

## NFL - 2010 Fantasy Football Week 1 Spread Pick'em Preview

Written by Patrick Mayo

Tuesday, 07 September 2010 00:05 - Last Updated Sunday, 12 September 2010 18:37

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Damn it feels good to be back. Six months is far too long to go without football. I tried referring to soccer as football during the World Cup, but that just made me feel worse. For all you on second tour of duty with me, welcome back. For all you new comers, beat it, you've already missed out. Kidding. Lord knows I need every reader I can muster up. Year one of the column was an unabashed success (Editor's note: not really) and I'm ready to take on year two. After picking at a delightful 61% against the spread last season I've decided to return and lend my "advice" on each game once again. Just incase your math skills have gone the way of the dodo, [or Lou Bega](#) , I'll just remind you now, that means I'm wrong 39% of the time. And that's a high mark. It only gets worse from here on out.

If you're a betting man (or woman, but that's unlikely); you know that week one is the time to make some money. We all like to think we have a grasp on who's good and who's not, but frankly, this is the NFL – it really could be anyone. This is a week primed for upsets.

But enough of this, witty repartee isn't really my thing. But football certainly is – so let's get to it.

### THURSDAY NIGHT

#### Minnesota at New Orleans (-5) [47.5]

In a rematch of the NFC Championship game, the Vikings hit the Bayou for a clash with the Super Bowl champions. What's different this time around? Well... Minnesota will be without superstar receiver Sidney Rice for starters. And, more importantly, Brett Favre is another year closer to the grave and suffering from "old man ankles" will leave him helpless against a Saints defense that will be attacking from all angles. Expect turnovers galore.

New Orleans brings back basically the same line up that won it all last season and will have no problems getting their money's worth out of the light bulbs in the Superdome scoreboard. Defending champs are undefeated in the Thursday season opener, which leaves this outcome without the dramatic flare the schedule makers were hoping for. Saints win big. **NO 39, MIN 17 (Pick: New Orleans -5, over 47.5)**

### SUNDAY AFTERNOON

#### Miami at Buffalo (+3) [38.5]

My poor, poor Bills. If it wasn't bad enough that they have a talentless roster to begin with, injuries have ravaged the little they had left. 2009 interception leader Jarius Byrd is questionable for Sunday game, but I'd bet money the [Birdman doesn't make it onto the field](#). Their best D-lineman decided to retire instead of embarrassing himself for another year wearing a Bills' uniform. And the kicker? They have a quarterback trio that has a better chance of winning on *Jeopardy* than an NFL game.

Miami, on the other hand, comes into the year with a lot of buzz and a blow out at Buffalo should help establish their confidence. Despite the Phins' historic struggles at Orchard Park, most of those losses have come after November when the weather gets lower than a Jamaican limbo bar.

As much as I like Miami this week, keep in mind that they've lost four straight season openers. No need to fret, but I'm contractually obligated to bring this to your attention. **MIA 24, BUF 10 (Pick: Miami -3, under 38.5)**

#### Oakland at Tennessee (-6.5) [40.5]

Seems like a mismatch on paper. The Titans can pound the ball on the ground and the Raiders would have [problems stopping Terry Fox busting through the hole](#). Tennessee has one of the best in the business running the show in Jeff Fisher, while Oakland has problems preventing Tom Cable from [laying the smackdown on his assistants](#). We know that the Titans will stick to a ball control type of game. They'll run the ball and settle for field goals all in an effort to limit mistakes from their genius quarterback. What we don't know is the improvement that the Raiders' offense will see under the guidance of Jason Campbell. I know it will be better, but it won't be good enough to travel east and topple the Titans at home.

### **TEN 24, OAK 13 (Pick: Tennessee -6.5, under 40.5)**

#### **Denver at Jacksonville (-3) [39.5]**

I wish there was a way to bet on what game will get the least amount of viewers this week, because this would be it. Jacksonville returns a team that somehow managed to win seven games last season. They have one legitimate playmaker in Maurice Jones-Drew, but he's surrounded by cast of losers that look they were plucked off a CFL practice squad.

