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Volume 38, Issue 20

January 6-8, 2024

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# RING OF FIRE

*A Weekly Insight Into The Art Of Sports Handicapping*

*I fell into a burnin' ring of fire  
I went down, down, down  
And the flames went higher  
And it burns, burns, burns  
The ring of fire, the ring of fire*

**W**hen legendary Hall of Fame country singer Johnny Cash and June Carter were singing partners and close friends, Carter wrote the aforementioned lyrics about their relationship, saying that being around Cash was like being in a "ring of fire." Cash was involved in drugs and had a very volatile lifestyle. Despite it all Carter wrote the song while driving around aimlessly one night, worried about his ways but also resigned to the fact that she couldn't resist him. "There is no way to be in that kind of hell, no way to extinguish a flame that burns, burns, burns," she said. Nonetheless they married and she helped him get and stay sober in their 35 years of marriage.

Ask any NFL player what burns them the most and they will likely tell you that it occurs when they take it on the chops three straight games against a

division opponent. It's not only demoralizing but it also borders on embarrassment.

It also serves as a point of motivation for the better teams in the league. So much so that had you had the insight to...

**PLAY ON any NFL .500 or greater division road dog with triple revenge-exact**

...you would own a sparkling 48-24-2 ATS mark since 1981 had you done so. Better yet, bring them in off a win and they improve to 35-13-2, while going **19-5-1 ATS** when coming off consecutive wins, including **12-1 ATS** since 1998. Last year found the fuming hot Cincinnati Bengals in this role when they visited Cleveland during the final week of the season. The Bengals fell, 21-16, as a 6.5-point dog while bringing home the bacon.

This week finds the **Los Angeles Rams** joining the 'Ring of Fire' when they invade San Francisco to take on the 49ers, a team that has the top seed in the NFC playoff locked up.

So, if you have a burning desire to cash one last ticket this week, I strongly suggest you heed the sage advice of June Carter and The Man In Black, Johnny Cash, who together put it best when they said...

*Love is a burnin' thing  
And it makes a fiery ring  
Bound by wild desire  
I fell into a ring of fire*

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*Marc Lawrence*

## AWESOME ANGLE OF THE WEEK

PLAY AGAINST any NFL road favorite from game Seven Out in their last game of the season if they allow 4.5 or more YPR and are facing an avenging foe off a loss.

**Play AGAINST:  
BUFFALO BILLS (1/7)**

## RUNNING DOWN A DREAM

ATS W-L Record Since 2000:

**16-2  
(89%)**

*View Marc's Awesome Angle Of The Week at the PlaybookSports.com website!*

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS WILL BE OUR FINAL PLAYBOOK FOOTBALL NEWSLETTER ISSUE OF THE SEASON. NEXT WEEK OUR FOOTBALL COVERAGE SHIFTS TO THE MIDWEEK ALERT.**

## INCREDIBLE STAT OF THE WEEK

*The Jacksonville Jaguars are 2-17 SU and 7-12 ATS away in their final game of the season in their franchise history, including 0-11 SU in games with the Over/Under total of fewer than 43 points.*

# THIS WEEK IN FOOTBALL - JANUARY 6-8

Remember: You Have A PLAYBOOK BEST BET Whenever Our Predicted Margin Of Victory Is 6 Or More Points In Favor Of Your Line

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Monday, January 8

### COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

NRG Stadium • Houston TX • ESPN 7:30 ET

Michigan over Washington by 1

And then there were two... though it might not be the two that many fans wanted to see in the final college football game of the 2023 season. And while we'll admit that a 'revenge matchup' pitting Alabama against Texas might have sparked more interest, a battle between two unbeaten teams for the CFP Trophy is just as appealing. Especially when the head coaches involved declared that their quarterback is the best in the game. Here's what Michigan's Jim Harbaugh had to say about QB J.J. McCarthy after the Wolverines topped Alabama 27-20 in overtime at the Rose Bowl: "I've said it before, but right here, this is the greatest quarterback in University of Michigan history. Got a long way to go to get where Tom Brady eventually got to, which is the GOAT. But in a college career there's been nobody at Michigan better than JJ." Washington head coach Kalen DeBoer also sang the praises of Huskies' QB Michael Penix Jr. after U-Dub defeated the Longhorns: "He just makes all the throws. He uses all the tools, and all the skill sets that make him special and make him, in my mind, the best player in college football." DeBoer also points out that Penix could have declared for the NFL draft after the Huskies won the Alamo Bowl over Texas last year but chose to return. "He has been on a mission," DeBoer said. "And his decision to come back lit a spark in more ways than one for our football team."

After listening to complaints about their soft schedule all year, the Wolverines have played arguably their two best games of the season to arrive here - nail-biters over Ohio State to end regular season play and last week against Alabama. Ditto for the sled dogs, who outlasted Oregon 34-31 in the Pac-12 Championship game and Texas 37-31 in the Sugar Bowl semifinal game on New Year's night. In fact, winning close games has become a calling card for Washington: the Texas win was the Huskies' tenth straight victory by 10 points or less, and their fifth straight one-score game. Still, Washington will need to overcome the Pac-12's nasty 11-25 SU and 7-29 ATS ledger in bowl games against foes coming off a win, a hurdle they just cleared when they brought down the Longhorns. The big question mark tonight, though, will be the availability of star RB Dillon Johnson, who was carted off the field in the final minute of last week's win over Texas. The junior running back averaged over 5 yards per carry this season and totaled 1,162 rushing yards and 16 touchdowns in 13 games for the Huskies (word is he is expected to play).

A check of the ATS archives finds Michigan playing from behind again. Harbaugh owns a weak 11-21-1 ATS career mark against undefeated foes, including 4-13 SU and 5-12 ATS when not favored by 5 or more points. And for what it's worth, this will be his first test against an undefeated opponent in the postseason. Then there is the infamous "Bama bounce" that occurs when a team beats the Tide by a touchdown (7 points) or more, as they are just 20-30 ATS

as chalk the following game. Our Well-Oiled Machine takes it one step further as it notes that undefeated teams who beat a Nick Saban coached Alabama squad are 3-11 ATS the following game, including **0-6 ATS** as a favorite of more than 4 points when facing a foe coming off an ATS win. Meanwhile, DeBoer stands **8-1 ATS** as a dog, including **5-0 SUATS** with the Huskies and **4-0 SUATS** versus .888 or greater foes. He is also 6-1 SU versus undefeated foes, including 1-0 SUATS as a dog. (Beat UCLA, 40-37 as an 11-point dog).

