

WEEK 2



ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

EFL 2023

We're Number 1!

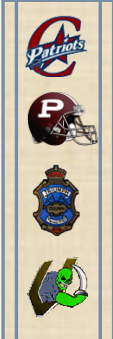
October 15, 2023

FOR THE WIN!

EAST



CENTRAL



WEST



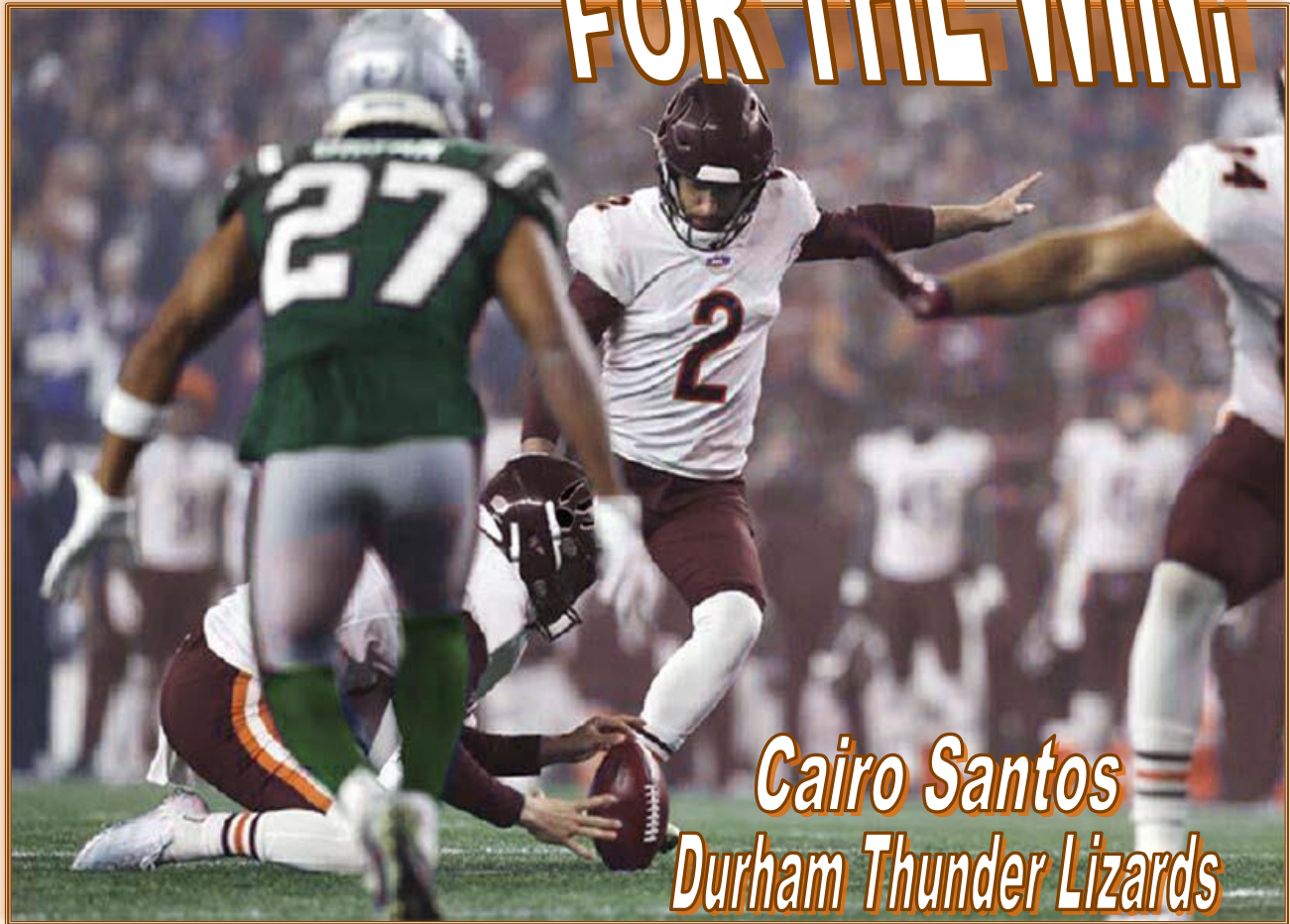
NORTH



COASTAL



SOUTH



Cairo Santos
Durham Thunder Lizards

Durham kicker *Cairo Santos* prepares to lay into a 51-yard field goal attempt for the win in Week Two, 4th quarter action in York. The kick sailed true through the uprights, giving Durham a slim 33-31 victory over the Excaliburs. York had every opportunity to score an upset, with *Derrick Henry* rushing for 217 yards and a touchdown to help his team build a 31-24 late in the 4th but could not hang on as *Josh Allen* engineered a comeback. *(Story inside)*



Who was slick
in Week Two?

“Brylcreem” THE
EFL’S FIRST SPONSOR



Derrick Henry
RB
York
Excaliburs

29 Car., 217 Yds., 2 TDs, 79 Lg.
Brought all-out effort in losing cause.



Chris Jones
DL
Peg City
Crusaders

4 T, 4 SK, 2 QB HUR. A disruptive
sack menace all day on early downs.


31
21

Daniel Jones threw 3 TD passes and rushed for 102 yards and a TD to lead the Wrecking Balls to a road upset over the Triumph. Jones threw a 4-yard TD pass to **Keenan Allen** in the 1st to gain the early lead. The Balls would never trail again while fending off a **Trevor Lawrence** TD pass and goal line sneak for another to eventually pull away comfortably in the 4th after a 57-yard run by **Deebo Samuel** set up Jones' TD run. **Desmond King II's** late 4th quarter interception of Lawrence all but sealed the deal for NJ. **Jeff Wilson** rushed for 122 yards and a 52-yard TD in a losing cause.

10-15-2023 Wilhalla Stadium Temp:68 Wind:Calm None Line:TCT by 11 MVP:Jones HFA

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 New Jersey (1-1)	7	10	7	7	31
2023 Twin Cities (0-2)	0	14	7	0	21

Passing

 NJ: Jones 27/23 137 Yds 3 TDs Int
 TCT: Lawrence 32/19 192 Yds TD Int

Rushing

 NJ: Jones 16/102 TD, Samuel 7/77, Montgomery 17/53, McKinnon 2/2
 TCT: Wilson 14/122 TD, Lawrence 3/4 TD

Receiving

 NJ: McLaurin 6/51, Samuel 6/35, Allen 5/25 2 TDs, McKinnon 4/20 TD, Hooper 2/6
 TCT: Higbee 6/65 TD, Lockett 5/40, Moore 3/36, Wilson 2/18, Pierce 2/21, Duvernay 1/12

Defense

 NJ: King II Int 3-Tk
 TCT: Clark 15-Tk, Joseph Int 6-Tk, Hunter Sk 6-Tk, Love 8-Tk

Injuries

 NJ: Armstead 6
 TCT: Moseley 10, Maddox 7, Bradbury 3

Misc

 NJ: Ryland 1/1 FG 32 Lg, 40:30 TOP
 TCT:

0
37

Buffalo tried to seize the initiative with an opening drive gamble on 4th & 2 at the 50-yard line. **Lamar Jackson's** short slant attempt to **Russell Gage** missed the mark and the Violators marched to an easy FG. From then on, Virden was in complete control. **Patrick Mahomes** tallied 3 TDs in the 2nd quarter on passes of 12 and 60 yards to **Tyreek Hill** and a 24-yard go route to **Chris Olave** to launch an offensive that rang up 454 net yards. The Violators' 'D' completely shut down the Derailler offence, holding them to 16 net passing yards, 165 total yards and 0 points in a lopsided game.

10-15-2023 TERRORDOME Temp:80 Wind:Calm None Line:BUF by 2 MVP:Mahomes HFA:ON(5)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Buffalo (1-1)	0	0	0	0	0
2023 Virden (2-0)	3	21	10	3	37

Passing

 BUF: Jackson 16/3 25 Yds
 VV: Mahomes 28/17 290 Yds 4 TDs

Rushing

 BUF: Jackson 10/75, Abdullah 10/51, Dillon 10/29
 VV: Conner 14/66, Mahomes 4/59, Akers 10/33, Mitchell 3/11

Receiving

 BUF: Woods 1/14, Fant 1/11, Bigsby 1/0
 VV: Hill 5/135 2 TDs, Chase 4/49, Olave 3/65 TD, Conner 3/17, Hockenson 2/24 TD

Defense

 BUF: Donald Sk 9-Tk, Sneed FF 5-Tk
 VV: Williams Sk 5-Tk, James 10-Tk, Clark Sk 4-Tk

Injuries

 BUF: Robinson 9
 VV: James 2

Misc

 BUF: Elliott 0/1 FG
 VV: Prater 3/3 FG 56 Lg



Isiah Pacheco lost a fumble on Charleswood's first series, setting up an early Bruxelles TD on a 7-yard run by **Justin Fields**. A 43-yard punt return by **KaVontae Turpin** after a Pats' three-and-out positioned the Bombers for an 18-yard TD pass to **Chris Godwin** to make it a quick 14-0. The Pats rebounded with a **Jevon Holland** pick and 32-yard return that set up a **Juju Smith-Schuster** 18-yard TD reception, but the recovery was temporary. Fields made big pass plays to Godwin and **DeAndre Hopkins** and **Harrison Smith** stung **Kenny Pickett** with a 44-yard pick-six to pull away easily.

10-15-2023 The Fortress Temp:77 Wind: Line:BRX by 19 MVP:Fields HFA:ON(

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Charleswood (0-2)	0	10	0	7	17
2023 Bruxelles (2-0)	14	10	9	3	36

Passing

CHP: Pickett 22/12 145 Yds TD Int
BRX: Fields 19/14 220 Yds TD Int

Rushing

CHP: Pickett 7/65, Pacheco 12/49, Singletary 6/19, Dobbins 4/14, Gibson 4/7 TD
BRX: Fields 10/50 TD, Foreman 19/46, Gainwell 7/31 TD

Receiving

CHP: Kelce 3/32, Singletary 2/2, Chark 2/34, Smith-Schuster 2/29 TD, Agholor 1/8
BRX: Godwin 5/94 TD, Hopkins 5/85, Wilson 3/21, Gainwell 1/20

Defense

CHP: Queen 10-Tk, Holland Int 4-Tk, Sweat 8-Tk
BRX: Smith Int(TD) 6-Tk, Anzalone 14-Tk, Wilson FF 9-Tk

Injuries

CHP: Ojabo 12, Darby 10, Davis 1
BRX:

Misc

CHP: Pacheco F-L, Gibson F-L, Lutz 1/1 FG 23 Lg, Queen 5 TFL
BRX: Karlaftis FR, Slay FR, Maher 3/4 FG 43 Lg, Turpin 2/57 PR 43 Lg



Alvin Kamara broke through for a 13-yard TD run to cap a 74-yard drive for the final go-ahead score in the 4th quarter to give the Crusaders a close-fought win. Kamara lost fumbles on consecutive possession in the 1st quarter that the Coyotes did not capitalize on, but came alive late, with 91 of his 118 rush yards coming in the final frame. Rookie **Bryce Young** threw a TD pass to **Travis Etienne** and ran for another, but also threw 2 interceptions that led to 2 Peg City FGs. **Jalen Ramsey** starred on defence with a pick and a blocked punt recovery in the end zone for Peg City's first TD.