Unfortunately, the Broncos aren't much better. Devoid of any legitimate receiving threats and a running game that I'd compare to molasses, Denver is going to struggle mightily on the offensive side of the ball.

Expect a low scoring game, where the only real intrigue will be Tim Tebow's return to Florida. Who's going to win? Well, I like Orton more than Garrard and I'll take Josh McDaniels' sweaters over [Jack Del Rio's greasy leather jackets](#) any day of the week – although he does get a few points back for being a [Shooter McGavin doppelganger](#). But not enough to sway this game in the Jags' favor. Broncos go on the road and win a close one.  
**DEN 17, JAC 14 (Pick: Denver +3, under 39.5)**

#### **Carolina at New York Giants (-7) [41]**

Call me crazy, but I really like the Panthers in this game -- even if Matt Moore is currently their quarterback. The Giants are certainly a decent team, but they really struggle where Carolina is best – stopping the run. For all the hype that goes to the Giants' D-line, they're far more effective getting pressure on the QB than clogging the gaps. They'll find it tough to pressure Moore when he's handing the ball off every play. A heavy dose of DeAngelo Williams and Jonathan Stewart will rain on New York's parade as they unveil their new stadium. **CAR 31, NYG 20 (Pick: Carolina +7, over 41)**

#### **Indianapolis at Houston (+2) [46.5]**

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The Colts own a 15-1 record lifetime against the Texans. Enough said. I really wish there was a way to bet on Houston blowing a fourth quarter lead with some sort of untimely turnover or blown 25-yard field goal, can anyone out there make that happen? Fun fact: This game (at Houston) has been an over every year since 2003. **IND 35, HOU 32 (Pick: Indianapolis -2, over 46.5)**

### Atlanta at Pittsburgh (+2.5) [38]

People seem to forget that the best player the Steelers have is Troy Polamalu, not Ben Roethlisberger. Big Ben is a key piece, but whenever Polamalu is healthy, this defense is terrifying. Now, Dennis Dixon is no Roethlisberger, but he will be afforded enough protection by the running game to look like an NFL starter. Atlanta's defense is no great shakes and, despite the hype, neither is the offense. Going into Heniz Field won't help either. Steelers in an 'upset'. **PIT 17, ATL 14 (Pick: Pittsburgh +2, under 38)**

### Cleveland at Tampa Bay (-3) [37]

It's risky business reading too much into a team, out of contention, that ends a season on massive a hot streak. I do it every year with my Blue Jays to very few results. But I really liked what I saw out of the Browns at the end of 2009. Can't say the say same about the Bucs. Jake Delhomme is very familiar playing in Tampa and Jerome Harrison should make mince meat of this porous defense. Give me the Brownies on the road. **CLE 21, TB 7 (Pick: Cleveland +3, under 37)**

### Cincinnati at New England (-4) [45]

This should be a fun one. The Bengals have transformed their team into the 'Steelers Lite'. They want to run the ball down your throat and prevent you from doing it to them. It's actually a great plan. Unfortunately, New England isn't a huge fan of running the ball and running against them won't score enough point to keep up. Another year removed from his knee surgery, Tom Brady should look more the 2007 MVP -- now with a women's hairdo -- than the 2009 shell of his former self. The Pats will be content airing it out all game and the Bengals don't have the

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weapons to keep up. Cincinnati didn't sign TO from 10 years ago. Belichick will have his team in mid-season form, while Marvin Lewis will be lucky if he doesn't have to bail any players out of jail before the game. **NE 38, CIN 27 (Pick: New England -4, over 45)**