Washington now has the opportunity to bring down the curtain on the Pac-12 in grand fashion. The Huskies helped deal a death blow to the conference by bolting to the Big Ten starting next season, but their last football game as a member of the Pac-12 could deliver the league's first national title since 2004. How ironic would it be should they take down Big Ten powerhouse Michigan in Monday's National Championship Game? As for the Wolverines, a win tonight might see the final score accompanied by an asterisk considering all the shenanigans that have gone on with the program under Jim Harbaugh's watch. He was suspended six games for two separate cheating scandals during the Wolves' 14-game campaign this season and during his first six years at Michigan, he did not beat archrival Ohio State a single time and failed to reach the College Football Playoff once. Then came recruiting violations, and the success followed. No surprise then that Harbaugh has apparently been sending signals to the NFL that he could be available if Michigan wins it all.

In the end, a Washington defense that allowed 31 points per game in the last two contests is all that's keeping us from calling for an outright win by the Huskies. As Brent Musburger likes to say, "It's all about cashing tickets" and our ticket tonight finds us on U-Dub and the points.

## TALE OF THE TAPE

WASHINGTON 14-0

MICHIGAN 14-0

### OFFENSIVE STAT AVERAGES

|       |                 |       |
|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 37.6  | POINTS PER GAME | 36.0  |
| 123.6 | RUSHING YARDS   | 159.9 |
| 4.4   | YARDS PER RUSH  | 4.3   |
| 350.0 | PASSING YARDS   | 218.9 |
| 9.6   | YARDS PER PASS  | 9.0   |
| 473.6 | TOTAL YARDS     | 378.8 |
| 7.3   | YARDS PER PLAY  | 6.1   |
| 23.7  | FIRST DOWNS     | 20.1  |
| 46.8  | 3RD DOWN %      | 44.8  |
| 7.4   | 4Q PTS PER GAME | 6.2   |

### DEFENSIVE STAT AVERAGES

|       |                 |       |
|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 24.1  | POINTS PER GAME | 10.2  |
| 129.9 | RUSHING YARDS   | 95.1  |
| 4.5   | YARDS PER RUSH  | 3.1   |
| 253.1 | PASSING YARDS   | 150.0 |
| 6.8   | YARDS PER PASS  | 5.8   |
| 404.1 | TOTAL YARDS     | 245.1 |
| 5.7   | YARDS PER PLAY  | 4.3   |
| 22.6  | FIRST DOWNS     | 13.0  |
| 40.1  | OPP 3RD DOWN %  | 30.2  |
| 1.57  | QB SACKS GAME   | 2.71  |

# 2-MINUTE HANDICAP



FOR A COMPLETE 2-MINUTE HANDICAP OF EVERY GAME ON TODAY'S CARD, VISIT [www.PlaybookSports.com](http://www.PlaybookSports.com)

**ATS** = Against The Spread • **A** = Away • **Con** = Conference • **D** = Dog  
**F** = Favorite • **H** = Home • **Rev** = Revenge • **R** = Road • **SU** = Straight-Up

## Week 18 NFL Games

All results are **ATS** – Against The Spread – and most recent, unless noted otherwise. Content contained in this report remains the exclusive private property of **PLAYBOOK™** and **PlaybookSports.com™** and may not be reused or disseminated in any form without express written consent of the publisher.

### TEAMS KEY FACTS, STATS & ATS TRENDS

#### Saturday, January 6

**Pittsburgh** SERIES: 4-1 L5... 5-2 aft non-conf RG... 7-3 vs dbl div rev  
**BALTIMORE** 5-1 aft score 40+ pts... 1-5 div HG... 1-5 in 2nd of BB HG

**Houston** 7-0 L7 div RG... 5-0 aft div RG... 4-0 off SU win 14 > pts  
**INDIANAPOLIS** SERIES: 8-3 L11... 0-4 Last Home Game... 3-9 L12 div HG

#### Sunday, January 7

**Dallas** SERIES: 4-1 L5... 4-1 TY vs < .400 opp... 1-4 aft Sat gm  
**WASHINGTON** 1-6 in 2nd of BB HG... 2-6 div HG... 2-4 Last Home Game

**La Rams** 9-0 as div dogs w/ revenge... 5-1 L6 div RG... 2-6 aft NYG  
**SAN FRANCISCO** SERIES: 6-1 L7... 5-0 vs triple revenge... 5-1 L6 div HG

**Buffalo** SERIES: 4-2-1 L7... 5-0-1 TY vs .666 > opp... 0-3 aft NEng  
**MIAMI** 6-0 L6 div HG... 6-1 home vs .600 > opp... 3-1-1 aft Balt

**Atlanta** SERIES: 4-1 L5... 5-2 L7 div RG... 3-12 in 2nd of BB RG  
**NEW ORLEANS** 1-5 aft div RG... 1-4 L5 div HG... 2-5 Last Home Game

**Philadelphia** 10-3 aft Ariz... 0-3 Last Road Game... 2-8-1 L11 div RG  
**NY GIANTS** SERIES: 7-3 L10... 8-1 vs opp off SU fav loss... 3-1 aft Rams

**Cleveland** 1-5 aft Jets... 3-9 L12 div RG... 2-5 off SU win 14 > pts  
**CINCINNATI** SERIES: Host 3-0... 8-2 L10 vs .666 > opp... 6-2 aft KC

**Chicago** 6-1-1 L8 gms... 3-1 L4 div RG... 0-6 off SU win 14 > pts  
**GEEEN BAY** SERIES: 9-0 SUATS L9... 7-0 aft div RG... 5-1 home off BB RG

**Seattle** SERIES: 4-0 SUATS L4... 4-0 TY vs .333 < opp... 3-1 aft Pitt  
**ARIZONA** 4-2 aft Phil... 0-6 L6 div HG... 1-3 L4 w/ quad revenge

**Ny Jets** 0-4 Last Road Game... 1-8 aft Thurs gm... 2-9 L11 div RG  
**NEW ENGLAND** SERIES: 6-0 SUATS L6... 1-5 aft div RG... 1-3 L4 div HG

**Jacksonville** 4-0 div RG... 5-1 aft allow 7 < pts... 9-3 aft non-conf HG  
**TENNESSEE** SERIES: 4-2 L6... 4-1 w/ trip revenge... 0-4 L4 div HG

**Denver** 3-1 L4 div RG... 1-3 aft LAC... 1-3 in 2nd of BB div gms  
**LAS VEGAS** SERIES: 5-0 SUATS L5... 3-1 aft Indy... 1-4 vs div revenge

**Minnesota** 7-1 away w/ dbl rev... 3-1 aft GB... 1-4 Last Road Game  
**DETROIT** SERIES: 6-0 L6... 4-1 Last Home Game... 4-1 aft Sat gm

**Tampa Bay** 3-0 VS dbl div rev... 5-2 L7 div RG... 2-6 vs .333 < opp  
**CAROLINA** SERIES: 7-3 L10... 7-0 aft Jack... 4-0 aft non-conf RG

**Kansas City** 6-2 L8 vs < .400 opp... 4-2 away off BB HG... 2-4 div RG  
**LA CHARGERS** SERIES: 5-2 L7... 4-0 Last Home Game... 6-1 aft div RG

**NOTE:** Home team is shown in ALL CAPS. PLAYBOOK selection is **Underlined and Bold**. Should we pass or not have a strong opinion on a game, neither team will be bolded.

