

WEEK 8



EFL

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Shooting for the Stars in our 15th Season!

November 28, 2021

LOCKETT - UP!



Tyler Lockett
Iowa City Cubs

Cubs' wide receiver, **Tyler Lockett** hauls in a pass from **Russell Wilson** with 0:38 left in the 4th quarter to lift Iowa City over Seattle, 27-23. The 1-7 Pilots rose to the occasion and gave the now 4-4 Cubs all they could handle but Wilson made the most of opportunities, throwing for 2 TDs and rushing for another to scrape out the win. *(story inside)*

EAST



CENTRAL



WEST



NORTH



COASTAL

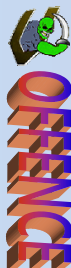


SOUTH



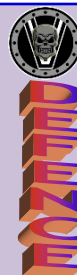
*Who was slick
in Week Eight?*

**"Brylcreem" THE
EFL'S FIRST SPONSOR**



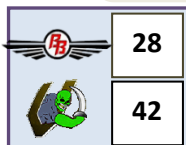
Patrick Mahomes
QB
Viriden
Violators

25 of 41, 381 Yds, 6 TDs, 2 INTs.
Flung the ball deep all day in win.



Jordan Fuller
CB
Las Vegas
Assassins

6 T, 2 PDs, 2 INTs (72-yds), 4/11 PA
allowed. Turned game with takeaways.


28
42

The Bombers led 21-7 in the 2nd, helped by a pair of short TD drives, one set up by a 29-yard **Andre Roberts** put return and the other by a **Harrison Smith** interception. Virden's **Patrick Mahomes** kept challenging the Bombers' defence and, after a slow start, found a groove beginning in the 2nd half with TD passes of 34 yards to **AJ Green** and 29 yards to **Ja'Marr Chase** for a 28-21 lead. **Drew Brees** tied it on a 75-yard bomb to **M. Valdes-Scantling** but Mahomes would finish it off with TD passes of 45 yards to Chase and 27 yards to **Gabriel Davis** to finish with 6 TDs and grab the win.

11-27-2021 TERRORDOME Temp:64 Wind:Calm None Line:VV by 4 MVP:Mahomes HFA:ON(5)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Bruxelles (2-6)	14	7	7	0	28
2021 Virden (5-3)	7	7	21	7	42

Passing

BRX: Brees 30/13 306 Yds 2 TDs

VV: Mahomes 41/25 381 Yds 6 TDs 2 Int

Rushing

BRX: Mitchell 19/64 TD, Williams 6/47, Fournette 7/14 TD, Brees 1/1

VV: Mahomes 3/50, Freeman 8/44, Elliott 10/26

Receiving

BRX: Valdes-Scantling 4/164 TD, Claypool 4/53, Godwin 4/78, Williams 1/11 TD

VV: Davis 6/111 TD, Chase 5/116 3 TDs, Hockenson 4/42 TD, Green 4/64 TD, Elliott 3/13

Defense

BRX: Fuller Int 6-Tk, Smith Int 4-Tk

VV: Peters 7-Tk

Injuries

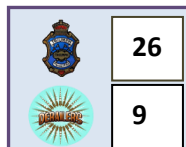
BRX: Robinson 6, Flowers 4, Wynn 2, Phillips 1

VV: Johnson 6, Ximines 5, Atkins 5, Bryant 5, Hooker 4, Osemele 4, Campbell 4

Misc

BRX:

VV: 28 1st Dwn, Harris Jr 5-PD


26
9

The Derailers assembled a 77-yard drive on their first series but settled for a 24-yard FG when it stalled inside the Triumph 10. Their only lead would be wiped out after **Alex Erickson** fumbled a punt and the Triumph recovered at the Buffalo 39-yard line. **Clyde Edwards-Helaire** knifed in from 2 yards to finish a short TD drive to make it 7-3. **Josh Sweat** corralled **Lamar Jackson** in the end zone for a safety to start the 3rd and **Mitch Trubisky** hit **DJ Moore** for a 69-yard TD to provide the highlights of a 23-point scoring string. The Triumph 'D' held off Lamar, holding him to a 2.4-yd avg yards/carry.

11-27-2021 New Era Stadium Temp:37 Wind:20-30 None Line:BUF by 5 MVP:Edwards-Hela HFA:O

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Twin Cities (3-5)	0	7	9	10	26
2021 Buffalo (3-5)	3	0	0	6	9

Passing

TCT: Trubisky 11/5 150 Yds TD

BUF: Jackson 38/21 223 Yds TD

Rushing

TCT: Edwards-Helaire 20/169 TD, Henderson Jr. 6/14 TD, White 3/10

BUF: Jackson 23/56, Woods 2/19, Davis 3/9, Booker 3/4

Receiving

TCT: Moore 2/102 TD, Bryant 1/1, Edwards-Helaire 1/18, Bateman 1/29

BUF: Gage 7/78, Woods 6/85 TD, Sanders 4/28, Fant 3/23, Davis 1/9

Defense

TCT: Sweat FF 6-Tk, Alexander 9-Tk

BUF: Hicks 13-Tk, Donald Sk 5-Tk

Injuries

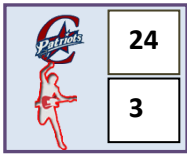
TCT: Brown 5, Brown 4, Golladay 3

BUF: Tartt 2

Misc

TCT: Lindstrom 1-FR, Sweat 1-SFTY

BUF: Erickson 2-F 1 Lost



DeShaun Watson spotted a wide-open **Travis Kelce** for a 17-yard TD pass and **Alvin Kamara** sliced through a hole opened up by **Laremy Tunsil** for a 10-yard TD run to highlight a 14-point 2nd quarter for the Pats. This burst was enough to carry the day for Charleswood as the Wrecking Balls could not get out of first gear against a surging Pats' defensive line that sacked **Matt Stafford** 6 times and hurried him in the pocket all game. **Carl Lawson** and **Derrick Brown** led the way with 2 sacks and 2 pressures each. The Pats' offence went into clock-eating mode early as a result.

11-27-2021 Stone Pony Shore Temp:56 Wind:5-15 None Line:NJ by 9 MVP:Watson HFA:O

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Charleswood (7-1)	3	14	7	0	24
2021 New Jersey (4-4)	0	0	3	0	3

Passing

CHP: Watson 23/16 239 Yds TD
NJ: Stafford 43/24 301 Yds

Rushing

CHP: Watson 7/45, Kamara 14/44 2 TDs, Dobbins 7/16, Hill 5/12, Ozigbo 1/2
NJ: Montgomery 6/20, McKissic 2/12, Stafford 1/10, Gallman Jr. 1/1

Receiving

CHP: Smith-Schuster 5/85, Kelce 5/80 TD, Kamara 2/16, Metcalf 2/32, Cooper 1/13
NJ: Allen 7/62, McKissic 7/74, Hooper 4/104, McLaurin 3/35, Montgomery 1/3

Defense

CHP: Lawson 2-Sks 3-Tk, Brown 2-Sks 3-Tk, Darby 9-Tk
NJ: Adams FF 6-Tk, Breeland 8-Tk

Injuries

CHP: Linder 4, Stanley 3, Trufant 1
NJ: Odighizuwa 1

Misc

CHP: 9/14 3rd Dwn
NJ: 2/13 3rd Dwn



Crusaders' QB, **Mac Jones** was intercepted 4 times in the 2nd half, leading to a three-touchdown barrage by a Coyote offence that had been held largely in check through the 1st half. The underdog Crusaders led 16-13 at halftime on a 5-yard TD pass to **Laviska Shenault** that followed three **Younghoe Koo** FGs, one set up by a **Jeff Okudah** interception. But Coyote corner, **Trayvon Mullen** reversed the momentum with a red zone pick-off of Jones in the 3rd that squashed a potential scoring drive. That opened the floodgates for a 4-TD game by Tannehill and another loss for Peg City.

11-27-2021 True North Field Temp:72 Wind:Calm Line:PCC by 9 MVP:Tannehill HFA:

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Cobb County (5-3)	7	6	10	14	37
2021 Peg City (0-8)	6	10	0	7	23

Passing

CB: Tannehill 31/23 327 Yds 4 TDs Int
PCC: Jones 40/20 181 Yds 2 TDs 4 Int

Rushing

CB: Peterson 18/58, Hasty 7/23 TD, Tannehill 2/8
PCC: Hubbard 15/86, Jones 2/12, Bell 1/7, Ingold 3/4, Aiyuk 1/2

Receiving

CB: Parker 8/131 TD, Cooks 7/88 TD, Cook 4/74 TD, Pittman Jr. 3/32 TD, Peterson 1/2
PCC: Shenault Jr. 6/52 2 TDs, Higbee 4/54, Aiyuk 3/24, Hubbard 2/7, Bell 1/18

Defense

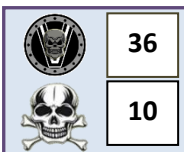
CB: Mullen Int 7-Tk, Jenkins Int 5-Tk, Nelson Int 4-Tk, Martinez Int 3-Tk
PCC: Okudah Int 6-Tk, Vigil 8-Tk

Injuries

CB:
PCC: Barkley 6, Godchaux 6, Cohen 4, Jones 4, Bullard 3, Bush 3, Thompson 3

Misc

CB: McManus 1/1 FG 24 Lg
PCC: Koo 3/3 FG 52 Lg, 33 4th Dwn



36

10

The Convicts led a tight 1st quarter 10-7 after a dazzling 75-yard catch-and-run by **Tim Patrick** ignited the home crowd. The Assassins answered with a 73-yard drive capped by a 9-yard TD pass to **Cameron Brate** to move in front 13-10. Chino had the field position edge before **Jordan Fuller** jumped a crossing route and picked off **Teddy Bridgewater** to set up a FG. That turned the momentum and **Justin Herbert**'s 39-yard pass to **Jerry Jeudy** set up a TD pass to **Zach Pascal** to close the half with LV up 23-10. They never looked back, with Fuller's 2nd INT helping to shutout Chino in the 2nd half.