10-15-2023 Coyote Field Temp:85 Wind:0-10 None Line:PCC by 12 MVP:Jones HFA:ON(

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Peg City (2-0)	0	13	0	14	27
2023 Cobb County (0-2)	0	7	3	10	20

Passing

PCC: Jones 25/18 158 Yds
CB: Young 38/21 237 Yds TD 2 Int

Rushing

PCC: Kamara 14/118 TD, Barkley 16/49, Hasty 3/6, Jones 1/2
CB: Etienne 10/70, Young 6/32 TD, Cook 2/10

Receiving

PCC: Sutton 5/55, Kamara 4/40, Aiyuk 4/38, Barkley 2/7, Everett 2/15, Ingold 1/3
CB: Pittman Jr. 6/66, Cooks 5/105, Etienne 4/23 TD, Addison 2/16, Musgrave 2/15

Defense

PCC: Jones 4-Sks 4-Tk, Ramsey Int 6-Tk, Jones Sk 4-Tk, Hutchinson 8-Tk, Humphrey Int
CB: Omenihu 2-Sks 7-Tk, Kancey Sk 7-Tk, Uche 2-FF 4-Tk, Oluokun 8-Tk

Injuries

PCC: Jack 1
CB: Adams 13, White 8, Jones 8, Woods 5

Misc

PCC: Kamara 2F-2L, Ramsey Blk P Ret TD, Koo 4/4 FG 45 Lg
CB: Jackson FR, Oweh FR, Moody 2/2 FG 53 Lg



10

Justin Herbert was strip-sacked by **Dawuane Smoot** at the Bat's 8-yard line and 2 plays later, **Kareem Hunt** darted off right tackle for a 3-yard TD run to break a 7-7 deadlock with 2:19 left in the 3rd. This was enough for Seattle to chalk up the upset over the Bats in their home opener. On a day when both defences had the initiative, **Kenneth Walker III** had a big day, rushing for 114 yards the other Seattle TD. Billtown tried to establish air dominance, with Herbert attempting 48 passes, but they failed to fly over the Pilots' plucky secondary, which notched an interception and deflected 9 passes.



17

10-15-2023 Kingdome Temp:70 Wind:Calm Line:BB by 4 MVP:Walker III HFA:ON(1)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Billtown (0-2)	0	7	0	3	10
2023 Seattle (1-1)	0	7	7	3	17

Passing

BB: Herbert 48/29 262 Yds TD Int

SEA: Wentz 26/13 142 Yds Int

Rushing

BB: Spears 5/23, Breida 2/13, Herbert 1/10, Harris 2/6

SEA: Walker III 24/116 TD, Wentz 2/30, Hunt 8/29 TD

Receiving

BB: Hodgins 8/83, Jeudy 6/58, Kincaid 4/22, Watkins 4/30 TD, Hardman 3/57

SEA: Lamb 6/78, Dell 3/20, Mingo 2/21, Mayer 1/22, Walker III 1/1

Defense

BB: Pierre-Paul Sk 7-Tk, Davis 10-Tk, Wise Jr. Sk 4-Tk, Williams Int 4-Tk

SEA: Smoot Sk FF 4-Tk, Lattimore 9-Tk, Murphy-Bunting Int 4-Tk, Baker 8-Tk

Injuries

BB: Leonard 12, Fuller 11, Williams 5, Pocic 1

SEA:

Misc

BB: Herbert F-L, Fairbairn 1/1 FG 52 Lg

SEA: White FR, McPherson 1/1 FG 20 Lg



27

Rookie, **Roschon Johnson** crossed the goal line for the go-ahead TD with 1:18 left in the 4th to give the Cubs the last lead in a back-and-forth classic that saw 9 lead changes. The Convicts controlled the pace, holding the ball for 38 mins, piling up 33 first downs and 473 totals yards. Explosive Cubs' plays, including a 45-yard cross to **David Njoku** to set up a TD and a 43-yard flat pass to **Michael Carter** to set up a FG, kept Iowa in the game. Chino left points on the field, with 2 missed FGs and a botched two-minute drill at the end of the half, finishing at the Cubs' 9 with no points as time expired.



28

10-15-2023 Iowa City Superplex Temp:74 Wind: Line:ICC by 4 MVP:Wilson H

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Chino (1-1)	6	7	7	7	27
2023 Iowa City (2-0)	3	13	3	9	28

Passing

CHI: Goff 55/36 358 Yds 2 TDs

ICC: Wilson 13/10 174 Yds TD, Carr 10/7 89 Yds

Rushing

CHI: McCaffrey 19/66, Jones 8/38 TD, Goff 3/11

ICC: Johnson 11/60 TD, Wilson 5/40 TD, Carter 2/3, Miller 1/3

Receiving

CHI: Boyd 9/122 TD, Campbell 6/60, Hurst 5/57, McCaffrey 5/33, Jones 4/16 TD

ICC: Kirk 5/65, Brown 4/86 TD, Carter 4/58, Njoku 1/45, Dissly 1/9, Palmer 1/3

Defense

CHI: Smith Sk 3-Tk

ICC: Jones 8-Tk

Injuries

CHI: Ward 2

ICC: Smith 8

Misc

CHI: Butker 2/4 FG 39 Lg

ICC: Tucker 3/3 FG 51 Lg



33

Cairo Santos booted a 51-yard FG as time expired to lift the Thunder Lizards over York. This was see-saw contest that saw **Josh Allen** picked off 3 times in the 1st half to set up 17 York points in the 2nd quarter, then to see the tables turn with 17 points by Durham in the 3rd, with 7 of those coming on a 54-yard TD pass to **Dawson Knox** after **Devon Witherspoon** notched his second pick in as many games. The York loss spoiled a great day for **Derrick Henry**, who rushed for 219 yards and 2 TDs, one of those a breakaway from 79 yards. **Tom Brady** struggled, throwing 2 INTs and 0 TDs.



31

10-15-2023 Camelot Temp:83 Wind:0-5 None Line:YOR by 4 MVP:Allen HFA:ON(3)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Durham (2-0)	7	0	17	9	33
2023 York (1-1)	0	17	7	7	31

Passing

DTL: Allen 28/19 278 Yds 2 TDs 3 Int

YOR: Brady 35/20 168 Yds 2 Int

Rushing

DTL: Allen 11/104, Allgeier 17/61 TD, Tucker 1/15 TD

YOR: Henry 29/217 2 TDs, Scott 2/7 TD, Burton 1/3 TD, Brady 1/1

Receiving

DTL: Samuel 5/54, Knox 4/99 TD, Valdes-Scantling 4/69 TD, Palmer 3/26, Tucker 2/24

YOR: Kmet 6/52, Burks 5/54, Williams 4/36, Henry 3/8, Davis 1/10, St. Brown 1/8

Defense

DTL: Witherspoon Int 6-Tk, Burns 9-Tk

YOR: Buckner 2-Sks FF 2-Tk, Byard Int 7-Tk, Guy Sk 5-Tk, Douglas Int 5-Tk, Poyer

Injuries

DTL: Ruckert 6

YOR: Mathis 13, Zuniga 12, Ojulari 8, Addison 4

Misc

DTL: Allen F-L, Santos 2/2 FG 51 Lg

YOR: Poyer FR, Gould 1/1 FG 35 Lg



13

With the score tied at 13 and 5 mins left in the 4th, **Jimmy Garoppolo** went a perfect 4 of 4, with three consecutive passes of exactly 22 yards, the last to **Mike Evans** for a TD, to put Cowtown in front to stay, 19-13. Brooklin went three-and-out attempting to reply and never got the ball back. This was a tight game throughout. **Joey Slye** notched FGs of 53 and 54 yards with the strong Tillman Field wind at his back but missed another and an extra point against the wind. Hawks QB, **Geno Smith** rushed for 53 yards and passed for 197 yards in the loss but only 21 of those in the 4th quarter.



19

10-15-2023 Tillman Field Temp:71 Wind:15-25 *Internet* Line:COW by 25 MVP:Garoppolo HFA:ON(4)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Brooklin (0-2)	0	3	7	3	13
2023 Cowtown (2-0)	0	6	7	6	19

Passing

BRH: Smith 35/23 197 Yds TD Int

COW: Garoppolo 30/21 263 Yds 2 TDs Int

Rushing

BRH: Smith 4/53, Ekeler 7/30, Robinson 10/30

COW: Murray 9/51, Williams 16/27, Garoppolo 4/3

Receiving

BRH: Ekeler 7/28 TD, London 5/88, Ingram 5/49, Hollins 2/11, Robinson 2/12

COW: Lazard 6/70, Evans 6/81 TD, LaPorta 5/58, Murray 4/42, Watson 1/20 TD

Defense

BRH: Jones Int FF 6-Tk, Curl Sk 6-Tk, Tranquill 9-Tk

COW: Smith Sk 7-Tk, Peterson Int 5-Tk, Watt Sk 5-Tk, Chinn 8-Tk

Injuries

BRH: Paye 5

COW:

Misc

BRH: Paye FR, Bullock 2/2 FG 41 Lg

COW: Williams F-L, Carter 6/68 PR 18 Lg, Slye 2/3 FG 54 Lg



14
34

Leading 14-10 in the 3rd quarter, the Swordfish turned the ball over on downs on 4th & 2 at their 44, setting up a sharp 6-play drive and a Spartan TD on a 13-yard pass from **Jalen Hurts** to **Pat Freiermuth**. That set off a string of 24 unanswered points, with **Miles Sanders** and Hurts adding a TD each on the ground and **Greg Zuerlein** a 24-yard FG to cap the scoring. Sebastian held their own in the 1st half, as **Nick Chubb** rushed for a TD and **Kirk Cousins** hit **Juwan Johnson** for another, but 3 turnovers on downs, a pick and a fumble put them behind the 8-ball in the 2nd half.