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## PRO FOOTBALL

### Saturday, January 6

### 5★ BEST BET

#### **BALTIMORE** over Pittsburgh by 7

Think the Ravens are not the best team entering the final week of the NFL season? Guess again. They will take the field today knowing they are 6-2 outright against the eight teams seeded No. 1-7 in the current NFL playoff picture, winning the games with a +125-point differential. In fact, their only two losses were by 2 points against Cleveland and 3 points in an overtime loss to Indianapolis. However, before jumping off the high board into this game, it's interesting to note that 24 of the previous 31 games in this series have been decided by one score or less, including a whopping 17 games by a field goal or fewer. So, with the Steelers arriving as 3.5-point road chalk and needing a win to stay alive in the playoff race, where do we turn here, you ask? Well, we see a red door, and we want it painted black – as in the blackbird Ravens. You can call it black as night or black as coal. Yet, it's how we roll in season-ending frays like this when a team whose power rating would normally find itself installed as 13.5-point chalk, but instead dresses up as a home dog due to "need" and "rested starters". Rest assured, there is no way Baltimore head coach John Harbaugh wants to go into the playoffs with the Steelers also in attendance. Go back to 2019 when Baltimore was in this exact same spot with a playoff seed secured in their back pocket. They were home dogs who rested their starters in the final game of the season, yet still won the game when they punished who? - Pittsburgh - 28-10. The Steelers can make the playoffs with a win today and a loss by either Buffalo or Jacksonville, along with four other Wild Card possibilities (see our playoff scenario chart on Page 6 for exact details). However, Baltimore's 16-2 SU and 14-4 ATS ledger at home in games coming off a win of 35-plus points – including **13-1 SU and 12-2 ATS** versus sub .600 foes – sets up **THE CLINCHER: Baltimore is 12-3 SU and 13-1-1 ATS as a home dog in this series when the Steelers sport a winning record.**

**THIS JUST IN:** Brad Allen's crew has been assigned to this game by the NFL. We're sure it's an NFL P.R. move to douse water on the flames they created in the Cowboys-Lions fiasco. Good luck, Steelers; hope you don't need a two-point conversion. And if you have a message for the ref, make sure it's in writing.

### Houston over INDIANAPOLIS by 6

From a playoff perspective, this one is simple: win, and you're in. If the Texans are triumphant, they clinch the AFC South and, at the least, a playoff berth. Should Indy prevail they win the AFC South and at the least a playoff berth. The fact of the matter is we like the look of Houston rookie phenom QB C.J. Stroud back in the saddle, especially

against a lame contingent of Colts who enter just 2-7 ITS (In The Stats) in its last nine games. This history book reminds us that the Texans are **7-0 ATS** in their last seven division road games and 5-0 ATS when coming off a division road game. Toss in a **4-0 ATS** log when coming off a win of 14-plus points, and there is only one way to look in this pivotal AFC South scrape, especially with the Horseshoe's horrid **3-17-1 ATS** record in Last Home Games when Indianapolis sports an equal or greater win percentage.

### Sunday, January 7

#### Dallas over WASHINGTON by 16

Okay, let's start things off with the first of many "what-ifs" that started when the Dallas Cowboys snuck out of AT&T Stadium with a victory over the Detroit Lions on Saturday Night, a win that was highly controversial when a surprising two-point conversion in the last seconds of the game was overruled. The Lions were in position to prevail – and sew up at least the No. 2 seed in the NFC Playoff Picture – after a successful two-point conversion with 23 seconds left in the game, but a crew of inept zebras wouldn't allow it. As a result, the Cowboys would go on to win 20-19 and put themselves in to position to clinch the NFC East division with a victory over the Commanders today. With it, the Cowboys will win the NFC East with a win here while keeping a streak of non-consecutive NFC East division winners alive, dating back to 2006. Stop for a moment and think about what needed to happen to keep the streak intact: The aforementioned zebra robbery in last week's Cowboys "win" over the Lions, and Philadelphia's fall from grace in its ugliest loss of the season in last week's head-scratching home loss to the cellar-dwelling Cardinals, was a parlay that would have paid astronomical odds. Instead, Dallas is in a position to steal a division title, and the Commanders will likely serve as the Cowboys' bitch. With Washington, **1-6 ATS** in the second of a two-game home stand and 5-12 SUATS of late when hosting a division foe, Dallas, 13-0 outright as double-digit division chalk, the only upset here will be those backing the Commanders.

### 4★ BEST BET

#### LA Rams over SAN FRANCISCO by 10

After a one-year hiatus, the Rams are back in the playoffs. Winners of three straight and six of its last seven games, Los Angeles is the one team in the NFC that no one in the playoffs wants to hook. They are 6-1 since their Bye week, with the only loss coming in overtime at Baltimore. As we called out in the Browns writeup, we know that NFL away teams in the postseason are just 6-24 SU and 8-22 ATS since 1996 in their initial playoff game when coming off a division loss. The Rams will be handing the ball to Carson Wentz, who at first glance is just 2-8 SU and 3-7 ATS in his last ten starts. But he is also 7-5 SUATS in his career with teams riding a three-game win streak, including **3-0 SUATS** in division games. The Rams are **9-0 ATS** as a division road dog, as well as **5-1 ATS** in its last six division road contests. Flipping the script, the Niners enter with nothing to gain as they have the No. 1 seed throughout the NFC playoffs and figure to be resting starters for an extended period of time, with star RB Christian McCaffrey and QB Brock Purdy already nailed to the pines and QB Sam Darnold slated to start. With that, we wrap it all up with **THE CLINCHER: See Marc's 'Ring of Fire' BETCHA DIDN'T KNOW article on page 2.**

### CURRENT NFL SEEDINGS

#### AFC

1. Seed: Baltimore (13-3)
2. Seed: Miami (11-5)
3. Seed: Kansas City (10-6)
4. Seed: Jacksonville (9-7)
5. Seed: Cleveland (11-5)
6. Seed: Buffalo (10-6)
7. Seed: Indianapolis (9-7)

#### Still alive –

8. Houston (9-7)
9. Pittsburgh (9-7)

#### NFC

1. Seed: San Francisco (12-4)
2. Seed: Dallas (11-5)
3. Seed: Detroit (11-5)
4. Seed: Tampa Bay (8-8)
5. Seed: Philadelphia (11-5)
6. Seed: L.A. Rams (9-7)
7. Seed: Green Bay (8-8)

#### Still alive –

8. Seattle (8-8)
9. New Orleans (8-8)
10. Minnesota (7-9)
11. Atlanta (7-9)

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### UPSET GAME OF THE WEEK UPSET

