

NFL - 2009 Fantasy Football Week 14 Recap

Written by Patrick Mayo

Monday, 14 December 2009 00:05 - Last Updated Tuesday, 15 December 2009 07:41

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

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THURSDAY NIGHT

CLE 13, PIT 6 [PIT 20, CLE 12 (Pick: Cleveland +10, under 36) fantasy]

What has happened to Pittsburgh? You score six points on the Browns, and it's about time to throw the towel in on the season. The Browns' defense got to Roethlisberger all night. They sacked Big Ben an astonishing eight times and played their own brand of hard-nosed defense. Perhaps it was the cold or lingering effects from his concussion, but Roethlisberger looked uncomfortable all night long and was beaten by one of the decade's worst teams. The Steelers have been playing terribly lately, but nothing prepared us for this travesty. While the Steelers get the lion's share of the blame for the loss, Josh Cribbs can have the rest. When Cribbs' contract is up, he is going to cash in big time. □

SUNDAY EARLY

BUF 16, KC 10 [BUF 23, KC 17 (Pick: Buffalo Pk, over 37.5) fantasy]□

As expected, this game was settled on the ground. The teams combined for 352 rushing yards, but Buffalo can thank Chris Chambers for this win. Chambers dropped a deep pass in the game's dying seconds that would have given the Chiefs the lead. But that's how it goes when you play for KC. Jamaal Charles continued to show why he'd the running back of the future in KC. He finished with 181 total yards and a touchdown, including a 75-yard skedaddle to the end zone that showed off his blazing speed. I

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suppose Matt Cassel's four picks didn't help either. ☐☐

NE 20, CAR 10 [NE 31, CAR 10 (Pick: New England -13.5, under 44) fantasy]

[Randy Moss quit on his team?](#) ☐ Shocking! This news is coming from the Panthers. What does it say about Carolina, when they lose to a team that has its best receiver seemingly working for them? Probably nothing we didn't already know. The Panthers were outclassed in this one, as it took a half-hearted effort from the Pats to roll them. The best thing to come from this game is the ongoing saga in the New England locker room. All of these recent developments are straight form a bad soap opera. But I must admit, it's quite intriguing.

MIN 30, CIN 10☐ [CIN 20, MIN 17 (Pick: Cincinnati +6.5, under 43.5) fantasy]☐

While I was able to forecast almost every game pretty accurately, this one surprised me. The Vikings rebounded in a big way, sending a statement to the league that last week's pounding at the hands of the Cardinals was just an aberration. The Vikings did just enough on offense (322 total yards) and let their defense do its job. The Vikes' stopper unit allow a measly 210 yards all day long and did an effective job of setting up the offense for some short fields. Their only slip up was an 82-yard Bengal drive late on the second quarter which led to an Ochocinco TD, minus the promised celebration.

IND 28, DEN 16 [IND 28, DEN 17 (Pick: Indianapolis -7, over 44) fantasy]☐

I almost nailed this one dead on. Denver just had to go for two after Marshall's second touchdown. The Colts won, as expected, and moved to 13-0 and one step closer to perfection. Who cares. The big story from this game was Brandon Marshall's ridiculous 21 catches. Yes, Kyle Orton dropped back 41 times, threw towards Marshall 28, and found him for 21 of them -- and they still lost. It was nice to see Orton force the last one into him and get him the record. Classy move. The always arrogant Marshall actually seemed to be genuinely appreciative after the game. Maybe he really has turned a corner. If he has, this game is a memo to the NFL to expect more of this to come.

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BAL 48, DET 3 [BAL 35, DET 13 (Pick: Baltimore -13.5, over 42.5) fantasy] □ □

Ray Rice's monster game has gotten lost in the big days had by Marshall, DeSean Jackson and Chris Johnson but it hasn't been forgotten. Rice piled up 209 total yards on 17 touches and did it all in barely two quarters of action. This game was over by halftime and got so out of control that Troy Smith was able to get a score. The Lions got some bad news late in this game when Kevin Smith was carted off with what appears to be a torn MCL that will likely cost him the rest of season and maybe some of the next.

GB 21, CHI 14 [GB 30, CHI 17 (Pick: GB -3, over 43) fantasy]

The Packers are sneaking up on people. They're a playoff team but are not getting any attention. Rodgers and company showed up in Chicago, let Ryan Grant and the defense do their thing, and left town quietly. It was very business-like, and very much like a team that's gearing up to make some noise in the playoffs. □

MIA 14, JAC 10 [MIA 22, JAC 20 (Pick: Miami +2.5, under 44) fantasy]

This was not a game of defensive authority but one of offensive futility. Both teams struggled with the ball in their hands all day long and predictably, the game came down to the last few minutes. Jacksonville's last two drives consisted of a turnover on downs and a sack of David Garrard to end the game. With the win, Miami puts themselves into a tie for the last playoff spot in the AFC with the Jags, Ravens, and Jets. But if the performance of this week spills into the rest of the season, they'll both be on the outside looking in come January.