10-15-2023 Thermopylae Stadium Temp:62 Wind:5-15 None Line:PIC by 25 MVP:Hurts

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Sebastian (0-2)	14	0	0	0	14
2023 Pickering (2-0)	7	3	14	10	34

Passing

SS: Cousins 39/28 241 Yds TD Int
 PIC: Hurts 22/12 159 Yds TD Int

Rushing

SS: Chubb 15/48 TD, Taylor 2/3
 PIC: Sanders 22/88 TD, White 9/61, Hurts 7/59 2 TDs, Swift 4/3

Receiving

SS: Schultz 6/39, Jones 6/60, Peoples-Jones 5/81, Gallup 2/15, Moore 2/5, Marshall Jr. 2/19
 PIC: Smith 3/52, Freiermuth 3/44 TD, Sanders 2/11, Brown 2/33, Ricard 1/11

Defense


SS: Hicks 8-Tk
 PIC: Clowney Sk 8-Tk, Woolen Int 5-Tk, Gay 10-Tk

Injuries

SS: Johnson 7, Barr 2
 PIC: Williams 2

Misc

SS: Cousins F-L, Williams F-L
 PIC: Clowney FR, Karras FR, Zuerlein 2/2 FG 44 Lg



29
16

A 16-play opening drive netted the Blue Eagles 3 points and the Stars followed with a 10-play drive to tie it at 3, in an even 1st period. The Budapest offence got hot in the 2nd with a 24-yard pass to **Justin Jefferson** to convert a 3rd & 10, setting up the game's first TD, a 5-yard pass from **Aaron Rodgers** to **Stefon Diggs**. Diggs hauled in another TD pass on the next series and **Nick Folk** booted a 39-yard FG to close the half. A 74-yard pass to **Kalif Raymond** set up a **Raheem Mostert** TD run in the 3rd to make it 26-3. The Eagles scored 2 late TDs but were never in the game after that.

10-15-2023 The Eagles Nest Temp:67 Wind:0-10 None Line:SBE by 4 MVP:Rodgers HFA:0

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Budapest (1-1)	3	16	7	3	29
2023 Scarborough (0-2)	3	0	7	6	16

Passing

BUD: Rodgers 36/24 320 Yds 2 TDs
 SBE: Burrow 35/22 152 Yds 2 TDs Int

Rushing

BUD: Mostert 9/54 TD, Reynolds 5/33, Achane 7/27
 SBE: Cook 19/70, Burrow 5/42, Perine 5/17

Receiving

BUD: Jefferson 8/118, Diggs 7/48 2 TDs, Kittle 4/42, Mostert 2/21, Raymond 2/91
 SBE: Cobb 5/34 TD, Perine 5/34, Dotson 4/49 TD, Robinson 3/15, Mims Jr. 2/14

Defense

BUD: Luvu Sk 8-Tk, David Sk 7-Tk, Jordan Sk 5-Tk, Lenoir 10-Tk, Hill Int 4-Tk
 SBE: Walker Sk 5-Tk, Bosa Sk 3-Tk

Injuries

BUD:
 SBE:

Misc

BUD: Folk 3/3 FG 44 Lg
 SBE: Crosby 1/1 FG 28 Lg



Tua Tagovailoa threw TD passes of 8 and 11 yards to **Zach Ertz** in the 4th quarter to pull away from the Braves and notch the Glads their second win. After **Josh Jacobs** bowled 20 yards to the first TD of the game in the 1st quarter, both offences settled into a kicking duel of punts and FGs punctuated by interceptions by both sides to arrive at 13-6 Georgia advantage heading into the final frame. The Braves responded to the first Ertz TD with a 75-yard drive capped by a 2-yard **Joe Mixon** TD run, to make it 20-13, but turned the ball over on downs attempting to rally after the second Ertz TD.

10-15-2023 DeepWoods Off Col. Temp:79 Wind:0-10 None Line:GEO by 4 MVP:Jacobs HF

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 LaPlata (1-1)	3	3	0	7	13
2023 Georgia (2-0)	7	3	3	14	27

Passing

LPB: Ryan 37/21 244 Yds Int
 GEO: Tagovailoa 32/18 198 Yds 2 TDs Int

Rushing

LPB: Mixon 15/49 TD, Gibbs 5/26, Ryan 1/9
 GEO: Jacobs 24/111 TD, Stevenson 8/27

Receiving

LPB: Adams 8/123, Thielen 6/42, Goedert 5/75, Gibbs 1/6, Mixon 1/-2
 GEO: Johnson 6/71, Stevenson 3/28, Ertz 3/22 2 TDs, Cooper 3/51, Jacobs 2/18

Defense

LPB: Ward Int 6-Tk, Reddick Sk FF Tk, Kendricks 9-Tk, Simmons Sk 4-Tk
 GEO: Bell Int 11-Tk, McCloud 11-Tk, Smith Sk 3-Tk

Injuries

LPB:
 GEO:

Misc

LPB: Joseph 2/2 FG 33 LG
 GEO: Bass 2/2 FG 51 Lg



DK Metcalf caught 10 of 11 targets from **Jacoby Brissett** for 102 yards and a TD and **Caleb Huntley** powered in from 1-yard out for the winning TD in the 4th to give the Irish an upset win in their home opener. Huntley had kept the drive alive earlier with a 3-yard run on 4th & 1 at the Erieau 32. The Cadillac scored their only TD on a 25-yard fumble recovery by rookie **Ivan Pace Jr.**, off a **Myles Garrett** forced fumble. **Jason Myers** was 4 of 4 in FG attempts to account for Erieau's other points. **Kyle Murray** had his team in position to rally but was picked off at the 2 by **DaRon Bland** with 0:18 left.

10-15-2023 Mgr.McClancy Mem St Temp:76 Wind:10-20 None Line:EE by 4 MVP:Metcalf HF

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Erieau (0-2)	3	10	6	0	19
2023 East Elmhurst (1-1)	0	7	7	10	24

Passing

ERI: Murray 44/28 213 Yds Int
 EE: Brissett 27/17 197 Yds 2 TDs Int

Rushing

ERI: Murray 7/31, Pierce 10/24, Harris 8/22
 EE: Knight 10/57, Huntley 12/39 TD, Brissett 7/33, Skowronek 1/18, Charbonnet 4/12

Receiving

ERI: Waddle 7/97, Andrews 6/47, Hines 4/16, Jennings 4/22, Higgins 3/21, Harris 2/-1
 EE: Metcalf 10/102 TD, Granson 2/9 TD, Jones 2/68, Charbonnet 2/15, Skowronek 1/3

Defense

ERI: Garrett 2-Sks 2-FF 12-Tk, Forbes Jr. 9-Tk, Houston Sk 3-Tk, Pace Jr. Int 3-Tk
 EE: Bland Int 6-Tk, Parsons FF 8-Tk, Ogunjobi Sk FF 3-Tk

Injuries

ERI: Bosa 10
 EE: Hilton 1

Misc

ERI: Pace Jr FR-TD, Myers 4/4 FG 46 Lg
 EE: Brissett F-L, Piniero 1/1 FG 31 Lg



WEEK TWO

STANDINGS & STATS

2023 EFL - Week 2 Standings

East	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Bruxelles	2	0	0	1.000	W2	56	28.0	20	10.0	18.0	1 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0
Buffalo	1	1	0	.500	L1	31	15.5	47	23.5	-8.0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 1 0
New Jersey	1	1	0	.500	W1	34	17.0	41	20.5	-3.5	0 1 0	0 1 0	1 1 0
Cobb County	0	2	0	.000	L2	30	15.0	58	29.0	-14.0	0 1 0	0 1 0	0 2 0
Central	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Virden	2	0	0	1.000	W2	72	36.0	27	13.5	22.5	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0
Peg City	2	0	0	1.000	W2	53	26.5	40	20.0	6.5	0 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0
Charleswood	0	2	0	.000	L2	37	18.5	62	31.0	-12.5	0 1 0	0 1 0	0 2 0
Twin Cities	0	2	0	.000	L2	48	24.0	66	33.0	-9.0	0 1 0	0 1 0	0 2 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Iowa City	2	0	0	1.000	W2	44	22.0	41	20.5	1.5	1 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Chino	1	1	0	.500	L1	58	29.0	34	17.0	12.0	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Seattle	1	1	0	.500	W1	23	11.5	41	20.5	-9.0	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Billtown	0	2	0	.000	L2	24	12.0	33	16.5	-4.5	0 1 0	0 2 0	0 2 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	2	0	0	1.000	W2	65	32.5	34	17.0	15.5	1 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0
Cowtown	2	0	0	1.000	W2	43	21.5	23	11.5	10.0	1 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0
Sebastian	0	2	0	.000	L2	17	8.5	66	33.0	-24.5	0 0 0	0 1 0	0 2 0
Scarborough	0	2	0	.000	L2	26	13.0	53	26.5	-13.5	0 2 0	0 1 0	0 2 0
Coastal	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Pickering	2	0	0	1.000	W2	74	37.0	31	15.5	21.5	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0
York	1	1	0	.500	L1	67	33.5	47	23.5	10.0	0 1 0	1 0 0	1 1 0
Budapest	1	1	0	.500	W1	46	23.0	56	28.0	-5.0	0 0 0	0 1 0	1 1 0
Brooklin	0	2	0	.000	L2	27	13.5	55	27.5	-14.0	0 1 0	0 1 0	0 2 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Georgia	2	0	0	1.000	W2	65	32.5	36	18.0	14.5	1 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
LaPlata	1	1	0	.500	L1	44	22.0	37	18.5	3.5	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
East Elmhurst	1	1	0	.500	W1	34	17.0	50	25.0	-8.0	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Erieau	0	2	0	.000	L2	42	21.0	62	31.0	-10.0	0 1 0	0 2 0	0 2 0

Passing		G	Att	Cmp	C%	Yds	Y/C	Lg	25	50	In	I%	Td	Td%	Sk	Rate	
1	Mahomes	WV	2	57	36	63.2	563	15.6	60	4	0	1	1.8	6	10.5	1	123.6
2	Wilson	ICC	2	38	26	68.4	368	14.2	45	4	0	0	0.0	2	5.3	1	117.0
3	Tagovailoa	GEO	2	59	39	66.1	448	11.5	24	0	0	2	3.4	7	11.9	2	114.2
4	Garoppolo	COW	2	49	33	67.3	412	12.5	23	0	0	1	2.0	4	8.2	5	111.9
5	Fields	BRX	2	39	27	69.2	366	13.6	39	4	0	1	2.6	2	5.1	1	105.3
6	Goff	CHI	2	82	56	68.3	527	9.4	22	0	0	1	1.2	5	6.1	0	101.0
7	Ryan	LPB	2	67	42	62.7	580	13.8	62	6	0	1	1.5	2	3.0	1	94.1
8	Allen	DTL	2	59	40	67.8	551	13.8	54	5	0	3	5.1	3	5.1	4	93.3
9	Jones	NJ	2	62	44	71.0	295	6.7	40	1	0	1	1.6	3	4.8	6	90.5
10	Lawrence	TCT	2	68	45	66.2	473	10.5	31	4	0	1	1.5	2	2.9	4	89.9
11	Brissett	EE	2	57	34	59.6	319	9.4	44	1	0	1	1.8	3	5.3	6	85.3
12	Hurts	PIC	2	42	25	59.5	332	13.3	30	2	0	1	2.4	1	2.4	2	82.6
13	Herbert	BB	2	96	65	67.7	501	7.7	29	2	0	2	2.1	3	3.1	3	82.0
14	Jackson	BUF	2	50	28	56.0	234	8.4	17	0	0	0	0.0	2	4.0	5	81.6
15	Burrow	SBE	2	71	46	64.8	340	7.4	47	2	0	1	1.4	2	2.8	3	79.5
16	Rodgers	BUD	2	60	35	58.3	442	12.6	74	3	0	3	5.0	3	5.0	3	77.2
17	Smith	BRH	2	63	38	60.3	302	7.9	39	1	0	1	1.6	1	1.6	3	71.0
18	Murray	ERI	2	71	46	64.8	375	8.2	28	1	0	2	2.8	0	0.0	2	66.3
19	Pickett	CHP	2	51	28	54.9	336	12.0	39	2	0	3	5.9	2	3.9	4	63.8
20	Brady	YOR	2	76	44	57.9	450	10.2	56	2	0	3	3.9	1	1.3	0	62.9
21	Young	CB	2	68	38	55.9	413	10.9	48	2	0	4	5.9	2	2.9	8	59.3
22	Cousins	SS	2	84	50	59.5	454	9.1	34	2	0	5	6.0	1	1.2	4	53.4
23	Wentz	SEA	2	46	26	56.5	302	11.6	29	2	0	3	6.5	0	0.0	3	49.4