#### MIAMI over Buffalo by 3

Despite the fact that things went from bad to worse for the Miami Dolphins late in Sunday afternoon's blowout loss to the Ravens, the league has flexed this game to its treasured Sunday Night prime-time contest. While the Dolphins were crushed by the Ravens on the field, they have even worse things to deal with moving forward. Miami star LB Bradley Chubb had to be carted off the field, and quarterback Tua Tagoviola was injured, too, although Tua's injury is not considered serious. Four-time Pro Bowler CB Xavien Howard is also likely out with a foot injury. That's not good news for a team that just surrendered 56 points and 5 TD passes in last week's beatdown by Baltimore. The Fish have now lost their top two pass rushers, Chubb, and Jaelen Phillips, in garbage-time situations since Thanksgiving along with star QB Xavien Howard. However, Mike McDaniel, from his days with the 49ers, clearly knows the importance of entering the postseason on a positive note. Plus, Miami is **6-0 ATS** in its last six division home games, as well as **6-1 ATS** at home versus .600 or greater foes. Sure, we realize that with a win the Bills win the AFC East crown, but if they lose this game, they could get knocked out of the playoffs. Our point of contention is they could lose this game, and there is not a thing they can do about it if both the Jags and Steelers win. We realize they've tripped Miami up three straight times, but there is no excusing the fact that since Week 10, only one other quarterback (Bryce Young) owns a lower Pass Completion Percentage than Buffalo QB Josh Allen's 57%. Allen's bipolar career started at Wyoming, where he compiled a 56.2% career pass completion record. It's our contention, though, that even Miami's banged-up secondary is better than what Allen went up against with the Cowboys. Look for the Fish to come back to life here tonight.

#### NEW ORLEANS over Atlanta by 6

Entering the final week of the 2023 NFL season, there are 9 teams that have clinched a playoff berth, with 11 other teams still in contention as both of today's division rivals check that box. For the 7-9 Falcons, the path is simple: beat the 8-8 Saints, and hope the Panthers beat the 8-8 Buccaneers. Anything less, and the Dirty Birds will fly home from The Big Easy sans a playoff berth for the sixth year in a row. If all teams finish 8-9, however, Atlanta would own the tiebreaker by virtue of a 3-1 record against the other two teams. Tampa Bay went 2-2 against Atlanta and New Orleans, and the Saints would finish 1-3 against the other two if they lost to the Falcons. The Saints need a win or a tie and a Tampa Bay loss to clinch the NFC South. They'll need a win or a tie and a loss by Seattle to earn a playoff berth, so they, too, enter

*(continued on next page)*

# NFL PLAYOFF SCENARIOS FOR WEEK 18

## AFC – CLINCHED

### Baltimore Ravens (13-3)

AFC North division title, No. 1 seed, lone first-round bye and homefield advantage

### Kansas City Chiefs (10-6)

AFC West division title

### Cleveland Browns (11-5) – playoff berth

### Miami Dolphins (11-5) – playoff berth

## UP FOR GRABS

- Buffalo Bills (10-6) at Miami Dolphins Sunday, 8:20 pm ET, NBC TV

### Buffalo clinches AFC East Division title with:

- 1) Bills win

### Buffalo clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Bills tie OR
- 2) Steelers loss or tie OR
- 3) Jaguars loss or tie OR
- 4) Texans-Colts tie

- Houston Texans (9-7) at Indianapolis (9-7) Saturday, 8:15 pm ET, ESPN/ABC TV

### Houston clinches AFC South Division title with:

- 1) Texans win + Jaguars loss or tie

### Houston clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Texans win OR
- 2) Texans tie + Jaguars loss + Steelers loss or tie

### Indianapolis clinches AFC South Division title with:

- 1) Colts win + Jaguars loss or tie OR
- 2) Colts tie + Jaguars loss

### Indianapolis clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Colts win OR
- 2) Colts tie + Steelers loss or tie

- Jacksonville Jaguars (9-7) at Tennessee (5-11) Sunday, 1:00 pm ET, CBS TV

### Jacksonville clinches AFC South Division title with:

- 1) Jaguars win OR
- 2) Jaguars tie + Texans-Colts tie

### Jacksonville clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Jaguars tie + Steelers loss or tie OR
- 2) Steelers loss + Broncos loss or tie + Texans-Colts game does not end in tie

- Miami Dolphins (11-5) vs. Buffalo (10-6) Sunday, 8:20 pm ET, NBC TV

### Miami clinches AFC East Division title with:

- 1) Dolphins win or tie

- Pittsburgh Steelers (9-7) vs. Baltimore (13-3) Saturday, 4:30 pm ET, ESPN/ABC TV

### Pittsburgh clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Steelers win + Bills loss OR
- 2) Steelers win + Jaguars loss or tie OR
- 3) Steelers win + Texans-Colts tie OR
- 4) Steelers tie + Jaguars loss + Texans-Colts game does not end in tie OR
- 5) Jaguars loss + Broncos win + Texans-Colts game does not end in tie

## NFC – CLINCHED

### San Francisco 49ers (12-4)

NFC West division title, No. 1 seed, lone first-round bye and homefield advantage

### Detroit Lions (11-5)

NFC North division title

### Dallas Cowboys (11-5) – playoff berth

### Los Angeles Rams (9-7) – playoff berth

### Philadelphia Eagles (11-5) – playoff berth

## UP FOR GRABS

- Atlanta Falcons (7-9) at New Orleans (8-8) Sunday, 1:00 pm ET, CBS TV

### Atlanta clinches NFC South Division title with:

- 1) Falcons win + Buccaneers loss

- Dallas Cowboys (11-5) at Washington (4-12) Sunday, 4:25 pm ET, FOX TV

### Dallas clinches NFC East Division title with:

- 1) Cowboys win OR
- 2) Cowboys tie + Eagles tie OR
- 3) Eagles loss

- Green Bay Packers (8-8) at Chicago (7-9) Sunday, 4:25 pm ET, CBS TV

### Green Bay clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Packers win OR
- 2) Packers tie + Seahawks loss or tie + Saints loss or tie OR (see next column above)

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- 3) Packers tie + Seahawks loss + Bucs loss OR
- 4) Packers tie + Seahawks tie + Bucs loss or tie OR
- 5) Vikings loss or tie + Seahawks loss + or Buccaneers loss OR
- 6) Vikings loss or tie + Seahawks loss + Saints loss

- Minnesota Vikings (7-9) at Detroit (11-5) Sunday, 1:00 pm ET, FOX TV

### Minnesota clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Vikings win + Packers loss + Seahawks loss + Buccaneers loss OR
- 2) Vikings win + Packers loss + Seahawks loss + Saints loss