11-27-2021 The Big House Temp:73 Wind:0-10 None Line:LV by 1 MVP:Herbert HFA:ON(3

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Las Vegas (7-1)	7	16	10	3	36
2021 Chino (5-3)	10	0	0	0	10

Passing

LV: Herbert 44/27 303 Yds 4 TDs

CHI: Bridgewater 29/15 183 Yds TD 2 Int

Rushing

LV: Cook 20/101, Herbert 3/2

CHI: Jones II 6/18, Jackson 7/15, Bridgewater 4/9

Receiving

LV: Thomas 9/97 TD, Jeudy 5/102, Beck 2/-1, Graham 2/14, Cook 2/11, Brate 2/11 2 TDs

CHI: Jones II 4/13, Byrd 3/32, Jackson 3/20, Patrick 2/89 TD, Gallup 1/15, Jones Jr. 1/12

Defense

LV: Fuller 2-Int 6-Tk, Davis 8-Tk

CHI: Jackson 10-Tk

Injuries

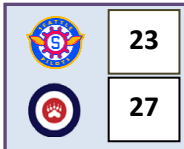
LV: Van Roten 1

CHI: McCaffrey 4, Prescott 3, Bouye 1, Purcell 1

Misc

LV: Fairbairn 3/3/ FG 45 Lg

CHI: Butker 1/1/ FG 50 Lg



23

27

Russell Wilson hit **Tyler Lockett** deep down the seam for a 24-yard TD with 0:38 left in the game to lift the Cubs over the Pilots. Wilson's heroics became needed after **Gardner Minshew II** crowned a 9-play, 60-yard drive with a 16-yard TD pass to **Denzel Mims** to overcome a 20-15 deficit at the 5:12 mark of the 4th. The Pilots controlled the time-of-possession but the Cubs led on the scoreboard for much of the game thanks in part to a bad snap to the punter that set up the Cubs' second TD and a couple of missed 4th-down Seattle gambles that set up a pair of **Justin Tucker** FGs.

11-27-2021 Joe Ferguson Stadium Temp:55 Wind:Calm Rain Line:ICC by 4 MVP:Wilson

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Seattle (1-7)	3	6	6	8	23
2021 Iowa City (4-4)	14	0	3	10	27

Passing

SEA: Minshew II 44/27 215 Yds 3 TDs

ICC: Wilson 32/20 212 Yds 2 TDs Int

Rushing

SEA: Hunt 8/55, Akers 16/54, Minshew II 2/16, Lamb 1/12

ICC: Wilson 5/55 TD, Carter 10/32, McKinnon 3/12

Receiving

SEA: Anderson 7/63 TD, Lamb 4/29, Mims 4/57 TD, Akers 3/9, Firkser 3/11, Renfrow 2/21

ICC: Lockett 5/72 TD, Beasley 4/35 TD, Carter 3/21, Njoku 2/21, Dissly 2/39

Defense

SEA: Wright Sk 6-Tk

ICC: Rhodes 10-Tk

Injuries

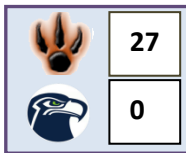
SEA:

ICC:

Misc

SEA: 0/4 4th Dwn, McPherson 1/1 FG 20 Lg

ICC: Tucker 2/3 FG 53 Lg



After a punt on their first series Durham got rolling on their second with a penalty-assisted 56-yard drive, capped by a 12-yard TD pass from **Josh Allen** to **Darren Waller** giving them a 7-0 lead. **Cairo Santos** booted a 54-yard to make it 10-0 and **Dawson Knox** finished off the 2nd quarter with a 5-yard checkdown from Allen for a TD and a 17-0 halftime lead. This was more than enough points as the Durham defence completely suppressed the Brooklin offence, holding the Hawks to just 6 1st downs. **Antonio Gibson**'s 1-yard TD run to seal it in the 4th gave him 100 yards for the game.

11-27-2021 Hawkeye Park Temp:31 Wind:0-10 None Line:DTL by 7 MVP:Allen HFA:ON(3

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Durham (7-1)	7	10	3	7	27
2021 Brooklin (3-5)	0	0	0	0	0

Passing

DTL: Allen 31/19 178 Yds 2 TDs

BRH: Carr 16/7 71 Yds, Jones 4/2 20 Yds

Rushing

DTL: Gibson 18/100 TD, Edmonds 7/40, Mattison 5/19, Samuel 2/15, Allen 3/11

BRH: Scott 7/32, Jefferson 5/17, Hyde 2/5

Receiving

DTL: Kupp 5/63, Waller 4/45 TD, Edmonds 3/13, Boyd 3/32, Knox 2/13 TD, Gibson 1/5

BRH: Engram 3/28, Scott 2/9, Hyde 2/24, Hopkins 1/14, Gronkowski 1/16

Defense

DTL: Hendrickson Sk FF 7-Tk, Young Sk 3-Tk, Armstead Sk 3-Tk

BRH: Jones 8-Tk

Injuries

DTL: Penny 4

BRH: McKinney 5, Hyde 2

Misc

DTL: 38:41 TOP, Santos 2/2 FG 54 Lg

BRH: 6 1st Dwn, 0/9 3rd Dwn



The North Stars jumped out to a 14-0 lead on back-to-back TD drives to open the game. The first ended fast, with a perfectly placed dime from **Aaron Rodgers** to **Justin Jefferson** for a 44-yard score, and the second after 11 plays and 81 yards with an 8-yard shovel pass to **Chris Thompson**. The Cowtown defence stabilized after **Jason Myers** booted a 59-yrd FG to make it 17-0 but the offence under **Ryan Fitzpatrick** never truly got in synch against a Budapest D that sacked him 4 times and bottled up the run game. A 10-point 3rd was more than enough to clinch Budapest's 8th win.

11-27-2021 Ferenc-Liszt Intl Temp:53 Wind:5-15 None Line:BUD by 13 MVP:Rodgers HF

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Cowtown (4-4)	0	3	0	7	10
2021 Budapest (8-0)	14	3	10	0	27

Passing

COW: Fitzpatrick 27/17 134 Yds TD

BUD: Rodgers 36/25 275 Yds 3 TDs

Rushing

COW: Toney 1/27, Fitzpatrick 3/16, Gore 4/16, Murray 3/10, Gurley II 7/6

BUD: Wilson Jr. 10/49, Patterson 8/35, Rodgers 3/30, Patterson 4/19

Receiving

COW: Evans 5/53 TD, Gurley II 3/15, McKenzie 3/20, Toney 3/10, Bourne 2/17

BUD: Jefferson 5/66 TD, Thompson 5/38 TD, Agholor 4/55, Patterson 3/17, Diggs 3/37

Defense

COW: Watt Sk 8-Tk, Smith 10-Tk, Chinn 8-Tk, Davis III 8-Tk

BUD: Suh 2-Sks 4-Tk, Winovich Sk 5-Tk, Attaochu Sk 3-Tk

Injuries

COW: Saubert 4

BUD:

Misc

COW: Slye 1/1 FG 54 Lg

BUD: Myers 2/2 FG 59 Lg, 37:35 TOP



23



20

D'Andre Swift atoned for a 1st half fumble by bursting through a hole behind **Patrick Ricard** for a 14-yard TD run then running in a pitch for the 2-point convert to give the Spartans a 23-20 lead with 1:38 left in the 4th. It was his second TD run of the quarter, the first going in from 38 yards earlier, and it completed a comeback from a 20-9 deficit established at the start of the 4th when **Nick Chubb** finished off a 75-yard Swordfish drive with a 17-yard TD run. Sebastian got the ball back with a chance at their own 25 after the touchback and drove to the Pickering 36, where they ran out of time.

11-27-2021 The Fish Tank Temp:76 Wind:Calm

Line:SS by 5 MVP:Swift

HFA:ON(3

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Pickering (4-4)	3	3	3	14	23
2021 Sebastian (4-3-1)	7	0	7	6	20

Passing

PIC: Rivers 38/25 295 Yds

SS: Cousins 30/21 217 Yds TD

Rushing

PIC: Swift 16/127 2 TDs, Sanders 2/4, Rivers 1/1

SS: Chubb 15/95 TD, Taylor 18/75 TD, Cousins 2/19

Receiving

PIC: Ridley 7/93, Brown 6/65, Shepard 4/60, Mooney 4/37, Swift 3/31, Freiermuth 1/9

SS: Miller 8/86, Reagor 5/37 TD, Ebron 4/44, Peoples-Jones 1/8, Chubb 1/21

Defense

PIC: Ward 8-Tk, Schobert 8-Tk

SS: Jackson III 10-Tk, Takitaki FF 6-Tk

Injuries

PIC: Dennard 4, Sanders 2, Incognito 2

SS: Jenkins 2

Misc

PIC: Swift 1-F Lost, Zuerlein 3/3 FG 47 Lg

SS: Jenkins 1-FR



24



7

After an opening kick out-of-bounds put the ball at the 40, **Tom Brady** took advantage with a 21-yard TD pass to **Mike Williams** to grab a 7-0 lead. The Blue Eagles were unable to answer and the Swords increased their lead on an 18-yard TD pass to **Danny Amendola** after a 93-yard drive. York finished off the half with an 80-yard drive culminating in Williams' second TD catch of the game on a short 9-yard out to make it 21-0. A Scarborough threat in the 3rd ended abruptly when **Joe Burrow** was picked in the red zone, summing up a rough day for the Eagles and an easy win for York.

11-27-2021 The Eagle's Nest Temp:46 Wind:0-10 None

Line:YOR by 4 MVP:Brady

HFA:

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 York (6-2)	7	14	0	3	24
2021 Scarborough (1-6-1)	0	0	0	7	7

Passing

YOR: Brady 34/23 251 Yds 3 TDs

SBE: Burrow 38/22 174 Yds 2 Int

Rushing

YOR: Henry 30/109, Williams 4/6

SBE: Carson 7/35, Burrow 3/20 TD, Gaskin 4/12

Receiving

YOR: Williams 5/49, Williams 5/68 2 TDs, Davis 4/36, Kmet 3/33, Ford 3/32, Henry 2/15

SBE: Robinson II 8/60, Gaskin 4/24, Carson 4/8, Crowder 3/68, Uzomah 1/3, Ward 1/6

Defense

YOR: Butler Int 10-Tk, Poyer Int 6-Tk, Rousseau Sk 3-Tk

SBE: Anzalone 14-Tk, Fowler Jr. Sk 6-Tk

Injuries

YOR: Henderson 5, Williams 1

SBE: Uzomah 8, Jackson 3, Bosa 3, Collins 2, Lawson 1

Misc

YOR: 36:55 TOP

SBE:



28

21

Cadillac back, **Nyheim Hines** turned a short hitch into a 29-yard pass play then pounded the ball across the line from 3 yards out with 0:02 left to give Erieau a come-from-behind win over Georgia. The Glads had taken a 21-20 lead less than 2 minutes earlier on a 3-yard TD run by **James Robinson** that capped a 15-play, 75-yard drive. Erieau had trailed 14-6 at half time after being unable to match a pair of **Ben Roethlisberger** TD passes in the 2nd quarter. Opportunistic scrambling by **Kyler Murray** kept Erieau's 2nd half drives intact and ending in TDs, helping to earn Erieau it's 2nd straight win.

