guard. Denver has looked terrible in recent weeks and the Giants seemed like they had things basically figured out. The Giants have nothing figured out on Thanksgiving. Eli Manning looks injured. His heel injury is affecting his play more than anyone is letting on. It's being reported now that Manning may have a stress reaction in the same foot he's been having problems with for about six weeks now. If that develops into a stress fracture his season will be finished. The Giant's season will effectively be finished as well, as David Carr is the back up in the Meadowlands. Denver didn't do anything spectacular on the offensive side of the ball, but they managed to move the ball well enough to kick four field goals. Knowshon Moreno was able to pace the the offensive, averaging 4.6 yards a carry and managed to gain positive yards every time he touched the ball, always a good sign. He also chipped in a touchdown along with Brandon Stokley. The big story here was the way Denver's defense was able to completely shut down the Giants offense. Brandon Jacobs wasn't able to find any running room. Maybe Amhed Bradshaw is more valuable to this offense than previously thought. He missed this game with a foot injury but should be active next week against Dallas; we'll see if he can help he Giants get back on track.

Dallas 24, Oakland 7 [DAL 27, OAK 10 (Pick: Dallas -13.5, under) fantasy]

I don't know how Oakland beats good teams when you see them play like this every other week. Every Cowboys running back contributed here. Felix Jones, Marion Barber and Tashard Choice all finished with more than 60 yards on the ground. Hell, I think the corpse of [Don Perkins](#) e ven broke off a 25 yard run. Oh wait, apparently he's not dead. Good news for him, I guess. The Raiders' inability to tackle anyone is pretty laughable. Miles Austin must have have been on Nnamdi Asomugha's fantasy team, as he seemed to have no problem letting Austin roam free. The only encouraging thing about Bruce Gradkowski at this point is that he's not JaMarcus Russell.

SUNDAY EARLY

New York Jets 17, Carolina 6 [CAR 20, NYJ 17 (Pick: Carolina +3, under) fantasy]

Hope you listened to me on Steve Smith this week, he finished the game with one catch for five yards. Unfortunately he doesn't get any bonus points for his assist on the [Darrelle Revis pick six](#), funny play though. This was easily the most unwatchable game of the day, beyond that. Mark Sanchez

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played the role of game manager, while Jake Delhomme played the role of Jake Delhomme and threw four picks. Thomas Jones continued his under the radar season, picking up his eighth rushing touchdown. Shonn Greene had a horrible fumble and has been seeing less and less work each week. It's all Jones from here on out. The Jets got back to 5-6 and have put themselves back into the AFC Wild Card hunt. They travel North of the border next week when they head to Rogers Center to play the Bills in their annual Toronto game. Carolina fall to 4-7 and any dreams of the playoffs have all but evaporated.

Cincinnati 16, Cleveland 7 [CIN 27, CLE 14 (Pick: Cleveland +14, over) fantasy]

Larry Johnson, Bernard Scott and a bit of defense were all the Bengals needed this week, as they walked all over the Browns. The game was not as close as the score though. Cincy out-gained the Browns 2 to 1 and held the ball for 38:11, that's a pretty dominating performance. Cedric Benson sat out again to rest his hip and will hopefully be back for a juicy match up against the Lions.

Indianapolis 35, Houston 27 [IND 31, HOU 27 (Pick: Indianapolis -3, over) fantasy]

Classic Texans game here. Get up big and then turn the ball over twice in the 4th quarter to blow the game. The Texans were firing out of the gate, getting up 17-0 after about 20 minutes and just couldn't hold on. The Colts swung the momentum in their favor when [Pierre Garcon made a beautiful one-handed touchdown](#)

catch late in the second quarter, and the Colts couldn't be stopped after that. The Colts usual suspects, Clark, Wayne and Manning, all made significant contributions as usual. Matt Schaub salvaged his fantasy day with a late touchdown pass to Jacoby Jones but was unable to get Andre Johnson involved enough. Shutting down Johnson has been the key to beating the Texans, and the Colts followed that blueprint all day long. Johnson was targeted nine times but was only able to haul in 5 catches for 67 yards. Johnson even helped the cause, dropping a touchdown in the second quarter.