### **Detroit at Chicago (-7.5) [43]**

People are writing this off as a blow out, but that seems too dismissive to me. The Lions are vastly improved on both sides of the ball and should certainly be able to at least keep up with the Bears. You would think Jay Cutler should be able to put up points here, but remember; this is Jay Cutler we're talking about. He's just as likely to throw five picks as five touchdowns. Just because Julius Peppers has been added and Brian Urlacher is back to lead the defensive unit, doesn't make this 2005 all over again. They're still going to struggle stopping teams. Of course Chicago is going to win, but not by as much as you'd think. **CHI 31, DET 25 (Pick: Detroit +7.5, over 43)**

## **SUNDAY AFTERNOON**

### **Green Bay at Philadelphia (+3) [47]**

This shootout will be a fantasy players' wet dream. Both quarterbacks are going to drop back and sling the ball all over the field in an exercise of stat padding. The defenders will certainly try their best – they are professionals -- but expect to see a lot of [trout faced gawking](#) as the ball scores above their heads. While Philly getting points at home is very tempting, this game comes down to quarterback play and Rodgers is one of the best in the biz. Sorry Kevin Kolb, you're not there yet. **G**

**B 42, PHI 35 (Pick: Green Bay -3, over 47)**

### **San Francisco at Seattle (+3) [37]**

Lock of the week? Possibly. Frank Gore loves to leave Seahawks' defenders dining on his dust and there's no reason this game should be any different. The 49ers' underrated defense will have Matt Hasselbeck pulling out his remaining three hairs by games' end. Come on San Fran,

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don't make me look an idiot – Well, at least any more of one. **SF 24, SEA 3 (Pick: San Francisco -3, under 37)**

### Arizona at St. Louis (+4) [39]

Seems like a no brainer, right? I'm not going to pull any punches with you; this game has really given me fits. Sure the Rams are terrible, but how do we know the Cardinals aren't as well? Arizona has lost two key defensive players in Antrel Rolle and Carlos Dansby. Anquan Boldin is in Baltimore. Larry Fitzgerald is banged up. And... what was the other one? Oh ya, future Hall of Famer Kurt Warner retired and has been replaced with Derek Anderson. A quarterback so good, he couldn't factor into the Cleveland Browns future plans. My eyes and brain are forcing me into Arizona, but my gut really says St. Louis. Stay away from this game in any suicide pool. **ARI 20, STL 14 (Pick: Arizona -4, under 39)**

## SUNDAY NIGHT

### Dallas at Washington (+3) [40]

Three points? Pffff... should be 30. Washington will be improved under Mike Shanahan, but what's really the difference between a D- and a C+. You're still not getting into grad school. If Dallas doesn't win in a blowout, I worry about their playoff chances. **DAL 35, WAS 10 (Pick: Dallas -3, over 40)**

## MONDAY NIGHT

### Baltimore at New York Jets (-1.5) [35.5]

What a great Monday nighter. The Ravens, a burgeoning offensive juggernaut, meets their defensive match in the NY Jets, my least favorite squadron. These are the two "it" teams coming into the season and a win here will give one team some huge momentum going forward.

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Even with Revis back in the line up, the Ravens still have a better chance to post points than a Mark Sanchez led offense. If the Jets are going to win they'll need to run the ball effectively all game long and hold Baltimore under 14 points, which is definitely doable. Unfortunately, the defense can't prevent the Franchise (or is it Sanchez?) from throwing a pick six or two – which is highly problematic. GO RAVENS, I believe in you! **BAL 17, NYJ 13 (Pick: Baltimore +1.5, under 35.5)**

### San Diego at Kansas City (+6) [45]

After the intense battle that is sure to go down on the East coast, we'll be treated to a lighthearted affair in the late game. The Chiefs are my surprise team of 2010 and the Chargers are my bust. No better time to see this prediction turn into reality than in week one. [Arrowhead will bring the ruckus](#)

, which will prove too much for Rivers and his depleted receiving corps.

**KC 27, SD 24 (Pick; Kansas City +6, over 45)**

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