11-27-2021 Heinz Field Temp:58 Wind:5-15 None Line:GEO by 9 MVP:Murray HFA:ON(1)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Erieau (3-5)	6	0	7	15	28
2021 Georgia (1-6-1)	0	14	0	7	21

Passing

ERI: Murray 30/22 273 Yds 2 TDs Int

GEO: Roethlisberger 24/19 169 Yds 2 TDs

Rushing

ERI: Murray 11/108, Harris 13/62, Hines 2/12 TD, Moss 2/6

GEO: Robinson 20/87 TD, Jacobs 2/6

Receiving

ERI: Waddle 6/67, Andrews 5/43 TD, Henry 5/69 TD, Hines 3/49, Higgins 2/21

GEO: Fells 4/29, Bernard 4/35 TD, Johnson 4/41, Landry 3/28, Fuller V 2/18 TD

Defense

ERI: Hewitt Sk 9-Tk, Murray 8-Tk

GEO: Baker Sk 8-Tk, Jones Int 6-Tk

Injuries

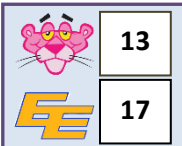
ERI:

GEO: Ingram III 2

Misc

ERI: Sloman 2/3 FG 44 Lg

GEO: 8/11 3rd Dwn



13

17

Irish CB, **Mike Hilton** forced a fumble that was recovered at the 4-yard line and run in by **Raheem Mostert** on the next play for a 7-0 East Elmhurst lead. Penalties hurt the Panthers' offence in the 1st half, putting them in 3rd & long situations and setting up Irish opportunities like the 24-yard TD pass from **Baker Mayfield** to **Tyreek Hill** to make it 14-0. Oshawa finally put together a TD drive to end the 1st half and added 2 FG drives in the 2nd but **Matt Ryan** could not close the gap after the Irish made it 17-13 in the 4th. **Dexter Lawrence II** registered 2 sacks on the final drive to seal the win.

11-27-2021 Mgr McClancy Mem Sta Temp:58 Wind:0-5 None Line:EE by 9 MVP:Mostert H

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2021 Oshawa (2-5-1)	0	7	6	0	13
2021 East Elmhurst (5-3)	7	7	0	3	17

Passing

OSH: Ryan 35/20 248 Yds Int

EE: Mayfield 24/13 178 Yds TD

Rushing

OSH: Drake 23/98 TD, Ryan 3/13

EE: Mostert 17/67 TD, Hill 4/17, Mayfield 1/1

Receiving

OSH: Adams 8/135, Gesicki 4/41, Schultz 2/15, Reynolds 2/10, Goedert 1/18, Singletary 1/9

EE: Hill 6/103 TD, Thielen 3/38, Mostert 3/25, Olsen 1/12

Defense

OSH: Thompson 9-Tk, Autry Sk 4-Tk, Simmons Sk 3-Tk

EE: Lawrence II 2-Sks 5-Tk, Barrett 2-Sks 3-Tk, Hilton Int FF 4-Tk, Ramsey 9-Tk

Injuries

OSH: Goedert 4, Edelman 2, Williams 2, Kendricks 1

EE:

Misc

OSH: 13/88 Pen, Drake 1-F Lost, Gonzalez 2/2 FG 40 Lg

EE: Smith,J 1-FR, Blankenship 1/1 FG 39 Lg



WEEK EIGHT

STANDINGS & STATS

EFL 2021 - Week 8 Standings

East	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Cobb County	5	3	0	.625	W1	215	26.9	161	20.1	6.8	3 1 0	1 1 0	5 1 0
New Jersey	4	4	0	.500	L2	149	18.6	202	25.3	-6.6	1 4 0	1 1 0	3 3 0
Buffalo	3	5	0	.375	L3	162	20.3	175	21.9	-1.6	2 2 0	2 0 0	3 3 0
Bruxelles	2	6	0	.250	L1	192	24.0	249	31.1	-7.1	1 3 0	0 2 0	1 5 0

Central	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Charleswood	7	1	0	.875	W5	186	23.3	164	20.5	2.8	4 0 0	3 0 0	5 1 0
Virden	5	3	0	.625	W4	226	28.3	189	23.6	4.6	2 2 0	2 1 0	4 2 0
Twin Cities	3	5	0	.375	W1	160	20.0	148	18.5	1.5	1 3 0	1 2 0	2 4 0
Peg City	0	8	0	.000	L8	119	14.9	236	29.5	-14.6	0 3 0	0 3 0	0 6 0

West	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Las Vegas	7	1	0	.875	W1	222	27.8	114	14.3	13.5	3 1 0	3 0 0	6 0 0
Chino	5	3	0	.625	L1	201	25.1	174	21.8	3.4	2 2 0	2 1 0	4 2 0
Iowa City	4	4	0	.500	W1	218	27.3	219	27.4	-0.1	3 1 0	1 2 0	3 3 0
Seattle	1	7	0	.125	L1	135	16.9	204	25.5	-8.6	1 3 0	0 3 0	0 6 0

North	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	7	1	0	.875	W3	266	33.3	121	15.1	18.1	4 0 0	1 1 0	5 1 0
Sebastian	4	3	1	.563	L1	281	35.1	277	34.6	0.5	2 2 0	1 0 1	2 3 1
Cowtown	4	4	0	.500	L2	168	21.0	179	22.4	-1.4	3 1 0	1 1 0	4 2 0
Scarborough	1	6	1	.188	L3	138	17.3	235	29.4	-12.1	1 2 1	0 1 1	1 4 1

Coastal	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Budapest	8	0	0	1.000	W8	250	31.3	117	14.6	16.6	5 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0
York	6	2	0	.750	W2	194	24.3	172	21.5	2.8	3 1 0	2 1 0	4 2 0
Pickering	4	4	0	.500	W1	157	19.6	182	22.8	-3.1	0 3 0	1 2 0	3 3 0
Brooklin	3	5	0	.375	L1	169	21.1	211	26.4	-5.3	1 3 0	0 3 0	2 4 0

South	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
East Elmhurst	5	3	0	.625	W1	170	21.3	148	18.5	2.8	2 2 0	3 0 0	4 2 0
Erieau	3	5	0	.375	W2	146	18.3	168	21.0	-2.8	1 3 0	2 1 0	2 4 0
Oshawa	2	5	1	.313	L1	178	22.3	221	27.6	-5.4	1 2 1	0 2 1	1 4 1
Georgia	1	6	1	.188	L4	198	24.8	234	29.3	-4.5	0 4 0	0 2 1	0 5 1

EFL 2021 - Week 8 Passing Leaders

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Rodgers,A	BUD	259	193	74.5	2503	2	0.8	75	24	9.3	132.1
2	Cousins	SS	262	188	71.8	2465	5	1.9	76	25	9.5	124.9
3	Mahomes	VV	271	175	64.6	2531	3	1.1	72	22	8.1	117.3
4	Watson,D	CHP	243	161	66.3	2041	1	0.4	47	18	7.4	115.3
5	Prescott	CHI	88	65	73.9	754	0	0.0	75	4	4.5	114.5
6	Wilson,R	ICC	235	168	71.5	1875	6	2.6	54	19	8.1	111.2
7	Allen,J	DTL	295	198	67.1	2268	3	1.0	75	21	7.1	109.5
8	Brady	YOR	248	170	68.5	2116	7	2.8	84	17	6.9	105.8
9	Tannehill	CB	216	138	63.9	1851	6	2.8	55	17	7.9	105.7
10	Herbert	LV	274	189	69.0	2061	5	1.8	65	18	6.6	105.2
11	Mayfield	EE	218	147	67.4	1704	3	1.4	48	11	5.0	101.9
12	Roethlisbe	GEO	266	178	66.9	1821	3	1.1	60	16	6.0	101.7
13	Bridgewater	CHI	162	116	71.6	1279	4	2.5	75	7	4.3	98.8
14	Brees	BRX	200	118	59.0	1620	4	2.0	75	13	6.5	98.3
15	Stafford	NJ	284	189	66.5	2231	5	1.8	75	13	4.6	98.2
16	Trubisky	TCT	191	116	60.7	1322	4	2.1	69	12	6.3	93.8
17	Ryan,M	OSH	275	177	64.4	1715	6	2.2	57	14	5.1	89.6
18	Fitzpatrick	COW	194	134	69.1	1363	7	3.6	52	9	4.6	89.3
19	Jackson,L	BUF	266	175	65.8	1652	4	1.5	60	10	3.8	89.1
20	Minshew II	SEA	146	92	63.0	895	4	2.7	62	8	5.5	87.0
21	Carr,D	BRH	246	141	57.3	1640	5	2.0	54	12	4.9	85.4
22	Rivers,P	PIC	232	140	60.3	1586	3	1.3	36	6	2.6	84.1
23	Burrow	SBE	252	149	59.1	1488	4	1.6	59	11	4.4	83.9
24	Murray,K	ERI	238	148	62.2	1415	4	1.7	47	7	2.9	81.5
25	Jones,M	PCC	270	150	55.6	1752	11	4.1	80	10	3.7	70.8

EFL 2021 - Week 8 Kick Return Leaders

		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Roberts,A	BRX	14	478	34.1	46 0
2	Agnew	SEA	15	457	30.5	68 0
3	Harris,D	COW	11	329	29.9	76 0
4	Johnson,D	SBE	10	292	29.2	41 0
5	Duvernay	TCT	10	262	26.2	49 0
6	Patterson	BUD	11	286	26.0	39 0
7	Rodgers,I	CHP	10	256	25.6	34 0
8	Webster,N	NJ	10	238	23.8	35 0
9	Scott,B	BRH	10	237	23.7	32 0
10	Carter,D	BUF	16	373	23.3	48 0
11	Waddle	ERI	10	233	23.3	31 0
12	Atwell	OSH	15	323	21.5	38 0
13	Cannon	BUD	3	111	37.0	42 0
14	Adderley	VV	3	89	29.7	33 0
15	Barner	PIC	7	194	27.7	39 0
16	Homer	YOR	9	243	27.0	36 0
17	Johnson,D	CB	3	78	26.0	28 0
18	Hubbard	PCC	4	103	25.8	29 0
19	Lewis,D	LV	8	201	25.1	43 0
20	Reed,J	VV	1	25	25.0	25 0
21	Hill	DTL	7	171	24.4	38 0
22	Davis,A	PCC	2	47	23.5	28 0
23	Powell	EE	5	116	23.2	31 0
24	James,R	GEO	3	66	22.0	35 0
25	Wallace	GEO	2	44	22.0	38 0