Kick Returns		G	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	Td	
1	Williams	BUF	2	6	138	23.0	28	0
2	Powell	PCC	2	6	134	22.3	38	0
3	Jackson	CHI	2	4	129	32.3	41	0
4	Haskins	SBE	2	4	108	27.0	32	0
5	Carter	COW	2	4	93	23.3	35	0
6	Agnew	GEO	2	4	88	22.0	29	0
7	Patterson	BUD	1	3	88	29.3	34	0
8	Berrios	LPB	2	3	86	28.7	30	0
9	Hines	ERI	2	3	73	24.3	28	0
10	Scott	DTL	2	3	72	24.0	37	0
11	Williams	SS	2	2	52	26.0	27	0
12	Rodgers	CHP	2	2	44	22.0	27	0
13	Duvernay	TCT	2	2	43	21.5	24	0
14	Nixon	BRX	2	1	36	0.0	36	0
15	Washington	CB	2	2	30	15.0	17	0
16	Jones	ICC	2	1	26	0.0	26	0
17	Burton	YOR	2	1	26	0.0	26	0
18	White	PIC	2	1	26	0.0	26	0
19	Brightwell	NJ	2	1	23	0.0	23	0
20	Bolden	ERI	2	1	22	0.0	22	0
21	Johnston	EE	2	1	20	0.0	20	0
22	Sims	WV	2	1	19	0.0	19	0
23	Gray	PIC	2	1	14	0.0	14	0
24	Spears	BB	2	1	14	0.0	14	0
25	Mingo	SEA	2	1	12	0.0	12	0

Punt Returns		G	No	FC	Yds	Avg	Lg	Td	
1	Covey	YOR	2	9	2	179	19.9	86	1
2	Turpin	BRX	2	6	3	174	29.0	52	0
3	Carter	COW	2	9	0	100	11.1	18	0
4	McCloud	PCC	2	7	0	70	10.0	15	0
5	Raymond	BUD	2	3	3	66	22.0	63	0
6	Taylor	NJ	2	5	1	58	11.6	17	0
7	Smith	CHI	2	5	0	52	10.4	16	0
8	Rodgers	EE	2	5	1	51	10.2	16	0
9	Agnew	GEO	2	4	1	45	11.3	15	0
10	Holland	CHP	2	4	0	43	10.8	16	0
11	Williams	SS	2	3	1	38	12.7	19	0
12	Jones	ICC	2	3	2	30	10.0	11	0
13	Washington	CB	2	3	3	29	9.7	11	0
14	Dell	SEA	2	3	1	29	9.7	14	0
15	Woods	BUF	2	4	0	28	7.0	8	0
16	Reed	SBE	2	4	2	26	6.5	13	0
17	Washington	BRH	2	3	1	22	7.3	8	0
18	Hines	ERI	2	3	1	20	6.7	12	0
19	Bryant	BB	2	2	2	15	7.5	8	0
20	Duvernay	TCT	2	1	1	10	0.0	10	0
21	Gray	PIC	2	1	3	6	0.0	6	0

		G	Att	Yds	Avg	Gain	10	25	50	FD	Lg	Td	Att/G	Yds/G
Rushing														
1 Henry	YOR	2	59	319	5.4	74.6	5	0	0	15	79	4	29.5	159.5
2 Sanders	PIC	2	46	214	4.7	82.6	7	0	0	12	17	3	23.0	107.0
3 Jacobs	GEO	2	44	185	4.2	81.8	6	0	0	10	20	1	22.0	92.5
4 McCaffrey	CHI	2	37	181	4.9	81.1	3	0	0	11	46	1	18.5	90.5
5 Robinson	BRH	2	29	174	6.0	89.7	3	0	0	9	53	0	14.5	87.0
6 Wilson	TCT	2	23	170	7.4	73.9	5	0	0	7	52	1	11.5	85.0
7 Williams	COW	2	37	151	4.1	83.8	3	0	0	9	34	1	18.5	75.5
8 Kamara	PCC	2	22	145	6.6	86.4	6	0	0	6	27	1	11.0	72.5
9 Walker III	SEA	2	32	135	4.2	84.4	5	0	0	6	14	1	16.0	67.5
10 Conner	VV	2	28	134	4.8	85.7	3	0	0	8	20	2	14.0	67.0
11 Cook	SBE	2	33	126	3.8	78.8	4	0	0	7	26	1	16.5	63.0
12 Jones	NJ	2	22	125	5.7	81.8	5	0	0	8	21	1	11.0	62.5
13 Mahomes	VV	2	9	125	13.9	100.0	8	0	0	7	20	0	4.5	62.5
14 Pickett	CHP	2	13	118	9.1	92.3	5	0	0	9	21	1	6.5	59.0
15 Jackson	BUF	2	22	117	5.3	77.3	4	0	0	4	28	0	11.0	58.5
16 Murray	COW	2	22	117	5.3	86.4	4	0	0	6	21	0	11.0	58.5
17 Etienne	CB	2	22	117	5.3	68.2	4	0	0	5	45	0	11.0	58.5
18 Allen	DTL	2	15	115	7.7	80.0	5	0	0	5	21	0	7.5	57.5
19 Johnson	ICC	2	22	102	4.6	90.9	4	0	0	7	15	1	11.0	51.0
20 Mostert	BUD	2	18	101	5.6	83.3	2	0	0	6	14	1	9.0	50.5
21 Chubb	SS	2	29	98	3.4	79.3	2	0	0	5	14	1	14.5	49.0
22 Dillon	BUF	2	25	96	3.8	84.0	3	0	0	7	16	1	12.5	48.0
23 Hurts	PIC	2	18	94	5.2	83.3	5	0	0	9	28	2	9.0	47.0
24 Montgomery	NJ	2	25	87	3.5	88.0	1	0	0	3	10	0	12.5	43.5
25 White	PIC	2	16	87	5.4	75.0	2	0	0	4	29	1	8.0	43.5
26 Foreman	BRX	2	32	87	2.7	71.9	2	0	0	5	11	0	16.0	43.5
27 Mixon	LPB	2	29	86	3.0	79.3	0	0	0	5	7	2	14.5	43.0
28 Allgeier	DTL	2	30	86	2.9	70.0	1	0	0	3	14	1	15.0	43.0
29 Patterson	BUD	1	7	85	12.1	85.7	2	0	0	3	39	1	7.0	85.0
30 Huntley	EE	2	23	82	3.6	87.0	2	0	0	8	15	1	11.5	41.0
31 Samuel	NJ	2	9	82	9.1	100.0	1	0	0	2	57	0	4.5	41.0
32 Pierce	ERI	2	20	82	4.1	90.0	2	0	0	5	15	1	10.0	41.0
33 Brissett	EE	2	16	80	5.0	87.5	3	0	0	5	13	0	8.0	40.0
34 Murray	ERI	2	13	80	6.2	100.0	1	0	0	9	28	0	6.5	40.0
35 Fields	BRX	2	18	76	4.2	72.2	3	0	0	6	17	1	9.0	38.0
36 Hall	TCT	1	16	72	4.5	75.0	4	0	0	6	12	1	16.0	72.0
37 Barkley	PCC	2	28	70	2.5	82.1	0	0	0	2	9	0	14.0	35.0
38 Harris	ERI	2	16	68	4.3	81.3	2	0	0	4	14	1	8.0	34.0
39 Knight	EE	2	16	65	4.1	75.0	2	0	0	3	15	0	8.0	32.5
40 Dobbins	CHP	2	18	63	3.5	83.3	1	0	0	3	13	0	9.0	31.5
41 Pacheco	CHP	2	25	61	2.4	68.0	0	0	0	0	9	0	12.5	30.5
42 Jones	CHI	2	13	61	4.7	61.5	4	0	0	5	12	1	6.5	30.5
43 Burrow	SBE	2	9	57	6.3	77.8	3	0	0	4	22	0	4.5	28.5
44 Stevenson	GEO	2	18	56	3.1	66.7	0	0	0	3	9	0	9.0	28.0
45 Ekeler	BRH	2	13	56	4.3	92.3	1	0	0	3	12	1	6.5	28.0