Buffalo 31, Miami 14 [MIA 24, BUF 14, (Pick: Miami +3, under) fantasy]

What a great game. Buffalo Fewelled my hope in every "Bills will have more wins than the Dolphins" preseason bet I made. The Bills are really playing hard for coach Fewell, even TO.

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"The Genius" Ryan Fitzpatrick is getting better every game. This week he [scrambled for a 31 yard touchdown](#) and found

[Terrell Owens for a 51 yard TD strike](#)

after a Miami interception. These are things you learn when you're a MENSA member. Fred Jackson did the bulk of the rushing, with Marshawn Lynch still suffering the pains of an injured shoulder. Jackson found the end zone twice and looked good doing it. Buffalo's defense now has 21 interceptions on the season led by defensive rookie of the year front-runner Jarius Byrd. The Byrd-man has eight picks and is challenging

[Koko B. Ware](#)

for use of the nickname. Without the deception of the Wildcat, the Dolphins are having to rely on Chad Henne to win them games. That strategy is better suited for losing.

Seattle 27, St. Louis 17 [SEA 31, STL 13 (**Pick: Seattle -3, over**) fantasy]

As wrong as I was on Jason Snelling, I was beyond right on Justin Forsett this week. Julius Jones is going to have a tough time winning back the starting job with Forsett lighting up the stat sheet every week. This week's damage: 22 carries, 122 yards and 2 touchdowns. At this pace the Seahawks would be nuts to take the ball out of his hands. Other than Forsett, Seattle looked really dreadful. Matt Hasselbeck could not take advantage of an easy match up posting only 102 passing yards against a weak Rams secondary. On the other side of the ball, Steven Jackson has another great game picking up 116 total yards and a touchdown. Despite running behind one of the league's worst offensive lines, Jackson now has 1118 rushing yards which ranks him second in the NFL.

Atlanta 20, Tampa Bay 17 [ATL 23, TB 17 (**Pick: Tampa Bay +12, under**) fantasy]

Injuries to Matt Ryan and Michael Turner made this game much closer than it needed to be but it did provide us with a pretty captivating finish. Backup QB Chris Redman led the game-winning drive late in the fourth quarter connecting with Rowdy Roddy White for a five yard touchdown with 23 seconds left in the game. Looking healthy again, Antonio Bryant made back to back deep catches that made his entire fantasy day. On Tampa Bay's third drive Bryant grabbed two balls for 80 yards and a touchdown. The rest of the game he had one catch for 11 yards. Chalk it up to rookie Josh Freeman's inconsistency. Once Freeman can learn to throw the deep ball with accuracy, watch out for Bryant. Kellen Winslow had another nice day grabbing 7 passes for 81 yards. Since Freeman took over as the player caller, Winslow has 23 catches in those four games and is a reliable option every week. They may only have one win but Tampa has been significantly better since Freeman took over.

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Philadelphia 27, Washington 24 [PHI 27, WAS 20 (Pick: Washington +9, over) fantasy]

Jason Campbell threw two touchdowns and ran for another, but it wasn't enough to overcome David Akers and the Eagles. If Philly can't start converting on more of their red zone opportunities, they'll find themselves losing their fair share down the stretch. Akers cannot continue to be their most productive player. The Redskins have looked better lately but seem to invent ways to close every week.

SUNDAY LATE

Tennessee 20, Arizona 17 [ARI 31, TEN 24, [Pick: Arizona +1, over) fantasy]

Vince Young!!! Young threw for a career high 387 yards and tossed a walk off touchdown to Kenny Britt for the win. Kurt Warner sat this one out with sore noggin, and it severely limited Arizona's offense. Boldin led the receivers with 53 yards, which is the lowest top receiver total since Leinhardt was last starting. After another 150+ yard game from Chris Johnson, he is now on pace to eclipse Eric Dickerson's 25 year record of 2105 rushing yards in a season. Somehow this story has become lost in the Vince Young resurgence, but Johnson is having a historic season. Now sitting at 5-6, if the Titans can knock off the Colts next week they have a real shot at finishing at 10-6 and completing the greatest playoff comeback in NFL history.