EFL 2021 - Week 8 Punt Return Leaders

		No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Grant,J	CHI	18	4	282	15.7	62 1
2	Peppers	ERI	13	3	153	11.8	22 0
3	Erickson	BUF	11	7	119	10.8	24 0
4	Harris,D	COW	17	3	177	10.4	18 0
5	Taylor,T	CHP	18	3	186	10.3	27 0
6	Cooper,P	VV	12	9	118	9.8	41 0
7	Moore	EE	12	8	118	9.8	17 0
8	Roberts,A	BRX	13	0	120	9.2	29 0
9	Proche	DTL	23	8	197	8.6	20 0
10	Hill,K	SBE	17	4	127	7.5	25 0
11	Peoples-Jo	SS	13	4	92	7.1	16 0
12	Spencer,D	NJ	13	4	75	5.8	16 0
13	Raymond	CB	10	1	52	5.2	17 0
14	Hardman	LV	12	13	39	3.3	13 0
15	Amendola	YOR	12	0	13	1.1	5 0
16	Lamb	SEA	5	3	74	14.8	38 0
17	Hines	ERI	2	0	24	12.0	16 0
18	Atwell	OSH	7	2	81	11.6	22 0
19	Tate,G	BRH	3	11	28	9.3	19 0
20	Rodgers,Am	BUD	8	15	71	8.9	20 0
21	Cole Sr.	SEA	8	1	71	8.9	16 0
22	Renfrow	SEA	5	4	44	8.8	20 0
23	Johnson,D	GEO	6	4	50	8.3	12 0
24	Barner	PIC	6	7	48	8.0	14 0
25	Carter,D	BUF	1	2	6	6.0	6 0

EFL 2021 - Week 8 Rushing Leaders

			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Henry,D	YOR	189	856	4.5	48	5
2	Robinson,J	GEO	155	781	5.0	52	6
3	Cook,D	LV	156	765	4.9	49	5
4	Drake	OSH	130	695	5.3	40	5
5	Taylor,J	SS	113	630	5.6	52	6
6	Sanders,M	PIC	118	586	5.0	25	2
7	Chubb,N	SS	114	569	5.0	47	5
8	Jones,A	EE	112	568	5.1	22	5
9	Elliott,E	VV	136	555	4.1	28	6
10	Gordon III	TCT	100	518	5.2	45	0
11	Edwards-He	TCT	69	495	7.2	46	5
12	Jackson,L	BUF	86	485	5.6	32	7
13	Harris,D	CB	67	476	7.1	35	3
14	Murray,K	ERI	77	468	6.1	23	5
15	Conner	ICC	65	430	6.6	47	1
16	Harris	ERI	103	417	4.0	37	1
17	Jones II	CHI	91	363	4.0	26	4
18	Mitchell	BRX	77	356	4.6	34	4
19	Wilson,R	ICC	50	351	7.0	26	3
20	Carson	SBE	74	349	4.7	13	3
21	Montgomery	NJ	104	338	3.3	18	0
22	Swift	PIC	57	322	5.6	38	6
23	Peterson,A	CB	75	296	3.9	16	2
24	Scott,B	BRH	53	287	5.4	20	1
25	Akers	SEA	62	284	4.6	52	2
26	Davis,M	BUF	71	282	4.0	19	2
27	Williams,J	BRX	54	273	5.1	18	0
28	Kamara	CHP	86	272	3.2	19	2
29	Gurley II	COW	73	256	3.5	20	4
30	Hunt,K	SEA	62	253	4.1	37	1

EFL 2021 - Week 8 Receiving Leaders

			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Adams,D	OSH	62	669	10.8	57	8
2	Allen,K	NJ	50	488	9.8	35	6
3	Gallup	CHI	49	710	14.5	75	4
4	Diggs,S	BUD	49	587	12.0	46	5
5	Hill,T	EE	44	633	14.4	40	6
6	Jefferson	BUD	43	693	16.1	75	7
7	Johnson,D	GEO	42	376	9.0	20	6
8	Lockett	ICC	42	438	10.4	24	6
9	Waller	DTL	41	491	12.0	43	6
10	Anderson,R	SEA	40	391	9.8	23	2
11	McKissic	NJ	40	352	8.8	29	1
12	McLaurin	NJ	38	566	14.9	75	4
13	Hopkins,D	BRH	38	510	13.4	54	7
14	Claypool	BRX	37	629	17.0	75	8
15	Kelce,T	CHP	37	516	13.9	31	8
16	Chase	VV	37	782	21.1	72	8
17	Woods,R	BUF	36	435	12.1	60	5
18	Sanders,E	BUF	36	399	11.1	37	4
19	Amendola	YOR	36	459	12.8	31	3
20	Shenault J	PCC	35	390	11.1	42	5
21	Andrews,M	ERI	35	355	10.1	47	2
22	Kupp	DTL	35	585	16.7	75	3
23	Robinson,A	SBE	35	393	11.2	51	2
24	Samuel,C	DTL	35	338	9.7	34	2
25	Gage	BUF	34	321	9.4	25	0
26	Evans,M	COW	34	455	13.4	41	5
27	Parker,D	CB	34	436	12.8	36	6
28	Shepard	PIC	34	427	12.6	29	4
29	Godwin,C	BRX	33	527	16.0	56	4
30	Thielen	EE	33	389	11.8	26	2



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – Here we go again! A new COVID “variant” named *omicron* has appeared, allegedly in South Africa. It is more transmissible than other variants, with *more than 50 mutations*, and will likely overwhelm the entire world within 3 to 6 months. Pfizer and Moderna are, of course, rushing to produce a “vaccine” (I use the term very loosely here) to target *omicron*, but as it will take about 90 days to create and more months to produce and ship, one has to wonder why go to all the trouble and expense when the variant will be fully circulated and causing coughs across the world by then... (*waiting for laughter and derision from other journalists at my naivete, but it never comes*) ...oh yes! I forgot! More profits for the pharmaceutical giants! They apparently have not made enough billions and are now aiming for trillions.

As with the *delta* variant scam, the increased transmissibility of *omicron* is being promoted as its most insidious feature. Left out of the headlines is the reality that *omicron* will be less virulent than *delta*, which was less virulent than *beta*, which was less virulent than *alpha*. You see, according to Virology 101, flu/corona viruses naturally mutate as they spread and tend to become more transmissible and less virulent. Thus the Spanish Flu that killed tens of millions more than COVID-19 could dream of is now indistinguishable from the common cold, if it still exists at all. COVID-19 may have been alarmingly deadly at one time – especially to people over 80 who were sick already – but it is bound to become far less so as time marches on. But let’s vaccinate kids anyway!

So, all this blabber about *omicron* is designed to keep you living in fear and beholden to Big Pharma. There could be other, more sinister political designs behind the Vaccine Passports and lockdowns that I won’t get into here, but keeping the discussion confined to the real and observable world, is it that inconceivable that drug companies would put profits ahead of people and look to capitalize on people’s fear of disease and lack of trust in their own immune systems? The “public health” measures make no sense otherwise. We are either being governed by complete idiots or venal turds corrupted by Big Pharma. I vote for both.

You know where I stand on the COVID-19 so-called vaccines. Some of you have stopped reading me because if it. Although I am vaccinated – against my better judgement – my position hasn’t changed. The publicity around *omicron* simply reinforces in my mind that we are being played like a fiddle by forces far more cynical and corrupt than “Joe Normie” can possibly conceive of. Some day, truth and natural law will catch up with these swindlers. But it likely won’t happen before another round or two of “boosters” – Pfizer and Moderna stock price boosters, that is!

BACK TO FOOTBALL – THE DARK LORDS BATTLE!

The EFL intervened to prevent another “Blackout Game” between Las Vegas and Chino. Coach & GM of the Convicts, **Rob Nazar** cried foul, claiming that homefield advantage had influenced the outcome of the first Blackout Game in Vegas last year and that his team deserved an opportunity to overturn that result at home. The league countered by pointing to the longstanding rule mandating dark and light jerseys and essentially warned Nazar and Assassins’ coach, **Anthony Holguin** in a letter that if they tried to pull that stunt again there would be a hefty fine levied on both teams which might include loss of draft picks.

To recap for fans who may have missed it last year, the Convicts and Assassins decided to settle the question of which team had the “blackest” uniforms by staging a promotional “blackout game” where both teams would take the field wearing their blackest jerseys. The winner would get to claim the title of blackest jerseys and, de facto, the baddest team in the West.

The game saw mayhem on the field and confusion in the stands as the teams looked practically identical, with only the red center stripe on the Convicts’ helmet and slightly greyer trousers distinguishing them from the Assassins. The only player who seemed to benefit was Las Vegas quarterback **Carson Wentz**, whose propensity to throw to the wrong jersey was nullified by the sameness of the outfits. It turns out that Wentz actually knows where his receivers are supposed to be – he just panics and throws to the wrong jersey. The blackout effect fixed that and Wentz had his best game of 2020, with 325 yards and 3 TDs passing to lead the Assassins to a blowout 34-10 win.

With jersey blackness removed as the prime measure of greatest villainy in the teams’ first showdown of 2021, Nazar and Holguin agreed to test which of their favourite dark lord villains would inspire their players to the most fearsome badass performance. Having both committed long ago to using blackguard villainy as a prop to sell jerseys and inspire dominant performances, the competing philosophies of evil that animated such performances mattered as much as uniform appearances in delivering the most malevolent product on the field. The question of who was the evildest coach had to be decided.

To the maniacal chants of the real convicts in the upper deck, coach **Rob Nazar** took the field dressed as **Darth Sidious**,

the most powerful Sith Lord from *Star Wars*, who nearly exterminated the rival Jedi Order and, as the Emperor Palpatine, ruled the galaxy for 20 years before Darth Vader betrayed him.

“I always thought the Dark Lord of the Sith was the complete package when it comes to ruthlessness and evil,” Nazar explained to reporters before the game. “I like to think my players can be inspired by this and are ready to channel the Dark Side into their play today.”