	Receiving	G	No	Dp	Att	Rac	Yds	Avg	25	50	FD	Lg	Td	Rec/G	Yds/G	
1	Jeudy	BB	2	17	1	24	31	150	8.8	0	0	10	17	0	8.5	75.0
2	Metcalf	EE	2	16	1	20	14	177	11.1	0	0	9	24	1	8.0	88.5
3	Hodgins	BB	2	15	1	19	20	155	10.3	1	0	5	29	0	7.5	77.5
4	Adams	LPB	2	14	0	21	58	303	21.6	4	0	10	62	1	7.0	151.5
5	Jefferson	BUD	2	14	1	22	22	175	12.5	1	0	7	30	1	7.0	87.5
6	Hill	VV	2	13	1	21	53	294	22.6	4	0	12	60	2	6.5	147.0
7	Ekeler	BRH	2	12	0	17	73	39	3.3	0	0	2	14	1	6.0	19.5
8	Moore	TCT	2	12	2	21	23	144	12.0	1	0	11	28	1	6.0	72.0
9	Thielen	LPB	2	12	0	17	10	86	7.2	0	0	5	10	1	6.0	43.0
10	Kmet	YOR	2	11	0	19	14	97	8.8	0	0	6	20	0	5.5	48.5
11	Samuel	NJ	2	11	0	12	46	107	9.7	1	0	7	40	0	5.5	53.5
12	Lazard	COW	2	11	0	15	39	147	13.4	0	0	8	23	1	5.5	73.5
13	Godwin	BRX	2	11	0	14	48	160	14.5	2	0	8	28	1	5.5	80.0
14	Andrews	ERI	2	11	2	15	30	97	8.8	0	0	4	24	0	5.5	48.5
15	Waddle	ERI	2	11	1	19	27	155	14.1	1	0	5	28	0	5.5	77.5
16	Pittman Jr.	CB	2	11	0	17	22	138	12.5	0	0	7	24	0	5.5	69.0
17	Boyd	CHI	2	11	1	14	12	138	12.5	0	0	8	17	1	5.5	69.0
18	Kelce	CHP	2	11	0	14	35	126	11.5	0	0	9	18	0	5.5	63.0
19	Goedert	LPB	2	10	1	15	67	144	14.4	2	0	8	37	0	5.0	72.0
20	Diggs	BUD	2	10	0	21	46	100	10.0	1	0	5	46	2	5.0	50.0
21	Lamb	SEA	2	10	0	12	12	143	14.3	1	0	8	29	0	5.0	71.5
22	Higbee	TCT	2	10	2	14	32	97	9.7	1	0	5	26	1	5.0	48.5
23	Johnson	GEO	2	10	2	15	34	142	14.2	0	0	8	24	3	5.0	71.0
24	London	BRH	2	10	0	17	1	153	15.3	1	0	8	39	0	5.0	76.5
25	Jones	SS	2	10	0	18	36	98	9.8	1	0	5	34	0	5.0	49.0
26	Chase	VV	2	10	1	16	24	129	12.9	0	0	9	24	1	5.0	64.5
27	Allen	NJ	2	10	0	15	10	43	4.3	0	0	6	11	2	5.0	21.5
28	Samuel	DTL	2	10	0	14	18	134	13.4	1	0	10	25	0	5.0	67.0
29	Kirk	ICC	2	10	1	15	33	119	11.9	1	0	7	31	1	5.0	59.5
30	Peoples-Jones	SS	2	9	0	19	16	135	15.0	1	0	7	31	0	4.5	67.5
31	Robinson	SBE	2	9	0	11	12	58	6.4	0	0	3	17	0	4.5	29.0
32	Lockett	TCT	2	9	0	10	24	78	8.7	0	0	4	17	0	4.5	39.0
33	Burks	YOR	2	9	1	14	74	137	15.2	1	0	4	56	0	4.5	68.5
34	Hopkins	BRX	2	9	1	14	55	137	15.2	2	0	7	39	1	4.5	68.5
35	Campbell	CHI	2	9	0	13	5	92	10.2	0	0	7	13	0	4.5	46.0
36	Valdes-Scantlin	DTL	2	9	2	11	23	141	15.7	1	0	6	33	1	4.5	70.5
37	Kamara	PCC	2	9	1	11	80	73	8.1	0	0	3	24	1	4.5	36.5
38	Kincaid	BB	2	9	0	12	6	46	5.1	0	0	1	7	0	4.5	23.0
39	Jones	CHI	2	9	0	11	102	59	6.6	0	0	5	14	1	4.5	29.5
40	Charbonnet	EE	2	8	1	14	39	32	4.0	0	0	2	17	1	4.0	16.0
41	Schultz	SS	2	8	0	17	2	53	6.6	0	0	0	9	0	4.0	26.5
42	Sutton	PCC	2	8	0	10	6	90	11.3	0	0	3	13	0	4.0	45.0
43	Woods	BUF	2	8	1	9	17	79	9.9	0	0	4	17	0	4.0	39.5
44	McLaurin	NJ	2	8	0	15	11	69	8.6	0	0	4	15	0	4.0	34.5
45	Brown	ICC	2	8	1	16	19	162	20.3	2	0	8	38	1	4.0	81.0



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – Week Two is over. What have we learned so far?

I've learned that the football commentariat and fanbases everywhere still haven't learned anything from history. They are as reactionary as ever. Two weeks into the season and supporters of teams that are 0-2 are panicking; supporters of teams that are 2-0 are crowing in satisfaction, confident that they are on their way to a date in the Conference Final; and supporters of teams that are 1-1 are split down the middle between those who see 1-1 moving to 1-2 and a lost season, and those who see 1-1 moving to 2-1 and a division title. There is very little middle ground when extrapolating a sample size of two games.

I am exaggerating, of course, to make a point. But in essence it is true. Fans, local writers, even national commentators with shows to sell are hyper-attuned to every aspect of every game, especially this early in the season, looking for the hottest take that will later prove prophetic and bolster their ratings, their following on *BoobTube* or, in the case of the average super fan, their self-esteem. The quest for "hot takes" is killing football analysis, drowning it in a sea of hyperbolic superlatives, outrageous claims and zero-sum outcomes. It's all about grabbing your attention – even if just for a few minutes – to generate that click to internet fame and fortune.

It's not that there are no genuine "hot takes" to be discovered. I generate them all the time without really trying too hard and this is one of them. Yes, I *am* that good. It is the *quest* for *hotter* takes that steers commentators, writers and fans calling into talk shows down the rabbit hole of intellectual darkness. When you try to make something out of nothing or a mountain out of a mole hill to convince other people you have found something important or special, you aren't doing yourself or anybody else any favours in the long run. They will just get tired of you and tune out because you are just pulling stuff out of your ass.

Here's an example from *Bleacher Feature*, a popular fan blog that seems to have a symbiotic relationship with the Google algorithm (reprinted with permission):

WHY BRYCE YOUNG COULD BE THE BIGGEST BUST IN DRAFT HISTORY! By Jack Kahle.

When a team chooses first in the draft they have the entire draft class to pick from. Getting the right pick is critical. Getting the wrong pick can set a team back years. Getting it wrong can also get a GM fired. Is Eron Osman about to get fired for picking Alabama's Bryce Young first overall in the 2023 draft? It's still early in the season, so Osman's job appears safe for now. But how safe will it be in six weeks? If eight games go by and the Coyotes haven't won a game because their rookie quarterback that he picked over everyone else available is still throwing more interceptions than touchdown passes, will Osman still be around? We know Bryce Young is talented or else he would not have been considered for the first pick. But is he ready for the EFL? It looks like he isn't. It's still early, but you'd think that the first overall pick would be able to play right away and make a difference the first day. That's what makes the first pick so special. Young is not looking special so far. He has thrown four interceptions in two games and has a QB rating of 59.3. That's not very good. It's not acceptable for a first overall pick. Here's why Young could be the biggest draft bust in football history: [move to slide show]

The slide show contains the lowlights of Young's hitherto very brief EFL "career" under the headings: 1 – **No Pocket Awareness** [shows picture of him being sacked by Peg City's Chris Jones]. 2 – **Bad Decision-Making** [shows video clip of him lobbing a ball high in the air trying to execute a screen and it being picked off by Buffalo lineman Carl Granderson]. 3 – **Locks on First Read** [shows clip of him looking for a double-covered Michael Pittman while Brandin Cooks runs free to the opposite side then getting sacked by Buffalo's Quinnen Williams]. 4 – **Afraid to Run** [shows clip of him scrambling for 3 yards and sliding down with no Crusader player within five yards of him]. 5 – **He's From Alabama** [shows pictures of Brodie Croyle, AJ McCarron Tua Tagovailoa, Mac Jones, and Jalen Hurts, all of whom the author claims failed to live up to expectations, despite one of them finishing with the highest QB rating in the league last year]. The article mercifully ends thus:

To be sure, it is still early in Young's career. He could turn things around and become the star franchise quarterback everyone believes he can be. He still has time. But time is running out. The EFL is unforgiving. Fans want results now. Young may not have that time and that could make him the biggest bust in draft history.

If you don't know who the author, Jack Kahle is, you are not alone. If you are wondering how this half-assed article popped up third on the list on a Google news search for "Bryce Young" you must understand that *Bleacher Feature* has a team of data analysts in the background pouring over reams of data attempting to anticipate future trends. Two weeks into the season, with the Coyotes 0-2 and fans grumbling online, the data gurus anticipate that the subject of *Bryce Young* being a bust will trend soon. And voilà, before it trends some hack named Jack Kahle (if that is his real name) turns out a hastily assembled and ill-thought-out sensation piece giving voice to what people are already starting to think about Young. It's kind of creepy.

It all starts, however, with people fretting, panicking and overreacting to two weeks of football. The data analysts are merely projecting based on what you as a fan are thinking and saying in your knee-jerk reactions. And remember, the first two weeks of this EFL season has featured in the main sloppily played, fundamentally flawed football, for the reasons I stated last week. Young is not the only player off to a bad start. He has in fact a higher QB rating and more touchdown passes than *Kirk Cousins* and *Carson Wentz* so far and is ranked just 2.6 QBR points behind the famous *Tom Brady*.

It's been two weeks, people! Last year at this time, the Spartans were 0-2 and *Jalen Hurts* had completed just 48% of his pass attempts. Pickering finished 14-3 and Hurts wound up leading the league in passer rating.

All the same, there are valid reasons to be at least a bit concerned after two weeks if, for example, you were naïve enough to think the Bats could sell off half their defence and their star running back and still win the West. And if I were living in Brooklin (God forbid!) and stuck with nothing but the Hawks, I would be nervous that by the time *Geno Smith* acclimatizes to EFL football, it will be too late for my team to compete in the toughest division in football.

It goes the other direction as well. Cowtown fans should probably hold off on making Gale Sayers travel plans; same goes for the Cubs. And no, *Patrick Mahomes* is not likely going to break the touchdown passing record of 73 set by *Drew Brees* in 2012; nor is Pickering likely to go undefeated.

It is still too early for us to know much more than what we already thought we knew prior to the start of the season. At this stage, the only tangible, fundamental development that could significantly alter a projection would be a catastrophic injury to a critical player. So far, that has not happened. Hopefully it never will but history tells us that at some point a critical player will go down long enough to change the course of a team's fortunes.

So, take a deep breath, sit back, and try to enjoy my recap of the slightly improved but still badly played football of Week Two.

THE TWO GAMES I DECIDED TO REJECT FOR 'GAME OF THE WEEK'

After a thorough review of the game film, the stat sheets and consultation with my secret sources of deep insider knowledge, I decided not to feature a particular game or set of games this week. I toyed with the thought of diving into a deep review of the superficially classic Durham-York contest, because it was close, saw over 60 points scored (Durham won 33-31) and ended with a long field goal for the win as time expired. It doesn't get much more compelling than that. But as I said, it was all on the surface. The only truly compelling component of this game was the performance of *Derrick Henry*, who rushed for 217 yards on 29 carries with two touchdowns, including an epic 79-yard chug through the entire Durham defence to tie the game at 7 in the second quarter. It was the indisputable offensive highlight of the week in the EFL and it earned Henry '*Offensive Player of the Week*' honours, even though his team lost the game. One other player in the running for that honour happened to be playing against Henry and is credited with leading his team to the win. Durham's *Josh Allen* passed for 278 yards and 2 touchdowns, rushed for 104 yards on 11 carries and completed two key passes in the final 30 seconds that put *Cairo Santos* in position to kick the 51-yard game-winning field goal. But Allen was intercepted 3 times and fumbled twice, losing it once, to create the problems that needed to be solved by his "heroic" game-winning drive. So, he couldn't win MVP for digging himself out of his own holes, especially when his opponent, *Tom Brady*, was unable to hit the broad side of a barn on this day.