Minnesota 36, Chicago 10 [MIN 38, CHI 13 (Pick: Minnesota -11, over) fantasy]

Jared Allen had two sacks. He'll tell you that's easy compared to [harpooning an Elk](#) though. Cutler led the Bears on two really "impressive" red zone attempts. First, he threw his weekly end zone interception looking for Johnny Knox. On the second, he started on the Vikings 8 yard line and settled for a 38 yard Robbie Gould field goal after two sacks and false start. The Bears really have this red zone stuff figured out. More smiles were had on the opposite sideline as Brett Favre continued his MVP bid. Favre threw for 392 yards and three touchdowns. Adrian Peterson scored a late touchdown to save him from his worst fantasy day of the year. With Favre playing at this level the Vikings will be a tough out in the playoffs as long as his arm holds up.

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San Francisco 20, Jacksonville 3 [JAC 17, SF 14 (Pick: Jacksonville +3, under) fantasy]

I think have been wrong picking with Jacksonville all season long. Every time they give you reason to believe in them, they post a performance like this. The only drives where they were able to move the ball ended in a bad Garrard turnover... he had two costly fumbles. They even missed a 21 yard field goal. That should be an automatic loss in itself. For the 49ers, Alex Smith hooked up with Vernon Davis for another touchdown. Davis now has nine touchdowns and is easily the most improved player in all of football. San Fran is sitting two games out of a playoff spot at 5-6 but have a very favorable schedule down the stretch and could challenge for the last playoff spot.

San Diego 43, Kansas City 14 [SD 38, KC 24 (Pick: San Diego -13.5, over) fantasy]

Philip Rivers is now the holder of the "Kurt Warner Award for most catchable deep ball". It seems that every time he airs it out it's caught on the other end. This week it was [Malcom Floyd hauling in a beautiful 53 yard bomb.](#)

The Chargers put it on cruise control after a quarter which allowed Chris Chambers and Jamaal Charles to both have nice days. Tomlinson isn't what he once was but is still very effective around the goal line. LT averaged 3.0 yards a carry, but broke the plain twice and should have had another late in the game.

SUNDAY NIGHT

Baltimore 20, Pittsburgh 17 [BAL 17, PIT 14 (Pick: Baltimore -2.5, under) fantasy]

This was just a great game. From the Michael Oher pregame interview (including such hardball questions like: "So Michael, if there's one athlete you would like to meet, who would it be?" I guess next week we learn his favorite color.) to the dramatic overtime conclusion. It blows my mind that Ray Rice isn't in on every down. Every time he played the entire drive the Ravens posted points. I know the Ravens want to give Rice rest but he is far more effective than either Willis McGahee or LeRon McClain. Rice was untacklable every time he touched the ball. He turned in a vintage Brian Westbrook type day with 88 yards on the ground and 67 through the air. Former Oregon standout Dennis Dixon fared much better than anyone expected filling in for Ben Roethlisberger but ultimately cost the Steelers the game with a brutal pick in overtime.

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Santonio "Sherlock" Holmes has solved the mystery of the Ravens secondary. He now has seven touchdowns in his last six games in the series. On another note, if you ever wondered why Ben Roethlisberger is predominantly referred to as "Big Ben" or just "Ben" by commentators and writers, it's because people hate the effort that goes with saying or spelling 'Roethlisberger'. He's on a first name basis with everyone.

MONDAY NIGHT

New Orleans 38, New England 17 [NE 45, NO 41 (Pick: New England +3, over) fantasy]

I was genuinely surprised that the Saints were able to play such great defense. I really was. The Saints dominated on both sides of the ball and made a statement that they're truly the league's best team. Take that Colts! The Pats will be fine going forward, and losing this game sets them up for the greatest post season run in history. They'll end the Colts perfect season in the AFC Championship Game and then ruin the Saints perfect season in the Super Bowl and get redemption for 2007. Unfortunately this isn't the NBA, and games aren't fixed, because that would really be engaging.

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