

NFL - 2009 Fantasy Football Week 16 Spread Pick'em Preview

Written by Patrick Mayo

Tuesday, 22 December 2009 00:05 - Last Updated Monday, 28 December 2009 12:24

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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Last Week

- Against Spread: 8-8
- Straight Up: 9-7
- Over/Under: 11-5

FRIDAY NIGHT

San Diego at Tennessee (-2.5) [47]

The Christmas Nighter pits a clinched Chargers team against a Titans teams that desperately needs a win and some help. Tennessee tried their best to blow the game last week but still snuck out a victory. They should have an easier time this week. San Diego has clinched a playoff birth and holds a game-and-a-half lead on the #2 seed. This is definitely a game they could mail in. Traveling west to east and playing on a short week are all bad omens. Look for Vince Young to keep the Titans' story going for at least another week. **TEN 28, SD 23 (Pick: Tennessee -2.5, over 47)**

SUNDAY EARLY

Baltimore at Pittsburgh (-2.5) [41]

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This is one of two games with huge implications on the AFC Wild Card picture. The Ravens are currently in the driver seat, one game ahead of the 7-7 congestion behind them. Their path to the playoffs is simple though -- win, and they're in. The Steelers, on the other hand, seemed to get their game back in last week's walk-off win against the Packers. Sitting at 7-7, Pittsburgh needs a win to stay alive and can do everyone a favor by knocking the Ravens off. The Steelers almost won this match-up a few weeks ago at Baltimore, and that was with Dennis Dixon at quarterback. Big Ben should get them the win this time out. **PIT 23, BAL 20 (Pick: Pittsburgh -2.5, over 41)**

Buffalo at Atlanta (-9) [41]

My beloved Bills are on the road this week and have yet another huge spread they can cover. Nine points is a lot for a team that barely beat the Jets last week. Atlanta is still missing their starting running back and are losers in six of the last nine -- they're not setting the world on fire by any stretch of the imagination. The Bills' ball-hawking defense should take advantage of the still-hobbled Matt Ryan and keep this one close. **ATL 20, BUF 17 (Pick: Buffalo +9, under 41)**

Carolina at New York Giants (-5.5) [42]

What was the best part of Carolina's win against the Vikings Sunday night? The national exposure that was brought to Panthers' safety/kick returner Captain Mullerlyn. Although The Captain didn't contribute much on Sunday night, he now becomes the lead example by which all unique names are set. I can't wait for him to be traded to Tampa Bay and have someone realize this potential. The Giants keep themselves in the playoff picture with their beat-down of Washington Monday night. They haven't been great at keeping momentum going from week to week so expect the cats to keep it close and take them down in an upset. **CAR 30, NYG 25 (Pick: Carolina +5.5, over 42)**

Houston at Miami (-3) [45]

The winner stays alive here, and the loser goes home. It's as simple as that. This game should be a straight-up shootout. Look for a heavy dose for Ricky Williams and maybe some "WildPat" as the Dolphins will look to dominate on the ground. Matt Schaub has gotten his team back into

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the playoff picture with a pretty decent strategy -- throw to Andre Johnson. The guy is always open -- there's no way he's that uncoverable! Johnson has 190+ yards in two straight games. Expect that to continue this week against Miami's terrible secondary. With Johnson as the primary different maker, take the Texans in a close one. **HOU 31, MIA 28 (Pick: Houston +3, over 45)**

Jacksonville at New England (-7.5) [43.5]

New England can clinch the AFC East with a win (or a Miami loss) and should do just that against the Jags. The game Jacksonville needed to win was last week against the Colts. They didn't, so their season's probably over. A win will keep them alive, but it doesn't guarantee anything. The Pats should be celebrating their return to the playoffs after a one-year absence. **N E 21, JAC 13 (Pick: New England -7.5, under 43.5)**

Kansas City at Cincinnati (-14) [40.5]