- New Orleans Saints (8-8) vs. Atlanta (7-9) Sunday, 1:00 pm ET, CBS TV

### New Orleans clinches NFC South title with:

- 1) Saints win + Buccaneers loss or tie OR
- 2) Saints tie + Buccaneers loss

### New Orleans clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Saints win + Seahawks loss or tie + Packers loss or tie OR
- 2) Saints tie + Seahawks loss + Packers loss

- Philadelphia Eagles (11-4) vs. NY Giants (5-11) Sunday, 4:25 pm ET, CBS TV

### Philadelphia clinches NFC East title with:

- 1) Eagles win + Cowboys loss or tie OR
- 2) Eagles tie + Cowboys loss

- Seattle Seahawks (8-8) at Arizona (4-12) Sunday, 4:25 pm ET, FOX TV

### Seattle clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Seahawks win + Packers loss or tie OR
- 2) Seahawks win + Packers loss + Buccaneers loss or tie OR
- 3) Seahawks tie + Packers loss + Saints loss or tie

- Tampa Bay Bucs (8-8) at Carolina (2-14) Sunday, 1:00 pm ET, FOX TV

### Tampa Bay clinches NFC South title with:

- 1) Buccaneers win OR
- 2) Buccaneers tie + Saints loss or tie

### Tampa Bay clinches playoff berth with:

- 1) Buccaneers win + Seahawks loss + Packers loss or tie

with plenty on the line. With both teams bringing lousy numbers to the party, we'll let you decipher the side you like. Is it Atlanta with its **1-7 ATS** mark when seeking single revenge and its 3-12 ATS ledger away off an away game, or New Orleans' **1-5 ATS** mark in games when coming off a division road title? Before diving in, though, make sure you know whether or not Bucs QB Baker Mayfield will be behind center (bruised ribs). If not, you'll be asking Kyle Trask to cash a ticket. Yikes.

## Philadelphia over NY GIANTS by 3

There has not been a back-to-back winner of the NFC East division since 2006, and if ever there was a time for the slumping Eagles to right the ship before the postseason, it was last week against a Cardinals crew fading like a distant memory. It wasn't meant to be, though, when former Philly DC Jonathan Gannon put the screws to the Green Birds. The Eagles were in the driver's seat to break and prepared to break the jinx before they laid a Tyrannosaurus Rex size egg last week in a stunning home loss. As a result, Philadelphia now needs a win today and a loss by Dallas to claim the division. That's like asking Santa to hitch up the reindeer and make another post-Christmas Eve run. It ain't gonna happen. Yet, while the division title is still at stake, word has it that Philly head coach Nick Sirianni will likely rest his starters on an ailing team that has lost four of its last five games. Confounding

matters, a significant snowstorm is in the forecast for Sunday at MetLife Stadium on Sunday. Hey, maybe the Christmas sleigh might want to make a spirited run. Nah. With the Cowboys playing at the same time as the Eagles, scoreboard-watching could likely be a point of contention in this contest. Remember, Sirianni rested starters in Week 18 before -- back in 2021 when they were blown out, 56-21, at home by the Cowboys in their season finale as the Eagles clinched a playoff spot in Week Seventeen and didn't care if they were the No. 6 or No. 7 seed. So, the question begs: Will the Eagles show up today after last week's disappearing act? They should, knowing they would be in the same boat we called out in the Rams game, as NFL away teams in the postseason are just 6-24 SU and 8-22 ATS since 1996 in their initial playoff game when coming off a division loss. Nick Sirianni needs to know this. More importantly, Jalen Hurts and his troops do, too. Meanwhile, the Giants check in at **8-1 ATS** against foes coming off a SU favorite loss and **5-1 ATS** in its last six games as a home dog of 6 or fewer points. With revenge from a 33-25 loss just two weeks ago, we'll likely be on the take.

## CINCINNATI over Cleveland by 3

Cleveland (11-5) clinched its third postseason appearance since 1999 on Thursday night with a win over the New York Jets. The Browns

are in both the playoffs and an unusual spot: They can treat their regular-season finale like a preseason game. With a wild-card berth already locked up, Cleveland coach Kevin Stefanski has indicated he may rest some starters, including red-hot quarterback Joe Flacco, for today's final regular-season game against the Bengals. That makes this week's game against the Bengals (8-8) meaningless, and Stefanski will consider having players rest and avoid injuries as the No. 5 seed Browns prepare for a wild card-round game against the AFC South champion – Jacksonville, Indianapolis, or Houston – on Jan. 13, 14 or 15. However, a win here would give the Browns 12 regular-season wins for just the second time in franchise history when they went 12-4 in 1986. With Flacco, who has led the Browns to four straight wins and thrown for 1,616 yards in five starts since he was signed on Nov. 20, sitting this one out, it's important to remember the 8-8 Bengals are officially eliminated from the postseason. The Browns are handing the ball to veteran Jeff Driskel, who was signed off Arizona's practice squad last Friday. He'll mark the fifth starting quarterback for the team this season – an NFL record. For what it's worth, Driskel is 1-9 SU and 5-5 ATS as a starter in the NFL, including **4-0 ATS** as a dog of more than seven points. Regardless, the AFC North is the only division in the league without a losing team. More importantly, Cleveland dresses up in the same role today as the Rams and Eagles, knowing that NFL away teams in the postseason are just 6-24 SU and 8-22 ATS since 1996 in their initial playoff game when coming off a division loss. If you're ready to pounce on the Bengals, all we can say is caveat emptor.

### 3★ BEST BET

#### Chicago over GREEN BAY by 7

Green Bay can clinch a Wild Card berth with a win today ... but be careful here. The truth of the matter is the Bears are the sort of team that opponents who need to "win and be in" the playoffs do not want to meet, not with the weight of the postseason lurking overhead. For openers, Chicago has won four of its last five games, with the only loss a 3-point decision at Cleveland while going 4-1 ATS and ITS (In The Stats) in those contests. In addition, the Bears fondly recall last season when then Packer QB Aaron Rodgers proclaimed that he "owns" Chicago. For openers, it's appearing more and more that QB Justin Fields will be the Bears' quarterback of the future. Over the past nine starts, Fields owns an 87.5 QB Rating with 1,838 yards, 13 TDs, and 5 INTs, not to mention 521 rushing yards, which is attributed to Chicago's No. 2 Ranked Rush Offense (trailing only the Ravens) in the last three games. Jumping on the pile, our NFL Coaches' Database notes that Packers head coach Matt LaFleur has been reduced to 1-3 ATS as a favorite since Aaron Rodgers bolted for the Big Apple. In this "revenge is best served cold" call, we cement it with **THE CLINCHER: Green Bay is 2-4 SU and 1-5 ATS in season finales for the last six years.**

#### ARIZONA over Seattle by 3

Safe to say, we love games like this. A potential playoff team, on the outside looking in, in its final hurrah – and priced accordingly. The Seahawks arrive with a -39 net points differential on the season, which goes hand-in-hand with its -43 net yards per game average this campaign. It's largely due to the fact that Seattle has been outgained in its last six games – a true indicator of how the games are actually being played on the field. Today they take on a Cardinals team that has rushed the ball for over 200 yards in two of their last three games. In addition, NFL home dogs in final games of the season coming off an outright win as a dog in which they beat the spread by 14 or more points are 8-5 SU and 10-3 ATS since 1980. Tie Seattle's **0-7 ATS** mark in games when coming off a home game against an AFC opponent, and you know what to do.