To the torrential boos of the near-capacity crowd of over 80,000 fans at *The Big House*, coach **Anthony Holguin** emerged from the tunnel fitted out in the cumbersome but fearsome-looking battle armour of the **Dark Lord Sauron**, the aspiring ruler of Middle Earth in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. In Tolkien’s universe, Sauron is a fallen angel who uses arcane knowledge and deception to manipulate and dominate others with the goal of subjugating the world, drawing parallels to Satan.

“To be honest, I just really liked the armour the guy wore in that battle scene,” Holguin confessed in his pre-game presser. “And I thought the penthouse suite he had at the top of that big tower with the burning eye staring out was dope.”

Deathspun reporter, **Tarkin Smith-Abdullah**, spoke up: “Coach Holguin, Tolkein himself characterizes his character, Sauron as, “*as near to a wholly evil will as possible*.” What do you have to say about taking on that character yourself today?”

“He did?” Holguin replied, looking surprised. “Sweet! Yeah, I consider myself pretty evil, at least when I’m coaching. I don’t want to just beat the Convicts today I want to destroy them. With the spirit of Sauron and his evil eye behind us, I feel we can do it.”

And so, the battle lines were drawn between the two self-styled bad boys of the EFL. Their prestige as villains was on the line. More importantly, however, the future course of the West Division race would be determined in this game. The Assassins held a one-game lead. The Convicts could officially make it a two-horse race at the halfway mark by drawing even with a win; or fall further behind and be forced to crack the whip in a desperate bid to catch-up down the home stretch. A fully healthy Convicts team stood a good chance of handing the Assassins their second straight loss. However, this Convicts team was missing their starting quarterback and All-Pro running back. It would take an inspired effort by the offence and defence to turn the rising tide of the Assassins’ quest for Pacific Conference dominance. **Rob Nazar** was banking on the spirit of the Evil Empire to motivate his team to exceed expectations.

“Darth Sidious was the most powerful of the Sith and he got there through treachery, sabotage and murder. He built an empire and ruled the entire galaxy,” Nazar explained in dark, somber tones from within the folds of his black hood to the players circled around him on the sideline. “The universe bowed before him. He only fell because he was betrayed from within. Remember that when you are



Assassins’ coach, **Anthony Holguin**, dressed as Sauron (left) and Convicts coach, **Rob Nazar**, dressed as Darth Sidious (right), cranked up their rivalry to the next level by turning their Week Eight showdown into the ultimate battle of Dark Lords. With the league refusing to permit another ‘Blackout Game,’ the coaches shifted focus onto themselves in an attempt to measure the evilness of their leadership and claim the title of Baddest Coach in the EFL. Holguin’s “sword” turned out to be more impressive than Nazar’s.

on the field today. The only thing that can stop you, is you! Sauron has no power over you except what you give to him. Remember, Sauron was defeated by a Hobbit. What kind of Dark Lord loses to a stupid little Hobbit?"

"EEEE-YAH! DEATH TO SAURON!" barked 49 Convicts in unison before breaking off into their platoons for the start of the game.

"Alright guys! Sauron is the King of Evil and you are his servants! Go out there and kick some Convict a\$\$!" Holguin shouted from behind the steel helm fully encasing his head. The reverberation off the metal created a sinister tone in his voice that sent a chill through the massive huddle of white & silver clad Assassins.

"EVIL RULES! OOO-AH!" they roared as they broke from the circle and began their shoulder pad punching ritual. Both teams were fired up and ready to kill each other.

The early portion of the game lived up to its billing as the ultimate battle of dark forces. The defences starred first, with both rising up to force opposing three-and-outs on the opening possessions. Then the offences began to roll; cautiously at first with a **Harrison Butker** field goal for Chino then quickening on the Assassins' next series with 6 straight completions by **Justin Herbert** on a 75-yard TD drive. Recently re-activated **Michael Thomas** finished it off with a 3-yard catch in the end zone and a lofty spike of the football that drew catcalls and beer bottles from the bleachers.

The Convicts answered with lightning speed. Wide receiver **Tim Patrick** made a leaping catch over the middle and landed in stride to slip two tackles and bolt all the way to paydirt for an electrifying 75-yard touchdown. The explosive cheer of the home crowd sent a physical wave across the field that seemed to shrink the Assassins sideline. Safety, **Rayshawn Jenkins**, who had whiffed on the tackle as Patrick had landed with the ball, walked slowly off the field, his head hanging.

Anthony Holguin, peering with difficulty through the narrow slats of his helmet could sense a weakening of his team's resolve. That it came so early alarmed him. He reacted instinctively by unsheathing his sword and waving it in the air. The sword's polished silver blade glinted in the daylight. It was a very real replica of a medieval bastard sword, chosen for both the name and its long length. Anthony had joked that he wanted a sword that would capture "what a big bastard I intend to be to Rob!" The sudden appearance of the sword created a ripple of shock and awe through the ranks of the Assassins players on the sideline.

"Steady!" bellowed Holguin in his metallic-sounding voice. "That was one play! *One play!!* We'll get it back if you stay evil in your mind. Now go out there and crush them!"

The Assassins players did not initially react well to the unsheathing of the sword. They went three-and-out on their next offensive series. The offence looked slow while the Convicts were exploding toward the ball.

In a sudden burst of real frustration, Holguin lifted his bastard sword above his head with both hands and chopped down violently on a bench, cleaving it in two. His shocked players froze in place. Were they going to be next?

"Crush them, I said!" he yelled at them. "If you don't know what crush means, look at that bench!" he pointed his sword at a helmet that lay on its side between the broken halves of the bench. It created a visceral fight-or-flight reaction in his players that landed on the side of fight.

"CRUSH THEM!" a few of his players, led by **Demario Davis**, barked spontaneously in unison. The entire team echoed, "CRUSH THEM TO DEATH!"

Fearing for their very souls – as should all servants of the devil – the Assassins offence went on a long march from their own 27 all the way to the Chino 9-yard line. From there, on 3rd & goal, Herbert slid the ball to **Cameron Brate** for a touchdown to put Las Vegas back in front, 13-10. The Chino defence had resisted fiercely the entire way, but pinpoint passing by Herbert and great protection by the offensive line had gotten the better of them. It was now their turn to slump. Safety **Marcus Maye** shook his head as he dragged his feet toward the Chino sideline. He had given Brate too much cushion underneath and had failed to close in time.

Rob Nazar glared balefully at his defence from within the folds of his black Sith shroud. He could see they were doubting themselves after Herbert had had his way with them. Noting what his hated opponent had done to stabilize his players after the Patrick touchdown, Nazar reacted deliberately. He reached in to his cloak and pulled out his blue lightsabre. With a dramatic turn of his hips and twist of his arms he slashed at a giant cooler filled with Gatorade. The glowing tube traced a streak of blue light through the air as it slashed across the plastic surface of the cooler <Snap!> and broke in two.

Nazar stared in silence at the short half of his broken lightsabre. This 8.3 ounces of plastic powered by three AAA batteries had cost him less than \$20 on *Amazon*. He had been happy with the bargain at the time but now realized his error. His cheeks flushed with embarrassment as several of the Assassins players on the kick-off coverage team, the ones closest to the Chino sideline, started to laugh. He noticed a few of his own players turn away – some to conceal their own laughter and others to conceal their embarrassment.

"Now come on, guys! Let's get that back!" cried Nazar, dropping his broken lightsabre and pulling back his hood to make sure his players could hear him clearly. "It wasn't all bad! They missed the extra point! Let's make them pay for that. We got this, guys! We're the masters of the universe remember!"

This kind of positive encouragement did not normally sound out of place and may have worked on a regular day. But in a symbolic battle for Dark Lord Supremacy following an epic fail in a virtual sword fight, it came across as desperate and weenie-like. The opposing coaches had pulled out their swords and put them on the table, so to speak, and one was found to be inadequate.

From that point onward it was all Vegas. The first half finished off dreadfully for the Convicts as a **Jordan Fuller** interception of **Teddy Bridgewater** and 46-yard return set up a field goal and Herbert continued his deadly accuracy with a big play to

Jerry Jeudy for 39 yards and a touchdown pass to **Zach Pascal** with 8 seconds left, giving them a 23-10 lead at the half.

The second half was no better. The Assassins scored on their first two possessions to enter the 4th quarter with a 33-10 lead. As the Convicts made one last desperate attempt to get back in the game before it was too late, Fuller tipped a high throw from Bridgewater and snatched it out of the air for his second interception. His 27-yard return gave Las Vegas great field position and an opportunity to wind the clock down. But Holguin had other plans.

"Now we take away their souls!" he announced with steely fanaticism to his offence before it took the field. "Show them no mercy! Drive them from the field like dogs!"

The second-year Herbert raised his eyebrows slightly at the cruel direction. But since he was now getting into the spirit of the Dark Lord showdown and learning to enjoy the domination and humiliation of opponents like **Za'Darius Smith**, who had vowed to decapitate him and had gotten close a few times but had failed to land a solid blow, he went to work trying to run up the score for his heartless master.

This was all unbeknownst to **Rob Nazar**, who simultaneously raised the white flag by substituting his back-ups to play out the remainder of the game. While he liked to be thought of as nasty and willing to play dirty, the Chino coach could also be very pragmatic and capable of noble gestures. He knew when he was beaten and was willing to spare further casualties on both sides by symbolically conceding. He was first stunned then outraged that his opponent wanted more than the usual pound of flesh.

The Assassins managed to add just 3 more points to their total but not for lack of trying for more. They drove through the air into the Chino red zone and tried three times to pass it into the end zone, but to no avail. **Ka'imi Fairbairn** came on for the 41-yard field goal to make it 36-10 with 2:38 remaining. That is where the score would remain.

When the game finally ended there were perhaps one-quarter of the fans still around to witness the final gun. After delivering a smattering of boos and catcalls they filed out without further protest while **Anthony Holguin**, still in full Sauron battle armour, stood on an intact bench on the Vegas sideline, waving his bastard sword and laughing uproariously.

"BWAH-HA-HA-HA-HA! I RULE YOU NAZAR!" he howled. *"BOW DOWN PUSSY! BOW DOWN! BWAH-HA-HA!"*

An incensed Nazar spoke afterwards to the media about getting revenge:

"Darth Sidious did not stay down for long," he noted in his postgame presser. "We know that he came back and restored the Empire after Darth Vader betrayed him. We will be back and we will not forget this. Coach Holguin has launched a vendetta and it will come back to bite him in his flabby arse."