However, the *real* reason I elected not to spend an inordinate amount of time bringing you the in-depth version of this game is because the closeness of it, the faux drama, was artificially created by the Durham coach's questionable and borderline neurotic decision to "stand down" many of his most important players on the sideline and prohibit them from entering the game. Starting right tackle, *Jack Conklin*, superstar wide receiver *Cooper Kupp*, veteran corner *Kenny Moore II*, space-eater *DJ Reader*, star safety *Justin Simmons*, linebacker *Pete Werner*, and tight end *Darren Waller* were the most notable figures dressed but not playing in the game. They were forced to watch from the sidelines as Allen frantically tried to turn *Curtis Samuel* into a number one receiver. The Durham coach could have ended the pain with a snap of his fingers. He could have sent Kupp into the game to get open down the middle and watch his offensive troubles disappear. He could have put Reader in to limit Henry and Simmons in to pick off Brady a third time. He could have gotten it over with, but he chose not to, because...

"I wanted to preserve their games if I could," deadpanned coach *George Kaldis* after the game when asked about it. "I was concerned about health. They could have come in at any time, but I was concerned about them getting injured."

This nonsensical response brought me back to his reasoning for not having *Josh Allen* kneel to seal a win against these same Excaliburs last year. He stated then that he wanted to "save Allen's running attempts," which in turn led to revelations that Kaldis adheres to the *Simulation Hypothesis*, the belief that we live in a simulated reality. Some claim he has discovered the rules governing this simulation – at least as they relate to football – and makes line-up decisions based on that knowledge.

This seems quite crazy, especially since none of the players he stood down were in fact injured. Kaldis did win a championship last year performing this unique brand of voodoo, so it would be premature to discount it as mere hallucination or other psychological



Cobb County QB, **Bryce Young** is slung to the turf by Peg City lineman, **Chris Jones** in Week Two EFL action. The star defensive lineman took advantage of an indecisive rookie to notch 4 sacks and two QB hits and earn Game MVP. The number one overall pick is off to a rough start and whispers of “bust” can already be heard in some media outlets.

disturbance. Nevertheless, he clearly elected to “preserve” some of his best players against York, showing that he did not take the Excaliburs seriously. On the other side, the Excaliburs had an opportunity to defend their honour and steal a win from their arrogant opponent and only Henry rose to the occasion. Brady choked. The coach, **Jay Hammond**, called a good game but one he might have called anyway. His slip-up was failing to inspire his troops, challenge their manhood, appeal to their pride. If these coaches aren’t going to take the game seriously, then either am I.

The other game on my list for ‘Game of the Week’ was a classic Chino choke job against the Cubs that ended with Convict kicker **Harrison Butker** missing a field goal attempt from 48 yards as time expired to gift Iowa a 28-27 win. It was Butker’s second miss of the game, the first coming early in the 4th quarter from 39 yards away. In the Iowa City Superplex, where the Iowa winds are no longer a factor, these types of misses are

a killer, especially when the big leg on the other side of the field belongs to **Justin Tucker**.

Combine the Butker misses with the badly bungled two-minute drill at the end of the first half that resulted in the Convicts running out of time at the Cubs’ 7-yard line, and one has a fiasco that the Chino media are rightly hot about. Hotter still because it came against the Cubs – a team that last year won 3 games, is stocked with rookies on defence, and cannot decide who to play at quarterback.

It is no secret that the rivalry between the Convicts and the Cubs is one of the nastiest in the league. They have been battled intensely for the West Division since 2007 and are interchangeably one-two in the division most seasons. Their coaches are like fire and water. **Rob Nazar** is a nasty guy on the surface with a good guy deep inside. **Deron Redding** is one of the nicest guys you’ll ever meet but harbours underneath a ruthless killer instinct and vindictive streak that serve him well when negotiating trades or maneuvering for draft position – not to mention keeping his job in the face of a hostile media faction in Iowa. They know who each other are and they don’t like each other one bit. Usually that makes for fun viewing when the teams are comparatively equal, and both give their best effort.

This week’s offering was not Chino’s best effort, although they amassed a ton of offence, racking up 33 first downs, 473 net yards of offence, and converted an impressive 10 of 16 third downs and were a perfect two of two on fourth downs. All this amounted to just 27 points, however. The Cubs, on the other hand, got the job done with big plays; four passes of more than 25 yards – one from **Derek Carr**, three from **Russell Wilson** – and taking full advantage of their opportunities – a perfect three for three scoring touchdowns in the red zone and Tucker being money as usual, hitting all three of his attempts from farther than 40 yards.

The Carr-Wilson carousel I will deal with another day, when I have seen more of it and understand better what **Deron Redding** is trying to achieve. At first glance, it appears that he is attempting to keep opposing defences out of rhythm, making them adjust on the fly to the differences in his two quarterbacks’ styles. This is a decent strategy, if the quarterbacks involved are good with it and the constant switching doesn’t take them out of rhythm instead. So far, so good on that score it seems. But both quarterbacks have huge egos and histories of being the undisputed starters on their teams. We’ll see how long they can play nice with each other in the sandbox.

While the Butker misses were damaging, the media in Chino are focused primarily on who to blame for the two-minute drill at the end of the second quarter that saw Chino come away empty-handed. Some point out that the way Butker was kicking, a field goal was not guaranteed in that situation. Others rightfully argue the point that regardless, the kicker should have had at least an opportunity, if a touchdown was no longer in the cards.

The drill was very well-executed up until the critical final plays. This is where the debate begins about who is most to blame for its failure. With 1st and goal at the 7-yard line, one timeout left and 0:27 remaining, the decision to call a draw to **Christian McCaffrey** was not the worst call in the world, provided the defence was fully committed to the pass. However, the Cubs smartly did not commit, knowing that both run and pass were options in that situation. The play was not well-executed in any case and McCaffrey was stoned for no gain, forcing Chino to call their final timeout. When a play doesn’t work out, it looks retrospectively like the wrong call and the coach is blamed. It may not be fair, but it is reality. So, put one check on the Blame Card for Nazar.

On the next play, an out-pattern toward the right pylon of the end zone, **Jared Goff** balked at his first read and quickly checked down to McCaffrey, who was sitting in the flat. For some unfathomable reason, rookie defensive back **JuJu Brents** happened to be lurking near the line, saw Goff glance at McCaffrey, and jumped the route. In his excitement, however, Brents let the pass go through his hands and sail out of bounds, missing a possible pick-six. The failure to see Brents and the reflexive decision to go to McCaffrey, falls on the quarterback. Put one check on the Blame Card for Goff.

On the final play of the half, a go-route to the end zone, Goff again balked at his first read and reflexively checked down to McCaffrey, who was again stationed in the flat. Once again, Brents was nearby watching McCaffrey, although a little farther back in the zone. He saw the play develop early, however, and with a running start knifed McCaffrey behind the line of scrimmage the instant he caught the ball. It was a nice play by the rookie, and it forced a mad scramble by the Chino field goal unit to get on the field as the clock ticked away. They were unable to get set in time and the half ended to a rain of boisterous cheers and jeers from the Iowa fans.

The decisions made in the moment on that final play certainly fall on Goff. However, he had done the exact same thing on the previous play, which should have been a red flag to the coach. Did coach Nazar tell his quarterback to throw it away if the pass to the end zone wasn't there? Or did he assume Goff, a veteran, would understand the situation and do that on his own? We don't know the answer to that question as neither Goff nor Nazar would confess as to what exactly happened on that play behind the scenes. Put half a check on the Blame Card for Goff, and half a check on the Blame Card for Nazar.

Final Blame Score: Nazar 1.5, Goff 1.5. Of course, in the event of a tie, blame is automatically assigned to the coach, who ultimately bears responsibility for his team on game day.

Therefore, I refuse to accord the honour of 'Game of the Week' to a victory demonstratively built more on failure than achievement. Although I must credit Redding and the Cubs for making the most of their opportunities and recognize the fans of Iowa as well, who filled the 70,000 seats of the Superplex and made more noise than humanly bearable on opening day, thereby doing their part.

....hmmmm....looking back on my voluminous text explaining my reasons for not featuring these two games, it seems as if I have inadvertently featured these two games. Oh well, I messed up again when it comes to economy of words. No doubt my editor will take issue with it, and I may not see you next week. So, pay close attention to my pearls of wisdom regarding the rest of the week's action, as you may not benefit again from my insights.

AROUND THE EFL

The best insight I can provide about Week Two in general, is that nothing dramatic and fate-altering took place. Teams continued their tactical positioning in expected ways, although there were a couple of surprise upsets. These surprises are interesting footnotes but are not likely to be of significance in the long run, except later when draft positions are being finalized.

At Kingdome in Seattle, a sparse opening day crowd that failed to fill half of the stadium's 66,000 seats cheered raucously as their Pilots upset the reigning West Division champion, Billtown Bats, 17-10. This was a bit of a perfect storm for Seattle, as just about everything that needed to go right did. **Carson Wentz** contributed very little and in the final analysis was a drag on the offence, despite making a couple of clutch throws to move the chains in the final three minutes to take precious time off the clock for the Bats' final comeback attempt. The effect of Wentz was more than neutralized by the ineffectiveness of his opponent **Justin Herbert** who, through a toxic combination of bad game planning, inadequate receivers and his own frustration, was unable to make more than 10 points out of his 48 pass attempts and 262 passing yards. The star of the show was running back **Kenneth Walker III**, who rushed for 116 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries. The Seattle secondary earns an honourable mention for parrying the Bats' passing attack with nine deflections and the linebackers deserve credit for keeping Herbert, a surprisingly adept scrambler, inside the pocket. Although the Bats are really a shadow of what they were last year, this is still a feel-good win for the Pilots and their fans. They now don't have to worry about going win-less and can work towards getting enough wins to finish fourth worst in the league and be in the best lottery position. Although considered a contender to repeat as West Division titlists, the Bats may in fact turn out to be Seattle's prime competition for the West Division basement. The roster is set up to fail and the idiotic game planning reeks of either incompetence, or a tank. Or it may just be a rough start. I remind myself that it is only Week Two, and not to assume the Bats will continue to be this bad for the next 15 weeks.