#### NEW ENGLAND over NY Jets by 8

Could this be a "Win One for the Gipper" goodie? With rumors swirling about Bill Belichick's imminent departure, albeit via retirement or via a trade, we think so. With the mindset in place and the Jets in a deep decline at 2-6 SU and **1-7 ATS** in their last eight games, we'd be stunned if this game is not dedicated to The Hoodie. Making matters worse for the Jets, they fly into Foxborough with a **1-5 SUATS** record in season finales the last six years, as well as a **1-7 SUATS** record in road finales. And we didn't even mention a **1-8 ATS** mark in games when coming off a Thursday performance or a 2-9 ATS log in their last eleven games on the division road. With the Pats having beat the Jets like a drum in each of their last 15 meetings in this series, you know exactly what to do here.

#### TENNESSEE over Jacksonville by 1

The up-and-down Jags can still cop the NFC South title with a win in Nashville today. Should they stumble for the fifth time in their last six games, they will need a Steelers loss – which they will know at game time – or a tie against the Titans, or a pair of other bizarre outcomes (see this week's Playoff Scenario chart on page 6). The bottom line here is the heat is on the Jags, and to their detriment they fall into the **INCREDIBLE STAT OF THE WEEK**. It doesn't help with the Nashville Cats playing with a triple revenge chip on their shoulder, especially given Tennessee's **4-1 SUATS** record in its last five games in this role. In addition, the Titans are **6-1 ATS** when coming off a division road rumble. With Jack's 2-9 ATS record on the road against .400 or fewer foes, we call for the upset!

#### LAS VEGAS over Denver by 6

A matchup of two disappointing teams, each on the outside looking in. However, the Broncos check in **2-10 SU and 1-11 ATS** in this series – with Vegas beating them like a drum in each of the last seven showdowns. It doesn't help, either, as Denver is a dastardly **1-5 ATS** in road finales. It all ties nicely into the Raiders' **6-1 ATS** record in Last Home Games and their **5-1 SUATS** mark in their last six as a division home favorite. A win here sends the Raiders home in 2nd place in the AFC West, something they'll be striving for. Vegas baby!

#### DETROIT over Minnesota by 10

After last week's fleeing by the zebras in Dallas, and despite the fact that the only way Detroit can move up to the No. 2 seed in the NFC playoffs is if they beat the Vikings, PLUS the Cowboys and Eagles both lose. Good luck with that. For now, Dallas is playing the Commanders while the Eagles are playing the Giants. Meanwhile, Lions head coach Dan Campbell announced he will be playing QB Jared Goff and his starters in this contest. That likely tells you all you need to know here, especially with Detroit, the dominant team in this series at **6-0 SUATS**, as well as 8-2 ATS in its last ten division home games. Meanwhile, Minnesota arrives alive in the playoff chase needing a win here and losses by Green Bay, Seattle, and Tampa Bay – or – a win and losses by the Packers, the Seahawks, and the Saints. You likely have a better chance of buying a Power Ball ticket. That being said, look for highly pissed-off Lions to improve to **5-0 ATS** in Last Home Games today.

#### Tampa Bay over CAROLINA by 8

It couldn't be any simpler for the Bucs – win this game, and they win the division. Should they lose, they are done. A tie would set up two other possibilities involving two foes that would need to either lose or tie their games. In short, a win will do it and would put QB Baker Mayfield into the postseason for the second time in his NFL career. However, the issue at hand is he didn't practice Wednesday with bruised ribs. Fortunately for Tampa, the Panthers are a miserable 2-5 SU and 1-6 ATS in Last Home games, as well as **0-6 SUATS** as a dog of 4-plus points behind QB Bryce Young. With the Bucs **7-1 ATS** as a visitor this season, you know where we'll be.

#### Kansas City over LA CHARGERS by 1

The one thing we know on the final week of the NFL regular season is that teams that cannot improve their playoff position will be resting starters (see Baltimore, Cleveland, Kansas City, and San Francisco). Deciding whether to fade them or not comes down to the head coaches' approach in these games and, of course, the perceived line value in the contest. Then, of course, there is the matter of how teams perform in their initial playoff game when coming off a loss, going just 89-73 SU overall since 1981 as opposed to 198-150 when entering off a win. Apparently, Andy Reid could care less as he is opting not to start Patrick Mahomes today. Instead, it will be Blaine Gabbert time for the Chiefs today, whose last start was in 2018 for the Titans. However, we also need to let him know that playoff teams are 147-84-3 ATS in season finales, including 80-44-1 ATS as a dog of more than three points. Meanwhile, the Chargers will be rebuilt from top to bottom in the offseason and are anxious to hit the links. Put a gun to our heads, and we'd yell, "Take the points."

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM  
MARC LAWRENCE AND THE  
ENTIRE PLAYBOOK STAFF!**

# KENNY WHITE'S 2023 FOOTBALL POWER RATINGS

Rnk: Overall rank in NFL • PWR: Numerical team power rating • HF: Numerical home field value