When notified about the Chino coach's remarks, Holguin, who was no longer wearing the Sauron helmet, chuckled and rolled his eyes. "I thought this was, like, supposed to be a battle between dark lords of evil. Isn't that what evil lords do...run up the score?" he shook his head to underscore evident disgust. "If he thinks he's so evil and deserves to wear a skull & crossbones on his helmet then he better be ready to take an ass-kicking. This just makes me want to crush his sorry ass even more next time!"

The Battle for Baddest Boy in the West is getting ugly. I can't wait for Week 12.

MUSINGS ABOUT MINNY

Eight weeks of the season have now passed and still no sign of **Trevor Lawrence**. Fans and Media in Minneapolis are demanding to know what the plan is for the top pick in the draft and are not getting any solid answers from the one person who would have them; owner, GM and coach **Guy Williams**. The lack of meaningful communication from the Triumph head honcho is nothing new, but the lack of even pretending to communicate is. This has led to all kinds of speculation about what might really be going on behind the scenes, some of which I touched on in last week's column.

Evidence of some kind of plan for this season should have materialized by this point, regardless of the head coach's tendency to jealously guard his "competitive advantage" by not sharing even minor bits of information about the status of players. For example, Twin Cities is the only team in the EFL that does not release an official depth chart. In its place they list the players in alphabetical order under their positions. (At least we know what positions they are supposed to play!) Nothing that could be called "evidence" of a season plan for the Triumph has surfaced. Instead, we have to infer certain things based on what we see on the field and overlay that with what logic, or "common sense," tells us.

For example, it is obvious that **Mitch Trubisky** is a lame duck quarterback for more than just the fact that Lawrence is waiting behind him (we think). They rarely attempt to feature him in the offence and instead seem to be trying to hide him. His 7 pass attempts in Week 6 versus Virden was the lowest total for a starting quarterback over an entire single game in EFL history. He did attempt 47 passes in Week 7 against Oshawa, but 3 interceptions in a loss put him back under a rock this week, with just 11 pass attempts against Buffalo. This does not necessarily mean that winning is the first priority for the Triumph, however. It may just be an attempt to preserve Trubisky's value as a trade commodity by not exposing him too much while Lawrence seasons in the press box. Or, it could actually mean they care about winning. But is this a team that looks like it's going to win a lot of games anyway?

Well, before you completely discount the Triumph as a team that could make some noise in 2021, even with Trubisky at quarterback, take a look at their victory over Buffalo this week. They did something that only one other team – Las Vegas – has done so far this year: shut down **Lamar Jackson**. The Triumph defence put on a clinic on how to contain Jackson and put it on in his own backyard of Buffalo, silencing the Derailers, 26-9. Let's take a quick look:

The Buffalo formula for success appeared to be working on their opening drive; spread formations, quick, short passes for little chunks and a mix of running plays that included the mandatory Jackson bootleg and dives up the middle. But the Triumph had a plan to slow it down and it worked. They eventually forced Buffalo off the rails inside their red zone, where coach **Daryl Brothers**,

showing odd reserve, elected to kick a field goal on 4th & 3 at the Twin Cities 6-yard line. I guess after all that work to move 77 yards in 17 plays, he felt that his team needed to come away with points. Interestingly, however, that would be the last time they would score until the 4th quarter.

The Triumph plan called for matched DB-to-wideout formations playing in mostly neutral or run postures with one linebacker in reserve spying on Lamar. Williams didn't put a spy on Lamar just occasionally, he did it on *every single play*. It helps that the player doing the spying happened to be All-Pro, **Bobby Wagner**. Could a lesser talent have pulled it off as consistently as the Triumph defensive captain? Likely not. But the point that at least *somebody* in the league was able to act as kryptonite to "Superman" was made clear in Jackson's bottom line: 56 yards on 23 carries, a measly 2.4-yard per carry average and a total of 9 points in the game for the Derailers.

The Triumph offence was not exactly awe-inspiring, but a fortuitous turnover, a steady dose of **Clyde Edwards-Helaire** on the ground and an explosive, out-of-the-blue 69-yard strike to **DJ Moore** from Trubisky put 24 points on the board and kept them comfortably in front for most of the game. Jackson had an *okay* day passing the ball, but his line of 21 for 38 for 223 yards and 1 TD was not the kind of production needed in a game of playing catch-up. The Triumph not only won; they won comfortably.

Which brings me back, again, to Lawrence. Will we see him in 2021? With Twin Cities now 3-5 and still in the hunt, as long as Trubisky manages the game and Triumph continue to be somewhat competitive, the coach likely sees no reason to make the switch, having clearly decided to keep his team's family jewels tucked away in safety for the time being.

TIME IN A BOTTLE

At the Fish Tank in Sebastian, the Spartans overcame a 20-9 deficit in the 4th quarter to flip the Fish 23-20. This was yet another fascinating Swordfish game full of **Russ Lemmon** gambles that both helped and hurt his cause. But this week, the focus of media and fan attention is not on Russ' 4th down free-for-alls. People are talking instead about two things: Pickering running back **D'Andre Swift**, the back-up ball carrier who dialed up TD runs of 38 and 14 yards and made a 2-point convert to lead the Spartan comeback; and Lemmon's controversial clock mis-management on the final drive of the game that saw time run out on Sebastian with the ball on the Pickering 36, down by 3.

Swift, pushed into a first-string role after **Miles Sanders** went down to injury in the 1st quarter, showed electric moves on a perfectly-executed draw against a double blitz by the Swordfish early in the 4th quarter. Once he reached the second level, he turned on the afterburners and barely slowed down in making a move on corner **Levi Wallace** to gain the sideline and finish off a 38-yard TD run that brought Pickering within striking distance, trailing 20-15. Later, at the 1:38 mark of the 4th, Swift showed close-quarter quickness and a power burst in bolting through a hole opened by **Patrick Ricard** to cover 14 yards for the go-ahead touchdown. He then took a pitch around the corner for the two-point convert to make it a 3-point Spartan lead.

1:38 was more than enough time, however, for the league's no.1 offence to recover and get into field goal range or the end zone. But time is not something one can keep in a bottle to save for when it's needed. It just passes and there is no getting it back, as **Russ Lemmon** and the Swordfish would soon discover.

After gaining a new lease on life with a pass interference call on **Xavien Howard** turning a 4th & 19 incomplection into a first down, the Swordfish drove across mid-field into Pickering territory. With 0:30 remaining, **Kirk Cousins** dropped back from the 44-yard line and completed an 8-yard check down to **Donovan Peoples-Jones** in the middle of the field with 0:17 left on the clock. The Fish had one timeout remaining and might have called it then and trusted the leg of **Daniel Carlson** to get the ball through the uprights from 54 yards. Or they might have rushed to the line and spiked the ball on 2nd down hoping to try one more shot at getting closer. Those options seemed to be the only two viable ones. But coach Lemmon, thinking outside the box as usual, went for a third option: Rush frantically to the line and run a play.

Theoretically, the bold move under the gun could have worked. However, even an optimistic projection meant the Swordfish would be cutting it really close. Thinking about it a little more; do you really want to be calling a crucial play on the fly like that? Probably not, but the Swordfish dove in anyway. Cousins, showing no football IQ whatsoever, dropped back, took too long to see that his primary was covered and checked down underneath to **Jalen Reagor** at the 30-yard line...*in bounds!* With Cousins, Lemmon, center **Mitch Morse**, and an alert Swordfish water boy close to the sideline all flashing the timeout sign as Reagor was pulled to the turf, the clock at the Fish Tank counted down to 0:00 and the whistle blew. The game was over.

An incredulous **Russ Lemmon** stared at the clock then at the officials then up at the booth. He raised his arms as if to say, *WTF is going on?* The sound of the gun, the uproar of indignant fans and the hoots of celebration coming from the Pickering sideline answered him unequivocally that time had run out on his team on this day.

After the game, the usually sedate Sebastian Press was agitated. They ignored the defensive letdown that had provided the opening for Swift's heroics in the 4th quarter and went straight for the coach's jugular, demanding to know what had happened to the Swordfish comeback at the end. The local media was already attuned to the deficiencies of the defence and expected nothing less from them than a late collapse. But the new-and-improved high-powered offence was supposed to fix the problem and it hadn't. They blamed the coach.

"Coach Lemmon, a lot of people on social media are criticizing you for not calling a timeout when the ball was at the 36 and lots of time left on the clock. What do you have to say to them?" **Jean Boisvert**, of the *Swampland Proof*, asked as the lead question in the post-game presser.

"I take full responsibility for that," replied a flustered, but all the same polite and restrained Lemmon. "You know, I always

hear visitors say that time passes a little slower in Sebastian than it does in other places.” He paused as several people chuckled at the remark. It was true: Time did seem to move slower in Sebastian. “So, I guess you could say that my internal clock was on Sebastian time...at the time...and I kind of expected the stadium clock was as well.”

The room erupted in laughter, despite the very grave fact that this lapse had possibly cost the Swordfish a vital game. One thing about the Sebastian coach, everyone in town loved the guy and couldn’t stay mad at him for long. He adroitly managed to avoid further acrimonious questioning by falling back on his love of music and channeling **Jim Croce**:

“You know, Jean,” he paused for effect then lilted: “*If I could save time in a bottle, the first thing that I’d like to do, is to save one last second to call a timeout, then I wouldn’t have this conversation with you.*”

AROUND THE EFL

This will be a quick tour, as I must leave time and space for the far more important mid-term report card:

In what could have been the upset of the week but wasn’t, the Seattle Pilots fell to the Cubs, 27-23 on a rainy day at Joe Ferguson Stadium. In a game that the Cubs absolutely had to have for both team and coach standing, the home team came up remarkably flat and was forced to rely on Seattle miscues and a 24-yard TD pass from **Russell Wilson** to **Tyler Lockett** with 0:38 left in the 4th quarter in order to prevail. A bad snap over the head of punter **Jake Bailey** and two conversion failures on 4th & short at or inside their own 50-yard line by Seattle led to a touchdown and two field goals for the Cubs. **Gardner Minshew II**, this week’s starting quarterback for Seattle, had the game well in hand otherwise, finishing with 3 TD passes, no turnovers and a 96.3 passer rating. The Pilots are still in pre-season mode, while rumours swirl in Iowa that even after this must win, Cubs’ coach **Deron Redding** is about to be fired.