At Monsignor McClancy Memorial Stadium in Queens, NY, the Irish did not look like a team in the tank as they adeptly dispatched Erieau 24-19. **DK Metcalf** effectively exposed the aggressiveness of rookie corner **Emmanuel Forbes Jr.**, and quarterback **Jacoby Brissett** was able to get the ball to him, resulting in an impressive 10 catches, 102 yards and one touchdown for the duo. As a complement to this aerial connection, the East Elmhurst Running Back by Committee, chaired by **Caleb Huntley**, combined for 159 yards and a touchdown on 39 carries, for an average of 4.7 yards per carry. Erieau's **Myles Garrett** had a monster game, with 12 tackles, 2 sacks and 2 forced fumbles. However, it was not enough to overcome the lax secondary and linebacker play of the defensive back-seven. All the same, had the Cadillac offence been the least bit efficient, the game might have had a happy ending for Erieau anyway. **Kyler Murray** laid an egg for the second week in a row, finishing with just 213 passing yards on 44 attempts, with one interception and no touchdowns. The Caddies' only touchdown came on a 25-yard fumble return by **Ivan Pace Jr** off a strip-sack by Garrett. It looks like the Erieau offence of 2018 all over again, before Murray came in to save the day. Something better change, or the micro peninsula on Lake Erie may not see football played on its soil in 2024.

At Wilhalla Stadium in Minneapolis, the Wrecking Balls wrecked the opening day atmosphere in the State of Minnesota with a decisive 31-21 win over the Triumph. This game marked quite the turnaround for New Jersey quarterback **Daniel Jones**, who earned the Game Ball from Coach **Sean McDermott** and the critical New Jersey media with a dual threat performance that had the usually disciplined Triumph defence running in circles. Jones threw 3 touchdown passes and rushed for another, while leading the team in

rushing yards with 102 on 16 carries. Jones did not have gawdy passing numbers – just 137 yards and a long pass of 15 yards – but he was efficient and accurate when he needed to be in the red zone. This is close to a blueprint of what the New Jersey brain trust hoped to see from Jones when they retained him for 3 more years as insurance for an ageing **Matt Stafford**. On the other side, the Balls' defence got off the field with regularity, reducing the Triumph time of possession to under 20 minutes and limiting their trips to the red zone. The Triumph did not play poorly, by any means, but they were heavily favoured in this game and certainly did not execute as they did in a loss to Virden last week. It's still too early to panic, but **Guy Williams** knows next week's trip to Billtown is a virtual must win.

At Tillman Field in Cowtown, the Corn Kings outlasted the Hawks 19-13 in a grinding neck-and-neck contest that could have gone either way. This was a good game, even as it was not the kind of game that either coach would want to go through on a weekly basis, win or lose. This weekend marked this year's Wind Festival in Cowtown, an event that often precedes the Pumpkin Harvest Festival and falls on a date determined by the yearly forecast of the Baxter County Farmer's Almanac. The strong winds of the windy season in Cowtown came as predicted and the strong gusts had an impact on both sides. However, with the game tied at 13, and five-minutes remaining, Cowtown quarterback **Jimmy Garoppolo** defied the elements and strung together four consecutive passes totalling 75 yards into the teeth of a 25-mph wind. The final completion was an out pass to **Mike Evans**, who galloped down the sideline for a 22-yard score. A gust of wind redirected **Joey Slye**'s extra point attempt, leaving the door open for a Brooklin win if they could get in the end zone and kick an extra point. However, the Corn King defence so emphatically shut down **Geno Smith** and the Brooklin offence on their next series, that coach **Tom Jones** elected to punt on 4th & 10 from deep in his own end and trust his defence to get the ball back. They did not achieve their mission, and the Corn Kings ran out the remaining 1:49 to earn the win. This was the type of victory that may turn out to be a difference-maker later in the season as it really was on the edge of going the other way, with three Cowtown fumbles putting the balance in jeopardy. To the chagrin of the Hawks, Cowtown recovered two of those to keep the game from tilting toward the visitors. The Hawks hoped to be in contention with their new quarterback. There is still time, but they must turn things around soon.

At Deep Woods Off Coliseum in Richmond Hill, GA, the Gladiators officially staked their claim to the South Division by taking out their main rival, LaPlata, 27-13 in the first of two showdown games. This game was closer than the score suggests, as the Braves had effectively contained the Glads offence throughout most of the game, resulting in only 7 points separating the squads heading into the fourth quarter. However, **Tua Tagovailoa** got hot on his team's final two possessions, finishing both off with touchdown passes of 8 and 11 yards to **Zach Ertz**. It was too much for **Matt Ryan** and the Braves' offence, as they were able to counter with only one touchdown. Through two weeks the Glads are averaging 32.5 points per game against very good defences, supporting pre-season predictions that this Tua-led offence would make its mark. They have handled the best of their own division so far; let's see how they fare outside of it.

At the Eagle's Nest in Toronto, the North Stars finished off the second leg of their season-opening road trip on a high note with a 29-16 victory over the Blue Eagles. **Aaron Rodgers** threw for 320 yards and 2 touchdown passes and, more importantly, no interceptions, to leave no doubt that he is back and in control after his embarrassing season debut against Pickering. While Budapest is once again trending in the right direction, Scarborough sits win-less in two home dates and must now embark on a three-game road trip beginning in Durham, where a rough reception is expected. **Dalvin Cook** has not made enough impact to compensate for a dearth of wide receiver talent, and that is probably due to that dearth of wide receiving talent. The alchemy of this team is off again this year.

At Coyote Field in Marietta, GA, the Crusaders dialed up the ground game on offence while lineman **Chris Jones** feasted on a rookie quarterback in a 27-20 road win over the Coyotes. Still, this game was closer than the score indicates and could easily have gone the other way if **Bryce Young** had a little more seasoning. His two interceptions were costly and his attempt to engineer a two-minute game-tying rally was riddled with rookie errors and indecision. Oh well, that's the price a team pays for throwing a rookie into the fire at the game's most important position. Tell that to already disillusioned Coyote fans, however, and you might get punched in the face.

At Thermopylae Stadium in Pickering, the Spartans waited for the inevitable coaching blunder by the Swordfish to secure their second win going away by the score of 34-14. For one half, however, **Gus Konstantakos** and the rabid fans in Pickering were not laughing as Sebastian rode the wave of a quick start by **Kirk Cousins** and a stiff effort from their defence to take a 14-10 lead into the locker room. However, a failed 4th & 2 gambit by the Fish at their own 44 on their opening drive provided the opening the Spartans were looking for. It acted like a turnover and soon **Jalen Hurts** had his team out in front to stay on a 14-yard TD pass to **Pat Freiermuth**. It was no contest after that. Will **Russ Lemmon** ever learn? Not until he is tarred and feathered and ridden out of Sebastian on a rail.

At The Fortress in Bruxelles, the Bombers opened their season at home in Belgium with a bang, vanquishing the Patriots by a score of 36-17. The legend of *'The Champs'* continues to grow in Europe out of proportion to his actual on-field abilities. But if the Bombers are winning, nobody in Bruxelles cares if he is providing not much more than back-up vocals for a band fronted by coach **Ken Main** and his intuitively diabolical game plans. To be fair, **Justin Fields** did what was asked of him in this game and did it better than he usually does, completing 14 of 19 pass attempts for 220 yards and a touchdown. He also led the team in rushing with 50 yards and a touchdown on 10 carries. Part of this can be attributed to indifferent secondary play by the Pats defence and a sense of malaise in the defence overall as it realizes that **Kenny Pickett** is likely to keep putting them back on the field prematurely for another fifteen weeks. The Bombers will take it and won't apologize. Next week they are on to Buffalo for another party.

And finally, at **TERRODOME** in Virden, the Violators cruelly exposed the Derailers for the clown franchise it is by routing them 37-0. This was a total dominant effort by Virden and the sad reality for Buffalo fans, wherever they are, is that it could have been much, much worse had **Lance Barrate** not become bored midway through the third quarter and made the decision to end the slaughter as soon as possible. The defence is for real. **Lamar Jackson** went 3 of 16 for 25 yards passing. Thank about that for a moment and tremble.

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Jimmy's WEEK THREE PICKS

COBB COUNTY @ NEW JERSEY (line – WRECKING BALLS by 2)

INJURIES: **Cobb County** – Jamal Adams (IR), Brandon Jones (OUT), Tre'Davous White (OUT), J.T. Woods (OUT); **New Jersey** – Arik Armstead (OUT).

The Wrecking Balls looked like a different team last week against the Triumph. The main reason was Daniel Jones, who rebounded from an ineffectual outing in Week One with full-service delivery against a good defence, rushing for over 100 yards and throwing 3 touchdown passes. The run threat is an element that was missing from Matt Stafford's game. If Jones continues to replicate that type of outing, there is hope for a full recovery in New Jersey. The Coyotes lost to a tough opponent with an excellent defence last week. They briefly led in the 4th quarter before the moment became too big for rookie Bryce Young and the run defence collapsed. The Balls defence is also good, although it does not always perform to expectations. Expect them to test the Coyotes' rookie QB with a variety of blitzes and disguised coverages and watch as the no.1 overall pick runs around like a headless chicken. **PICK: NEW JERSEY**

BUFFALO @ BRUXELLES (line – BOMBERS by 12)

INJURIES: **Buffalo** – Carl Granderson (DOUBTFUL), Wan'Dale Robinson (OUT); **Bruxelles** – Fabian Moreau (QUESTIONABLE).

The circus started early in Buffalo last week as they were blown out by the Violators. The glimmer of hope that had flashed so briefly and faintly after their big win in Week One did not get extinguished by the fact of losing to the top power team in the conference; it was due to the realization that their coach remains as irresponsible as always and that Lamar is erratic as ever when throwing the ball. While fan expectations have been reset to pre-season levels in Buffalo, the fact of Aaron Donald and Quinnen Williams being able to crack the impregnable Bruxelles offensive line opens the possibility that Justin Fields will have less time to execute the difficult process of reading defences and do something dumb. There is also the possibility that Lamar will recover from last week and have a good day – he's done it before. I'm not saying the Derailers will win, but the double-digit line makes me nervous. **PICK: BUFFALO**

VIRDEN @ SEATTLE (line – VIOLATORS by 10)

INJURIES: **Virden** – Derwin James (OUT); **Seattle** – Will McDonald IV (QUESTIONABLE).

The early season continues to provide surprises and a recent case in point is the Pilots' win over Billtown last week. Kenneth Walker III carried the offence on his shoulders while the Seattle secondary swatted down pass after pass to hold off Justin Herbert. This proves that the team can win the odd game without a quarterback, as Carson Wentz appeared to do more harm than good overall. While a win is always a nice feeling for players so unaccustomed to winning, the confidence boost that beating Billtown brings to the Seattle locker room is likely to evaporate shortly after the opening kickoff against Virden this week. The Violators showed what they can do against teams like the Pilots when they snuffed out Buffalo with little effort. Not nervous about this line! **PICK: VIRDEN**

CHINO @ CHARLESWOOD (line – CONVICTS by 8)

INJURIES: **Chino** – Jimmie Ward (OUT); **Charleswood** – Ronald Darby (OUT), Jordan Davis (OUT), Anton Harrison (OUT), David Ojabo (OUT).