NO 26, ATL 23 [NO 40, ATL 10 (Pick: New Orleans -9.5, under 51) fantasy]

Another week, another close call for the Saints, who haven't been awakened from their dream of a perfect season just yet . To keep the game close this week, New Orleans decided to fake a field goal in the last minute, just daring the Falcons to beat them. In classic Saints fashion, they did just enough at the to hang on and notch another one for

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the win column. ☐☐

NYJ 26, TB 3 [NYJ 20, TB 10 (Pick: New York -3.5, under 37) fantasy]

The Jets have thrown themselves back into the playoff picture getting a gimmie at Tampa. The Buccaneers must have been off raping and pilaging because they certainly didn't show up for this game. Need an example? Tampa didn't get a first down until halfway through the third quarter, and that was the result of a roughing the passer penalty. To put it into perspective, Thomas Jones rushed for 99 yards. Tampa gained 124 the entire game. The road for the Jets gets much rockier from here on out.☐

HOU 34, SEA 7 [HOU 28, SEA 10 (Pick: Houston -6, under 44.5) fantasy]

This game was over 15 seconds in. The first play from scrimmage was a 64 yard connection between Matt Schaub and Andre Johnson. There was no looking back after that. Johnson won a lot people their fantasy match-ups by half-time. He finished the first half with an unbelievable 10-184-2 line. If the Texans hadn't been up by so much at half, it would have been Johnson who broke some records Sunday. The Texans regular season modus operandi continues -- they're tough to beat as soon as they're taken out of playoff contention.

SUNDAY LATE

SD 20, DAL 17 [SD 31, DAL 25 (Pick: San Diego +3, over 48.5) fantasy]

The Cowboys' December woes continue. Dallas actually looked great all game but just couldn't score any points. Marion Barber was stuffed four times from the 4 yard line and Nick Folk missed another field goal -- either of which would have given them the win, as it turned out. Don't bet on the 'Boys until they prove that winning in December is possible. Is there a more under the radar team than the Chargers? They're now 10-3, and with a win against the Bengals next week, they can basically lock up the #2 seed in the AFC. They're winners of eight in a row and are proving that they can beat anyone... watch

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out. ☐ ☐

TEN 47, STL 7 [TEN 33, STL 10 (Pick: Tennessee -13, over 41.5) fantasy]

St. Louis is terrible. Not groundbreaking analysis but very true. Chris Johnson was too much for them to handle, as he finished with 186 total yards and three TDs. He's an absolute beast. The big news from this game was Vince Young's departure with a hamstring injury. It seems like it was more of precaution, so expect Young to return to action next week.

WAS 34, OAK 13 [WAS 24, OAK 17 (Pick: Washington -1, over 37.5) fantasy]

As expected, Oakland laid an egg after some big wins recently. Washington outclassed the Raiders all day long and ran it up on them in the fourth quarter. Jason Campbell looked good once again and seems to be developing quite the rapport with fill-in tight end Fred Davis. The never-heard-from-before Quinton Ganther got the start at running back and churned out two touchdowns. Anything is possible against the Raiders.

SUNDAY NIGHT

PHI 45, NYG 38 [PHI 35, NYG 30 (Pick: Philadelphia +1, over 45.5) fantasy]

DeSean Jackson must have been using a cloaking device all night -- he was literally open on 90% of the snaps. Can he really be that much faster than everyone in football? Jackson helped the Eagles take a stronghold on the NFC East with an un-Godly 260 total yards (168 receiving, 92 return). This was easily one of the year's more entertaining games -- there was no defense to be had from either team. Rookie Hakeem Nicks got himself just as open as Jackson but was suffering from a case of the Braylon Edwards. He dropped three bombs, two of which would have been touchdowns. Despite all this, he still finished with four catches for 110 yards and a touchdown.

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While offensive fireworks caught everyone's attention, the key to the Eagles' playoff success was on display. The Eagles biggest downfall over the years have been their lack of success on short yardage downs. Somehow they always appear to be more comfortable 3rd and 14 than 3rd and inches. Over the last few weeks, it seems Philly may have found an answer to this problem -- Michael Vick. While in the dog community he may be go by the name ["Electro"](#), Vick has 'shocked' everyone by proving his worth in short down situations. Could Andy Reid have been masking Vick's abilities all year long? Over the last two weeks, he has made defenders look silly, especially now that his leash has been given some slack (how ironic) and he's throwing the ball. He found the aforementioned Jackson for a 32-yard gain early, which led to their first touchdown. He was used on the goal-line and scampered in for a one yard TD in the second quarter. Vick was also used to pick up a crucial 3rd and 3 in the third. On that same drive, Vick was put in motion, tossed the ball, rolled out, and barely missed Jason Avant in the end-zone. This is the truest version on the Wildcat there's been, and the one we all thought we'd see when we first heard the idea. Reid is showing off Vick's capabilities now to scare everyone come playoff time. When Vick found Jackson on the game's first drive, every Giant bit on the run. When Vick converted on his short yardage first down, the safeties were not as keen to commit, leaving Vick to beat a defensive end and an outside linebacker to the outside -- a race he wins every time. Watch out for Vick when the Eagles need a few yards. Teams will have to cede him the yards or get beat deep -- pick your poison. He's the key to the Eagles' Super Bowl aspirations this year. ☐

MONDAY NIGHT

ARI 31, SF 24 (Pick: Arizona -3, over 44.5)☐

Classic Cards letdown. Don't expect it to phase them too much. The next two weeks they get the Lions and Rams. They'll be fine.

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