| Rnk | Team               | Conf/Div  | PWR   | HF  | Rnk        | Team                 | Conf/Div  | PWR   | HF  | Rnk | Team                | Conf/Div  | PWR   | HF  |
|-----|--------------------|-----------|-------|-----|------------|----------------------|-----------|-------|-----|-----|---------------------|-----------|-------|-----|
| 27  | Arizona Cardinals  | NFC West  | 95    | 2.5 | <b>NFL</b> |                      |           |       |     |     |                     |           |       |     |
| 16  | Atlanta Falcons    | NFC South | 98    | 2.5 | 22         | Green Bay Packers    | NFC North | 97    | 3   | 29  | New England Pats    | AFC East  | 94.5  | 3   |
| 5   | Baltimore Ravens   | AFC North | 107   | 3   | 19         | Houston Texans       | AFC South | 97.5  | 2.5 | 32  | New Orleans Saints  | NFC South | 99    | 3   |
| 2   | Buffalo Bills      | AFC East  | 109   | 3.5 | 29         | Indianapolis Colts   | AFC South | 94.5  | 3   | 23  | N.Y. Giants         | NFC East  | 90    | 3   |
| 31  | Carolina Panthers  | NFC South | 91.5  | 2.5 | 9          | Jacksonville Jaguars | AFC South | 102   | 2.5 | 23  | N.Y. Jets           | AFC East  | 96.5  | 2   |
| 25  | Chicago Bears      | NFC North | 96    | 2.5 | 3          | Kansas City Chiefs   | AFC West  | 108   | 3.5 | 6   | Philadelphia Eagles | NFC East  | 105.5 | 3   |
| 16  | Cincinnati Bengals | AFC North | 98    | 3   | 19         | Las Vegas Raiders    | AFC West  | 97.5  | 2.5 | 23  | Pittsburgh Steelers | AFC North | 96.5  | 3   |
| 14  | Cleveland Browns   | AFC North | 98.5  | 2.5 | 26         | L.A. Chargers        | AFC West  | 95.5  | 2   | 1   | San Francisco 49ers | NFC West  | 112   | 3   |
| 4   | Dallas Cowboys     | NFC East  | 107.5 | 3   | 10         | L.A. Rams            | NFC West  | 100.5 | 2.5 | 11  | Seattle Seahawks    | NFC West  | 100   | 3.5 |
| 12  | Denver Broncos     | AFC West  | 99.5  | 3   | 6          | Miami Dolphins       | AFC East  | 105.5 | 2.5 | 19  | Tampa Bay Bucs      | NFC South | 97.5  | 2.5 |
| 8   | Detroit Lions      | NFC North | 104   | 3   | 14         | Minnesota Vikings    | NFC North | 98.5  | 3   | 16  | Tennessee Titans    | AFC South | 98    | 2.5 |
|     |                    |           |       |     |            |                      |           |       |     | 27  | Wash Commanders     | NFC East  | 95    | 2.5 |

## THE 2-MINUTE HANDICAP: O/U STYLE

**AN 'OVER / UNDER' REPORT ON THIS WEEK'S NFL CARD BY VICTOR KING**

All games played on this week's NFL schedule are listed below. As always, the number listed first is the 'OVER' and the number listed second is the 'UNDER'. If you like what you see, there's much more – including **5 NFL O/U BEST BETS** – inside the **2023 Playbook 'TOTALS' TIPSHEET** by Victor King – the definitive weekly OU newsletter. A single issue is only \$11.00. Rest-of-Season subscription is \$11.00. Sent via email on Tuesdays. Call the PLAYBOOK offices to get on the 2023 "Totals Train"! **\*This week's GAME 18 Playbook O/U TREND play: Seahawks @ Cardinals 'OVER' the TOTAL\***


### 2023 NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE – WEEK EIGHTEEN

| GAME MATCHUPS                            | KEY OVER/UNDER STATS   |
|--|--|
| <b>Pittsburgh (Open: 37.5) BALTIMORE</b> | 8-3 OU on Saturdays... 6-3 OU aft Seat... but 0-6 OU L6 vs Bal (31.1)... 1-5 OU L6 vs .666 < opp... 1-5 OU off road dog win 6-2 OU w/ dbl div revnge... but 0-5 OU on Saturdays... 2-6 OU aft score 45+ pts... 2-5 OU L7 div HG... 3-6 OU aft Mia    |
| <b>Houston (47) INDIANAPOLIS</b>         | 2-0 OU L2 vs Ind (57.0)... 4-1 OU away off BB HG... 5-2 OU aft div HG... but 2-14 OU off SU win 21 > pts... 2-6 OU aft Ten 8-1 OU off SU win 3 < pts... 7-1 OU home this year (52.3)... 4-2 OU vs sing div revenge... but 0-4 OU aft Raiders         |
| <b>Dallas (49) WASHINGTON</b>            | 7-3 OU L10 vs < .400 opp... but 0-6 OU aft Saturday gm... 1-6 OU as div RF's... 1-5 OU aft Det... 1-4 OU L5 away vs Wash 4-1 OU TY vs .666 > opp... but 0-5 OU vs opp off Sat gm... 0-4 OU Last Home Game... 0-3 OU aft SF... 1-4 OU as div HD's     |
| <b>La Rams (44) SAN FRANCISCO</b>        | 3-1 OU L4 vs SF... 6-3 OU vs .666 < conf opp... but 0-5 OU aft NYG... 1-5 OU in 2nd of BB RG... 1-4 OU Last Road Game 5-0 OU L5 vs > .500 conf opp... 4-0 OU aft Wash... 5-1 OU LHG... 5-2 OU vs trip rev... but 1-5 OU as div HF's < 14 pts         |
| <b>Buffalo (48.5) MIAMI</b>              | 4-0-1 OU Last Road Game... 4-1 OU aft div HG... 4-1 OU in 2nd of BB div gms... but 0-3 OU aft NEng... 1-4 OU L5 div RG 0-3 OU aft Balt... 0-3 OU Last Home Game... 1-4 OU L5 div HG... 1-4 OU home vs .600 > opp... 1-3 OU w/ trip revenge           |
| <b>Atlanta (42.5) NEW ORLEANS</b>        | 0-5 OU L5 div RG... 1-5 OU L6 away vs NORl (40.5)... 1-3 OU aft Chi... 1-3 OU Last Road Game... 2-4 OU in 2nd of BB RG 0-6 OU L6 div HG... 0-4 OU aft TBay... 0-3 OU in 2nd of BB div gms... 0-3 OU Last Home Game... 2-5 OU aft div RG              |
| <b>Philadelphia (44) NY GIANTS</b>       | 6-0 OU aft Ariz... 3-1 OU Last Road Game... 3-1 OU L4 vs NYG (52.5)... 3-1 OU L4 div RG... but 2-5 OU away off BB HG 3-1 OU in 2nd of BB HG... 3-1 OU aft Arz... but 3-8 OU bef div RG... 3-6 OU Game 16... 3-6 OU L9 vs NFC South                   |
| <b>Cleveland (40.5) CINCINNATI</b>       | 7-0 OU away TY (55.3)... 4-0 OU aft score 35+ pts... 3-0 OU L3 div RG... 6-1 OU off SU win 14 > pts... but 0-4 OU L4 vs Cin 4-1 OU Last Home Game... 4-1 OU TY vs .666 > opp... 7-3 OU aft KV... 6-3 OU L9 div HG... but 1-5 OU vs opp off Thur gm   |
| <b>Chicago (44) GREEN BAY</b>            | 4-1 OU Last Road Game... 4-1 OU aft score 35+ pts... 7-3 OU L10 as div RD's... but 1-4 OU aft Atl... 2-6 OU away off BB HG 3-1 OU L4 vs Chi (54.2)... 3-1 OU aft div RG... 5-2 OU L7 as div HF's... but 0-3 OU aft Min... 2-14 OU home off BB RG     |
| <b>Seattle (47.5) ARIZONA</b>            | 3-0 OU L3 vs Arz (63.0)... 4-1 OU off home fav loss... 4-1 OU L5 as div RF's... 5-2 OU aft Pit... but 1-6 OU aft non-conf HG 7-0 OU home TY (55.0)... 5-1 OU L6 div HG... 5-2 OU off road dog win... 4-2 OU aft score 35+ pts... but 1-4 OU aft Phil |
| <b>Ny Jets (38) NEW ENGLAND</b>          | 3-1 OU aft Clev... but 0-6 OU L6 div RG... 0-5 OU in 2nd of BB RG... 1-4 OU L5 vs NE (35.0)... 2-5 OU aft Thursday gm 5-1 OU Last Home Game... 5-2 OU aft Buf... but 0-7 OU aft div RG... 3-9 OU as HF's 4 < pts... 2-4 OU vs opp off Thur gm        |
| <b>Jacksonville (40.5) TENNESSEE</b>     | 4-1 OU L5 away vs Ten (48.4)... 4-1 OU vs trip revenge... but 1-6 OU aft non-conf HG... 1-4 OU aft allow 7 < pts 5-2 OU off SU loss 21 > pts... 6-3 OU w/ trip revenge... but 0-5 OU aft div RG... 0-4 OU aft Hou... 0-4 OU Last Home Game           |
| <b>Denver (38.5) LAS VEGAS</b>           | 3-0 OU Last Road Game... 5-1 OU 2nd of BB div gms... but 1-13 OU off SUATS fav win... 3-11 OU aft allow 10 < pts 3-1 OU aft Ind... 7-3 OU L10 div HG... but 0-6 OU L6 vs .500 opp... 1-5 OU L6 home vs Den (41.7)... 1-4 OU home off BB RG           |
| <b>Minnesota (44.5) DETROIT</b>          | 4-0 OU L4 vs Det (54.8)... 4-0 OU vs opp off Sat gm... 4-1 OU Last Road Game... but 0-6 OU in 3rd straight div gm 3-1 OU aft Dal... 7-2 OU vs dbl revenge... 8-3 OU off 3+ ATS wins... 7-3 OU aft Sat gm... 5-2 OU L7 div HG                         |
| <b>Tampa Bay (37) CAROLINA</b>           | 6-2 OU L8 vs Car (49.1)... but 0-4 OU L4 as div RF's... 1-7 OU vs dbl revenge... 1-5 OU off home fav loss... 1-4 OU aft NORl 2-0 Last Home Game... but 1-6 OU home TY (37.3)... 1-4 OU aft non-conf RG... 1-4 OU aft score < 7 pts                   |
| <b>Kansas City (36.5) LA CHARGERS</b>    | 3-1 OU L4 away vs LAC (57.0)... 8-2 OU L10 div RG... 9-3 OU L12 as road dogs... but 1-4 OU vs < .400 opp 8-0 OU aft Den... 6-3 OU in 2nd of BB div gms... but 1-4 OU L5 div HG... 1-4 OU L5 vs .600 > opp... 2-5 OU Last Home Game                   |