After last week's loss to the Cubs fans in Chino are preparing themselves for another one of those years, where small mistakes in close games create big problems for the win/loss bottom line. The Convicts' offence under Jared Goff has been moving the ball well, but last week was unable to convert yards to enough points to beat a defence that defines mediocrity. This week presents another theoretically easy challenge in the Patriots, a rebuilding team with low expectations but also an uncanny knack of sticking around in

games they have little or no hope of winning. Kenny Pickett is somehow able to supersede his inferior stat line and accomplish important tasks in the moment – how is a mystery nobody cares to solve yet. It is enough, however, to know it is there. **PICK: CHARLESWOOD**

IOWA CITY @ PEG CITY (line – CRUSADERS by 2)

INJURIES: Iowa City – Tyron Smith (OUT); Peg City – Myles Jack (OUT).

The Cubs are a surprise 2-0 in many people's books, taking out two West Division rivals in two weeks. Given that the West is up for grabs, I am less taken aback by their two narrow wins than I am by the quarterback platoon system in place that has Derek Carr start then quickly replaced by Russell Wilson. Is the presence of Carr what is needed to bring Wilson back to life after last year's dismal campaign? We'll see as the season progresses whether this strange situation can keep working. This week Carr-Wilson faces a stiffer challenge in the Crusader defence, one capable of wrecking any fantasies that Iowans may have recently acquired that their beloved Cubbies of old are back. The secondary is capable of limiting AJ Brown and Christian Kirk while Chris Jones is enough on his own to wreck a game plan, as he showed against the Coyotes last week. This week is wake-up call week for the Cubbies. **PICK: PEG CITY**

TWIN CITIES @ BILLTOWN (line – TRIUMPH by 4)

INJURIES: Twin Cities – Garrett Bradbury (OUT), Avonte Maddox (OUT), Emmanuel Moseley (OUT). Billtown – Jordan Fuller (OUT), Shaquille Leonard (OUT), Ethan Pocic (OUT), Marcus Williams (OUT).

It was a disappointing outing for the Triumph last week against a psychologically fragile Wrecking Balls team. Perhaps they were themselves mentally exhausted after going toe-to-toe with Viriden in Week One. Whatever the reason, they need to get right this week as they have yet to win and the battle for second place in the Central is already heating up. Fortunately, or maybe not, they face a Billtown team that is also on the precipice of an 0-3 start and in desperate need of a win. The problem for the Bats is that they are proving, so far, to be more bark than bite on offence and a shell of its former self on defence. The coach has a vision for the offence that cannot be executed by Justin Herbert with his current cast of suspicious characters at wide receiver. And Dalvin Cook is gone. Barring some kind of fluke, or Trevor Lawrence wilfully throwing the ball to Patrick Surtain II, I don't see this as even being close. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

SCARBOROUGH @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 13)

INJURIES: Scarborough – None. Durham – Jeremy Ruckert (OUT).

The Thunder Lizards kept many of their key, but fragile players on the sideline last week against York and still came away with a road win. Josh Allen overcame 3 picks and got the job done at the end. No question Durham's roster has taken a step back from last year's championship-winning group, but at least they still have Allen, who just may be able to do everything himself on offence. Joe Burrow, conversely, cannot do everything himself on offence yet is in the position where he must or else the Blue Eagles will freefall once more to an early draft pick (good thing they didn't trade their first pick this off-season). I still think Scarborough has enough game in them to resist a Durham team that wants to save its players for the games that matter. By resist, I don't mean "beat," rather "stay close." The problem is that the psyche of this Blue Eagle team is so brittle, that a bad start will lead to a quick unravelling. **PICK: DURHAM**

COWTOWN @ SEBASTIAN (line – CORN KINGS by 6)

INJURIES: Cowtown – Michael Pierce (OUT). Sebastian – Anthony Barr (OUT), Austin Johnson (OUT).

In two lop-sided losses in two weeks, questionable fourth down gambits by the Swordfish have been the least of their worries. Kirk Cousins is off to an uncharacteristically rough start and the two studs at running back, Nick Chubb and Jonathan Taylor, have been rendered ineffective, having to come from far behind early in games. The defence remains typically spirited but was overmatched against two of the league's better offences. This week they face a team more in their wheelhouse than the two powerhouses they have faced so far. The Corn Kings are perfect through two weeks, but their wins have come tough against Scarborough and, last week, a Brooklin squad that may already be wishing it had Derek Carr back. This game will be an interesting measure of both these squads as the Swordfish historically play Cowtown tough and they are at home. The line is a little too generous for me. **PICK: SEBASTIAN**

PICKERING @ GEORGIA (line – GLADIATORS by 3)

INJURIES: Pickering – Kyle Dugger (OUT), Trent Williams (OUT); Georgia – None.

This is the most compelling matchup of Week Three, in my opinion, and it seems that the Wizards of the Wastelands agree with me as they have the upstart Glads favoured at home against the unbeatable Spartans. Trailing at halftime to Sebastian and having to wait until the Fish tried something reckless before taking control obviously damaged the aura of invincibility that had cloaked Pickering in the pre-season. Coupled with the Glads waiting out and finally breaking through a very good Braves defence last week, proving that their offence is no fluke, has tilted the fashionable pick toward Georgia. The problem with this reactionary thinking is that it discounts the fundamental problems the Glads' defence will have trying to stop Jalen Hurts behind that stalwart Spartan line. The Spartans will score

and it will not be easy for Tua to keep up against two would-be all-pros in the Pickering secondary. Resist the fad. **PICK: PICKERING**

LAPLATA @ BUDAPEST (line – NORTH STARS by 2)

INJURIES: LaPlata – None; Budapest – Jamel Dean (OUT), Minkah Fitzpatrick (OUT).

Aaron Rodgers bounced back from a poor showing in Week One to earn the Game Ball last week against Scarborough. While not his most momentous achievement, it was an important affirmation that he has not completely lost his abilities. This week he faces a stern test against a Braves defence that is much better than advertised. The concern in LaPlata, after last week's loss to Georgia, revolves around Matt Ryan's ability to lead the offence with only Davante Adams and Jahmyr Gibbs able to "play outside the x's." He is a statue in the pocket now and lacks that extra zip on his passes. No doubt his adrenaline will be flowing, however against a legendary opponent quarterbacking the most beatable version of the North Stars in four years, missing its top defender, Minkah Fitzpatrick. There will be big plays on both sides of the ball by both sides in this expected very close game with the homefield earning the win. **PICK: BUDAPEST**

YORK @ ERIEAU (line – EXCALIBURS by 8)

INJURIES: York – Phidarian Mathis (IR), Mario Addison (OUT), Aziz Ojulari (OUT), Jabari Zuniga (OUT). Erieau – Joey Bosa (OUT), Kyle Hamilton (OUT).

The Excaliburs lost an opportunity last week to steal a win against an opponent most forecasters had pencilled in pre-season as a loss. Derrick Henry saw that the Lizards were vulnerable and put in an epic effort trying to take advantage. Tom Brady, unfortunately, looked every bit his age in throwing 2 interceptions against 0 touchdowns and being inefficient in general passing the ball. Is this the Tom Brady we can expect to see more of this year? If it is, then this game does not look as easy as Kyler Murray's woeful start to the season suggests it will be. The Cadillac offence is in a state of discombobulation due to Murray, but even a small revival of his talents could be enough to ignite a recovery before it is too late. He will need a little more help than he is getting from Najee Harris and Dameon Pierce, however. In any case, the defence is playing well, Myles Garrett dominated last week, and should hold the line against a blowout. **PICK: ERIEAU**

EAST ELMHURST @ BROOKLIN (line – IRISH by 3)

INJURIES: East Elmhurst – Mike Hilton (OUT); Brooklin – Azeez Al-Shaair (OUT), Kwity Paye (OUT).

The Hawks haven't taken off yet and if they wait much longer their season will be over in the toughest division in the conference. Last week's loss to Cowtown could have gone their way with a lucky bounce or two, so they are going in the right direction after an opening day shellacking at home. The big question is: How good is Geno Smith, really? We don't know, but the early reviews are not promising that he can lead a serious Brooklin run at a post-season berth. The Irish remain one of the worst teams in the conference, despite pulling things together last week against a troubled Erieau unit. Their best players were able to make an impact, but they are one simple and well-executed game plan away from falling back into the muck. That they are favoured here makes this pick too easy. **PICK: BROOKLIN**

EFL FOCUS

A weekly tour of Media from around the EFL. This week we focus on.....

TWIN CITIES



WILL THE TRIUMPH, TRIUMPH IN 2023?

By Lars Odegard

I caught Triumph coach Guy Williams in the lunchroom at Wilhalla Stadium the day before the team flew to Virden for their season opener. This is a summary of what he had to say:

We have come a long way the past four years.

2022 Record: 9-8, directionally sound. It was VERY important for this team w/ Trevor Lawrence starting the last several games, to win the final game and re-establish a winning record. Narrowly missed the playoffs.

2021 Record: 4-11-1, still rebuilding.

2020 Record: 2-14, sold off many vets for draft picks, signed Jameis Winston, thought we'd go ~ 7-9...hmm that went sideways....first suddenly and then all at once.

2019 Record: 12-4, Mitch Trubisky's 1 decent season. Lost Super Bowl when down by 8, at the Aurora 4 yd line, 10 secs left, no TO's....sack. Done.

2023 Outlook: Despite 6th youngest overall team, expectations are soaring for a balanced, still developing, many ways to win it team. There is no W-L limit. "Experts" predict 13-4 and the top Wildcard berth. Bring it.

The Offense – Led by Trevor Lawrence, traded for WR Lockett and TE Higbee. Matched DJ Moore for a fortune. RB's mix of Breece Hall, Jeff Wilson (traded for), CEH. Respectable O-Line led by G Chris Lindstrom.

The Defense – Strong front 6, running a 4-2-5 base, because....yeah, it's the age. Led by Bobby Wagner, drafted by Twin Cities in its inaugural 2012 draft. Decent def backfield headed by Jaire Alexander, although durabilities are a concern. Expectations are high for TO's.

Special Teams – solid and balanced.

The Staff – Team Principal Guy Williams seeks to apply Reason and Intuition in all matters. Continuously seeks to evolve and improve in terms of player evaluations, game management, culture, strategy, and you know things of that nature. Long-termers OC Davy Seal (Sea, Air, Land...get it?) and DC Jack Lumber (geez he's from norderen Minnesoda woods don't ya know) each find a way to connect with all these youngsters and get them to buy in. Balance the known basics w/ keeping things fresh for the vets. What new ST coordinator Yaro Gepremium lacks in English speaking skills, he more than makes up in passion and cool neck ties.

Fan base – They've been thru the franchise cycles and are relishing the potential upside of this current iteration. Known to be one of the most visible fan bases for Triumph road games.