At Monsignor McClancy Memorial Stadium in East Elmhurst, the early divisional showdown between the pre-season favourite, Pink Panthers and the current front-runners in the South Division, the Irish, ended with the home team hanging on for a 17-13 victory. With the win, East Elmhurst takes a 2-game lead over Erieau and a 2½ game lead over struggling Oshawa. The game started inauspiciously for the **Scott Dennis** and crew, as three offensive penalties in their first 6 snaps and a fumble by **Kenyan Drake** at their own 4-yard line opened the gates for a fast start by the Irish. **Raheem Mostert** did the honours in one play after the takeaway with a 4-yard run around right tackle for a quick 7-0 lead. After that early setback the Pink Panthers actually out-competed the Irish until the 4th quarter, when the game finished for Oshawa as it started; inauspiciously, with three fruitless drives failing to close a 4-point gap. The unsteady Irish are well on their way to a no.3 seed as the “New Mustangs” abandon the division.

At True North Field in Winnipeg, over 10,000 fans on ‘Free Beer Day’ watched the Crusaders put North America temporarily on hold with a 16-13 lead over Cobb County at halftime. Two big catches by **Tyler Higbee** on 4th d own and a **Jeff Okudah** interception of **Ryan Tannehill** helped set up 2 **Younghoe Koo** FGs and a **Mac Jones** to **Laviska Shenault** TD pass to build the shocking lead. The tide turned hard in the 2nd half, however, when **Trayvon Mullen** intercepted Jones as the Pegs drove into Coyotes territory. The turnover over led to an 80-yard drive and score on a 24-yard TD pass to **DeVante Parker** to give the Coyotes a 23-16 lead. That started the “Mac Meltdown,” as the rookie went on to throw three more picks to gift the Coyotes the short fields needed to turn this into a blowout.

At Stone Pony Shore in New Jersey, the Patriots added to the Wrecking Balls’ home woes by smacking them down 24-3. **DeShaun Watson** led a restrained but effective assault with 239 yards and 1 TD through the air and a team-leading 45 yards rushing. He didn’t have to do any more, as the Pats’ D was in control from the beginning. The defensive line, led by **Carl Lawson** and **Derrick Brown**, manhandled the Jersey front five and put **Matt Stafford** was under pressure all day long. He was sacked six times, when he wasn’t getting knocked down or harried in the pocket. New Jersey punted on all five possessions in the 1st half, putting the home crowd in a surly mood for an even worse second half. New Jersey will be glad to go on the road after a 1-4 start at home.

At Hawkeye Park in Brooklin the Thunder Lizards outstripped the Hawks 27-0 for an easy victory to raise their record to 7-1. Durham mixed it up offensively with a higher run-to-pass ratio than we have seen from the **Josh Allen** Offence so far this year. With the Durham defence in full control, there was no need to force the team’s new “identity” onto the game plan, as has been the case in previous outings. **Tyrann Mathieu** held **DeAndre Hopkins** to just 1 catch on 6 targets. Brooklin could not get anything going, finishing the day with just 6 1st downs, 129 total yards and not a single third down or fourth down conversion. After gliding over Las Vegas last week and making the Hawks look like a Division-II college team this week, the Lizards are hitting the mid-way point of the season in full stride.

At **TERRORDOME** in Virden, the Violators flipped the bird to Bruxelles by the score of 42-28. **Patrick Mahomes** went pure sandlot in this game, flinging the ball over 20 yards through the air on 19 separate drop-backs. Sure, two of them got picked off, but six of them hit paydirt, and five of those scored from outside the red zone. The aerial bombardment drew more blood splatters from a Bomber defence that died weeks ago and is now feeding the vultures.

At Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, the Cadillac rebounded from an early hole to upend the Gladiators, 28-21. **Kyler Murray** threw for 273 yards and 2 touchdowns and rushed for 108 yards to garner game MVP honours and another free guided tour of McGeachy Pond Conservation Area. Cadillac owner, **Jamie Rilett** is doing what he can to both incentivize his players and keep the local economy alive.

At Ferenc-Liszt International Airport Stadium in Budapest, the return of the ‘mano’ to the scene of the great upset of the North Stars by Cowtown in the quarter finals of 2019 did not deliver a repeat of his same magical heroics. Corn King QB, **Ryan Fitzpatrick** was held to a garbage time touchdown and **Aaron Rodgers** dominated the 1st half as Budapest cruised to a 27-10 victory.

And finally, at the Eagle’s Nest in Toronto, the Excaliburs steamrolled over Scarborough, 24-7. York controlled the ball for 37 minutes and scored seemingly at will in the 1st half, before losing interest in the 2nd half. **Jay Hammond**’s crew are accustomed to playing close games and they simply did not know what to do with a 21-0 lead at the half. For lack of a better idea, they handed the ball to **Derrick Henry** and watched the clock tick away. Is Scarborough really this bad or is the coach a dunce? Check out my report card...



Professor McChad's Mid-Term Report Card

November 2021

In the Hallowed Halls of High Learning in the Living Football University called the EFL only the strictest standards apply. As a Senior Fellow of said EFL University it falls on me to maintain those standards by applying rigour to my grades. No team is spared the most exacting analysis and criticism based on my profound and every-increasing knowledge of this wonderful sport. For the sake of the sport, I spare no one. But if you meet or exceed the standard, you will be recognized and, in rare cases, praised. Here is my rating scale:

A: Excellent B: Good C: Fair D: Poor F: Fail

A plus (+) indicates slightly above the grade; a minus (-) slightly less.

Brooklin (B-): Judged solely on record, this should be a lower grade but I am rolling effort into the mix, adding props for an upset of Buffalo on the road and acknowledging their tough division. The reality is that the Hawks are not doing more with less, but playing close to their talent level. A slightly upgraded defence this year has not compensated for a diminished offence that features DeAndre Hopkins alone on an island with Derek Carr discovering limits to how far they can travel together.

Bruxelles (D+): Okay, they've had a tough schedule, but I am being harsh on this bunch anyway, partly because they dealt two All-Pro tight ends in the off-season for wait-and-sees then bid on Drew Brees to cover up the error; and partly because the defence stinks worse than an outhouse in summer. Watching Brees captain this wreck in likely his final season is a tragedy to behold. If it was just the talent loss causing this, I might be gentler, but the frenetic coaching is not up to the usual Main Standard.

Budapest (A+): It is hard to find fault with a perfect record, especially when it comes with an offence ranked in the top two, a defence ranked in the top three, and an average margin of victory of almost 17 points. The "+" also recognizes the inherent sportsmanship of the coach in not attempting to overly embarrass weak opponents after making the point that they don't belong on the same field as his team. It is also worth noting that this is the most complete North Stars team in their history.

Buffalo (B-): The Derailers have beaten good teams and lost to good teams over one of the tougher first half schedules in the league. Figuring out their proper place in the power rankings is clouded by the sense that a couple of their losses might have gone better if not for a combination of strange coaching decisions and an unbalanced roster that limits the coach's decision tree to a few exotic branches that only their superstars can climb. They deserve an extra shout-out for always being entertaining.

Charleswood (B+): I will draw the ire of Pats fans for not giving the nearly perfect Pats an A-grade, but even Charleswood partisans have to acknowledge that the team is just scraping by from week-to-week against some pretty questionable competition. This team simply does not look its record. While they should not necessarily be penalized for not winning in style, their desultory play-calling on both sides of the ball has, and will continue to cause them unnecessary trouble.

Chino (B+): The Convicts were a marginal contender in a tough conference even before Dak Prescott and Christian McCaffrey suffered serious injuries. Now they are hanging on and need an A-game to stay afloat in the choppy West. That is something they can't be expected to deliver with the ultimate "bridge" quarterback filling in for Dak and Ronald Jones II attending pass-catching clinics after practice. But a B+ effort is keeping them close and just may keep them in it until Week 13.

Cobb County (B): With two big pieces of their 2020 offence suddenly showing their age and Raheem Mostert gone, this year's edition of the Tannehill Show is playing to mixed reviews, showing how spoiled the young Coyote fanbase is. With the offence and defence both performing at top-five levels, a hint of under-achievement taints their record. The losses to Pickering and Buffalo were odd lapses for a team that can hang with anybody, and handle most, any given week. Thus the 'B.'

Cowtown (B): The Corn Kings appear to be a team that could finish in the playoffs or in the basement, so an even-500 record at the halfway point simply shows that Jekyll & Hyde are still dueling for control. The playoff version handed the Lizards their only loss to date while the basement version struggled to score at home against a mediocre Convicts' defence. Taken all together they have not particularly distinguished nor disgraced themselves, which is in my system the definition of a straight 'B.'

Durham (A-): Apart from an inexplicable lapse against their rivals from Cowtown, the Thunder Lizards have performed mostly up to expectations. The pressure to elevate Josh Allen to elite status and the absence of a bell cow in the backfield may be what is behind a tendency to over-emphasize the passing game at times, to the detriment of the offence, but certainly Jurassic weather has played a restraining role as well. The predatory, no.1-ranked defence is making discussions about the offence academic. They are taking the ball away at a record pace, giving the offence every chance to get things right.

Erieau (C): There must be something in the peninsular air off of Erieau beach that acts as a natural sedative because something is turning dynamic college athletes like Kyler Murray and Jaylen Waddle into half-speed automatons ripe for abuse at the hands of opposing defences. Five years of picking near the top of the draft has landed Erieau plenty of talent that arrives in town and is hardly heard from again. The coaching changes from year-to-year have not helped, nor has the lack of fans. They're the same old Caddies this year, but this time the outlines of a blueprint for success are faintly visible.

East Elmhurst (A): A 5-3 record is not usually associated with an 'A' grade, but this Irish team is an exception. The GM deserves credit for recognizing before anyone else that the division was up for grabs and that the scraps of elite talent that

peppered the roster needed extra pieces at the trade deadline to bring it to fruition. They have not beaten anyone important apart from rival Oshawa, and still have a way to go, so I am taking a leap in predicting their plan will work. But as of now, it's A-okay!

Georgia (C+): I may have a hidden bias for an established team with a solid history that enables me to tolerate the Glads' shabby 1-6-1 record and credit them with a fair-to-good ranking; but even if I do, I am sticking by the mark. The Glads just don't have the talent on defence to make anything easy for their offence, yet they have been in almost every loss so far this year. The offence, if it did not have to be one-dimensional so often, could become a top-ten threat. Better-than-record earns a "+."

Iowa City (C): The Cubs are in trouble every year leading up to the halfway point then always turn things around in the second half. However, there are signs that this year's Cubs will not turn things around as quickly or as completely as in the past. The signs are found in a defence that ranks in the bottom five and is unlikely to improve. This is due to a wider gap between the talent and scheme, which calls for talent to make up for lack of scheme. They need to be better with Vegas on the warpath.