Jamaal Charles gets a real test against a very good Bengals' run defense. Charles has been electric lately, proving to be the most consistent running back in the second half of the year. Other than that, this game should be all Cincy. The Bengals need to lock up the AFC North, and there's no better opponent than a team that just lost to the Browns. Take the Bengals to win and the Chiefs to cover. Cincy doesn't blow too many people out. **CIN 21, KC 10 (Pick: Kansas City +14, under 40.5)**

Oakland at Cleveland (-3.5) [37.5]

This is can't-miss TV right here. The upstart Raiders have played themselves out of a top-five pick, and the Browns have won two games in a row. Talk about a clash of the titans! Everyone of these terrible team battles ends up being a shootout, so I'll take the over and the Raiders, who should dominate on the ground with their three-headed attack. **OAK 28, CLE 25 (Pick: Oakland +3.5, over 37.5)**

Seattle at Green Bay (-14) [41.5]

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Seattle lost to Tampa last week. Tampa! Green Bay can clinch a playoff spot this week with a win, so count on them to wrap it all up this week. **GB 38, SEA 3 (Pick: Green Bay -14, under 41.5)**

Tampa Bay at New Orleans (-14.5) [49.5]

Here's another one of these "who cares" games that tend to be prevalent in Weeks 16 and 17. Now with a tick in the loss column, New Orleans really has nothing to play for in the rest of the regular season. This could be the week they start giving people some rest. Their defense has been giving up points left, right and center the last few weeks, so I like Josh Freeman and the Bucs to keep it close and challenge for an upset. **NO 30, TB 23 (Pick: Tampa Bay +14.5, over 49.5)**

SUNDAY LATE

Denver at Philadelphia (-7) [41.5]

Watch out for Philly in the playoffs. They are starting to reek of the Colts from 2006 -- a team that's been good for years and is flying into the playoffs way under the radar. I believe they have the best chance to knock off the Saints and finally go all the way this year. But they'll need Vick back first. Denver is coming off a loss to Oakland at home, and it seems like they're killing themselves in December again this year. Philly should take this one handily. **PHI 25, DEN 15 (Pick: Philadelphia -7, under 41.5)**

Detroit at San Francisco (-11) [41]

Detroit? On the road? No thanks. Start Alex Smith in fantasy this week, as he'll win you the week. **SF 28, DET 12 (Pick: San Francisco -11, under 41)**

New York Jets at Indianapolis (-6.5) [41]

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This is a hard one to handicap. Who's going to be playing for the Colts? I honestly have no idea. If the Colts play their starters, this is all Colts. The Jets can do themselves some favors with a win though. Of the 7-7 teams, they have the best AFC record, and winning out would more than likely get them in. But, like I've previously stated, the Jets' history of letting everyone down is well established, so GO COLTS!!! **IND 23, NYJ 20 (Pick: New York +6.5, over 41)**

St. Louis at Arizona (-14) [41]

Who knows which Cards teams is going to show up. Coach Wiz says they're playing to win the rest of games (apparently they weren't before), and that's all I need to hear. St. Louis has been a covering team all year long, but mainly at home. **ARI 34, STL 13 (Pick: Arizona -14, over 41)**

SUNDAY NIGHT

Dallas at Washington (+4) [41]

Poor Washington. Things finally looked like they were turning around, and then comes a 32-point beat-down at home. Dallas needs a win, and they seem to have overcome their December futility by knocking off the undefeated Saints. They should keep it rolling, even as a road favorite. **DAL 24, WAS 16 (Pick: Dallas -4, under 41)**

MONDAY NIGHT

Minnesota at Chicago (+7) [47]

As bad as Chicago has been, seven points is way too many points for a home team, on Monday night, in cold weather. I fully expect the Bears to cover. Favre has been terrible lately and has a track record of fading down the stretch. Couple that with Favre's inability to play in cold weather over the last few years and this has "low-scoring, close game" written all over it. **MIN 17, CHI 14 (Pick: Chicago +7, under 47)**

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