# THIS WEEK'S BEST BETS

A REVIEW OF THE CURRENT  
STAR-RATED BEST BET SELECTIONS

|   |                   |                    |  |                    |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| <b>FOR WEEK ENDING SUNDAY,<br/>JANUARY 7, 2024</b>  |                   | <b>3★ BEST BET</b> | <b>4★ BEST BET</b>                               | <b>5★ BEST BET</b> |
|    | <b>NFL</b>        | <b>BEARS</b>       | <b>RAMS</b>                                      | <b>RAVENS</b>      |
|   | <b>UPSET GAME</b> | <b>DOLPHINS</b>    | <b>SUBSCRIBE TO PLAYBOOK TODAY: 800.752.9266</b> |                    |
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## 2023-24 PRO FOOTBALL - JANUARY 6-7

Listed next to the games below are two entries: **OL** is the opening line on the contest and **PB** is the **PLAYBOOK** margin.  
You have a **PLAYBOOK** Recommendation whenever our predicted margin of victory is 6 or more points off the opening line. Remember, opening lines are subject to change during the week so always check **YOUR CURRENT LINE** against the **PLAYBOOK** line to determine a final play.

All times listed are Eastern Standard Time (Red type indicates time change) • Games in Official International Rotation sequence • Dates & times subject to change

|                            |                  | OL  | PB |                        |                 | OL | PB |  |  | OL  | PB              |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----|----|------------------------|-----------------|----|----|--|--|-----|-----------------|
| <b>SATURDAY, JANUARY 6</b> |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     |                 |
|                            |                  | 455 |    | BUFFALO                |                 | 2' |    |  |  | 471 |                 |
|                            |                  | 456 |    | 8:20 PM<br>MIAMI ★ NBC |                 |    | 3  |  |  | 472 |                 |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     | 1' 8            |
| 467                        | PITTSBURGH ABC   | 4   |    | 457                    | ATLANTA         |    |    |  |  | 473 | JACKSONVILLE    |
|                            | 4:30 PM          |     |    |                        | 1:00 PM         |    |    |  |  |     | 1:00 PM         |
| 468                        | BALTIMORE ★ ESPN | 7   |    | 458                    | NEW ORLEANS CBS | 4' | 6  |  |  | 474 | TENNESSEE CBS   |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     | 1               |
| 469                        | HOUSTON ESPN     | 6   |    | 459                    | PHILADELPHIA    | 6  | 3  |  |  | 475 | DENVER          |
|                            | 8:15 PM          |     |    |                        | 4:25 PM         |    |    |  |  |     | 4:25 PM         |
| 470                        | INDIANAPOLIS ABC | 1   |    | 460                    | NY GIANTS CBS   |    |    |  |  | 476 | LAS VEGAS FOX   |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     | 2' 6            |
| <b>SUNDAY, JANUARY 7</b>   |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     |                 |
|                            |                  |     |    | 461                    | CLEVELAND       |    |    |  |  | 477 | MINNESOTA       |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        | 1:00 PM         |    |    |  |  |     | 1:00 PM         |
|                            |                  |     |    | 462                    | CINCINNATI CBS  | 4' | 3  |  |  | 478 | DETROIT FOX     |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     | 4 10            |
| 451                        | DALLAS           | 13' | 16 | 463                    | CHICAGO ★       |    | 7  |  |  | 479 | TAMPA BAY       |
|                            | 4:25 PM          |     |    |                        | 4:25 PM         |    |    |  |  |     | 1:00 PM         |
| 452                        | WASHINGTON FOX   |     |    | 464                    | GREEN BAY CBS   | 3' |    |  |  | 480 | CAROLINA FOX    |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     |                 |
| 453                        | LA RAMS ★        |     | 10 | 465                    | SEATTLE         | 3  |    |  |  | 481 | KANSAS CITY     |
|                            | 4:25 PM          |     |    |                        | 4:25 PM         |    |    |  |  |     | 4:25 PM         |
| 454                        | SAN FRAN FOX     | 3'  |    | 466                    | ARIZONA FOX     |    | 3  |  |  | 482 | LA CHARGERS CBS |
|                            |                  |     |    |                        |                 |    |    |  |  |     | 1               |

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