Las Vegas (A): The Assassins appear to be in charge of the conference and are just one loss to one of the league's two super powers away from being perfect. This team is playing the part of bully even though they did not necessarily look the part coming into the season. This is impressive given questions around the ability of the receiving corps and the right side of the offensive line. Detractors point to their easy schedule, but that is irrelevant. They handled what came their way and then some.

New Jersey (B-): How much should one penalize a team for being unlucky? What you see in any version of a Jersey team is never what you get, but the reasons aren't always the same from year to year. Last year's prospects flamed out with some help from the coaching staff. This year's stronger roster is under-achieving, but well within the statistical margin of error for bad bounces. They are taking fewer risks on defence, otherwise their game plan has not changed much. They are learning...slowly.

Oshawa (D): With allowances for a new coaching staff and the emasculating impact of pink jerseys, the Pink Panthers remain the league's biggest disappointment. It is hard to believe this is the same core of players that dominated the league all but continuously over the previous 7 years. It is as if somebody wiped their brains free of any memory of past success. The new and degenerate version of the offence features more short passes and a broader route tree, adjustments that logically should make it more efficient and less predictable. But nothing seems to work as intended for the new coach. More after-school study required!

Peg City (D-): The best that can be said about the Crusaders is that they are ready to fight hard, with every ounce of their underage roster, to get a win. Spirit is not the problem on this team; having no player over the age of 30 years is. Watching a Crusaders' practice is like being on the set of *Logan's Run*. The Crusaders of 2020 are doing quite well playing for other teams this year, while this cast of neophytes, led by a charismatic lunatic, avoid an 'F' only because of exemplary class participation.

Pickering (C+): Another slow start for the Spartans and another D-grade narrowly avoided by a late surge before the half. It has been an erratic campaign so far for Philip Rivers, who may be getting his last shot at glory. Early-season mistakes tarnish not only his own legacy but also the reputation of the coach who, against his better judgement, decided to roll with the veteran in a revival year. Their potential for a strong finish is nevertheless evident in their recent play and for that they get a "+."

Scarborough (D+): The Blue Eagles' attempt to establish the Burrow brand and an offensive identity in the spirit of 'pass first, play-call later' could not be failing more spectacularly. No team has gained fewer yards nor gained them less efficiently than Scarborough. While Joe Burrow is to blame for the failure to execute the game plan, the coach is to blame for the ragged game plan, which appears to be based on a deluded modern "Air Coryell" fantasy without the ground support. Oh my!

Seattle (D+): Had the Pilots used the pre-season to decide on a starting quarterback instead of waiting to hold in-season auditions things might be progressing more smoothly. After 8 weeks and a single win, it appears they have settled on Gardner Minshew II as Starter-1, Trey Lance as Starter-2 and relegated Sam Darnold to Clipboard-1. It is almost too easy to draw a parallel with the Three Stooges. This slapstick outfit has been better recently, but "better" in this case is a relative term.

Sebastian (B+): Breaking it down, the Swordfish get an A+ for their offence and a D for their defence. The final grade reflects how their coach has managed to mitigate the short-comings of the defence through tactical situational adjustments and enhance the offence with off-balance play-calling and a willingness to gamble aggressively. Now, if his gambles always worked, he would be a genius. Since they don't always work and sometimes backfire, he remains merely bold and eccentric.

Twin Cities (B-): The Triumph are not weighed down by great expectations one year removed from qualifying for the first overall pick in the draft. They are, however, starting to irritate the football world and their own fans by failing to showcase that pick on the field. If it is because Mitch Trubisky is presently the superior option then God help the Triumph. They are not doing badly for a bad team with Trubisky under center, but each game he starts is one week of rookie development pushed back.

Virden (B+): This is not the same team as last year but it still has Patrick Mahomes at quarterback. That can go a long way to papering over holes in the roster and lessening the effects of injuries. The coach looks good when he can still post a winning record after overhauling a conference championship-winning roster by getting rid of many of its key components. The Violators are still in the hunt despite the purge and an unparalleled rash of injuries. The coach gets credit, the GM does not.

York (A): Unlike in past seasons when the Excaliburs played above expectations and the only explanation was a vague invocation of Tom Brady and Von Miller, this year's surprise team knows well that it rose to no.4 in the power rankings at the halfway mark because of Brady and Derrick Henry playing complementary football on offence and DeForest Buckner replacing the legendary Miller as leader of the defence. The coach is letting it happen and his team is winning the games it should win.

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RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 8: 51-41-4

Jimmy's WEEK NINE PICKS

IOWA CITY @ VIRDEN (line – VIOLATORS by 6)

INJURIES: Iowa City – None; Virden – Geno Atkins (OUT), Anthony Barr (OUT), John Brown (OUT), Austin Bryant (OUT), Parris Campbell (OUT), Ezekiel Elliott (OUT), Dee Ford (OUT), Malik Hooker (OUT), Lane Johnson (OUT), Kelechi Osemele (OUT), Solomon Thomas (OUT), Oshane Ximines (OUT).

The Cubs fought off the one-win Pilots last week but it took some traditional Russell Wilson two-minute magic to finish the job. Meanwhile, the Violators rolled over Bruxelles with ease. Patrick Mahomes played like he was trying to win some kind of bet, looking to cash in on the dysfunctional Bombers' defence with many deep throws. With Ezekiel Elliott out this week along with most of the defence, the Violators may feel the need to play "bombs away" again against an Iowa defence that offers no disincentives to do so. The Cub's pass rush is as anemic as they come and the secondary has not stepped up. The Cubs should keep pace, however, as piling up yards and points is the least of their concerns. The main concern is that the team is not all it is hyped up to be, a perception reflected in the line. People forget, though, the Cubs started this way last year and pulled up their socks around this time. **PICK: IOWA CITY**

CHARLESWOOD @ SEATTLE (line – PATRIOTS by 4)

INJURIES: Charleswood – Brandon Linder (OUT), Ronnie Stanley (OUT), Desmond Trufant (OUT); Seattle – None.

This line at first does not look right given that the teams' records are mirror images of each other at extreme ends of the won-loss spectrum. However, the Pats' average margin of victory is less than a field goal and the Pilots have played many tough teams down to the wire this year despite coming out on the short end of those contests. Add in that the Pilots are at home, plus the defence has likely closely studied the five plays in the Charleswood playbook, and one can talk oneself into thinking this could be a close game. The missing link in the analysis is who will play QB for Seattle. It looked like the rookie, Trey Lance had the job wrapped up, but the coach switched to Gardner Minshew II last week and almost pulled off an upset. Could Sam Darnold see action next? The only thing we know for sure is that DeShaun Watson will be at QB for the Pats and that's good enough for me. **PICK: CHARLESWOOD**

CHINO @ PEG CITY (line – CONVICTS by 6)

INJURIES: Chino – AJ Bouye (OUT), Christian McCaffrey (OUT), Dak Prescott (OUT), Mike Purcell (OUT); Peg City – Josh Allen (OUT), Saquon Barkley (OUT), Jonathan Bullard (OUT), Devin Bush (OUT), Tarik Cohen (OUT), Davon Godchaux (OUT), Chandler Jones (OUT), Jalen Thompson (OUT).

The Convicts are coming off a drubbing at the hands of the Assassins and are pretty sore about it. They are looking to get back on track and can be expected to be nasty about it. Here is their chance to feel good again. Last week the hapless Crusaders did not look so hapless against a strong Coyote team until their rookie QB melted down in the second half. That fight the Crusaders bring each week makes teams more than a little nervous to face them, even though the Pegs have yet to prove their desire can overcome their inexperience and lack of talent. With no player over the age of 30 on their roster, the Crusaders are like a rookie team. No pro team wants to lost to a gang of kids. Expect this one to follow the usual pattern: early Crusader push, followed by collapse. **PICK: CHINO**

TWIN CITIES @ LAS VEGAS (line – ASSASSINS by 12)

INJURIES: Twin Cities – Antonio Brown (OUT), Trent Brown (OUT), Kenny Golladay (OUT); Las Vegas – Darius Leonard (OUT), Greg Van Roten (OUT).

I can say without spitting out my coffee that the Triumph looked impressive in victory last week. Not with talent and athleticism, of course, because there is precious little of that on their roster. Rather, they impressed me with their discipline in executing a brilliant

game plan against a top-tier star and pulling off a convincing upset. That makes me think they have something in store here for the no.1 seed in the conference above possibly unleashing the no.1 pick in the draft. Whether or not the secret Triumph plan can survive a punch in the face from the stout and pugnacious “we-don’t-need-no-stinking-plan” Assassin defence remains to be seen. If Vegas ignores the head games and simply executes its will to power there is little the Triumph can do to stop them in either phase unless they can make the Assassins one-dimensional. Expect them to try and the poison they pick will make the difference. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

NEW JERSEY @ COBB COUNTY (line – COYOTES by 8)

INJURIES: New Jersey – Osa Odighizuwa (OUT); Cobb County – None.

The Coyotes let the Crusaders hang around longer than is socially acceptable for a team that hangs out with the playoff dudes. Chalk it up to a let down as they looked ahead to this crucial division match. The Wrecking Balls enter one game behind the Coyotes after their offence failed to show up against the Pats. New Jersey is happy to leave their home field, where they have lost four games, and go on the road, where they are undefeated. Cobb County has been snookered at home once this year, but with sellout crowds at Coyote Field loud and proud these days expect noise to play a role. Conversely, Matt Stafford may prefer to listen to opposing fans over discontented New Jerseyites, even if he can’t hear his own snap count. The interception bug has slowed down Ryan Tannehill a bit, but the Coyotes are still the all-around better team. Still, with the division up for grabs, expect the Wrecking Balls to keep it close. **PICK: NEW JERSEY**

BUFFALO @ BRUXELLES (line – DERAILERS by 3)

INJURIES: Buffalo – Jayon Brown (OUT), Jaquiski Tarta (OUT); Bruxelles – Trey Flowers (OUT), Jordan Phillips (OUT), A’Shawn Robinson (OUT), Isaiah Wynn (OUT).

Derailers fans are panicked that the Triumph cracked the Lamar Code last week, thus depriving them of their MVP until he learns to read defences and pass from the pocket. Not to worry, Buffalo, here comes the absolute worst defence in the league to make things better for you; not to mention that Bobby Wagner is far away in Vegas this week. The closest thing the Bombers have to Wagner is safety Harrison Smith, but they need him in the back end spying out errant Jackson throws, not trying to contain the run. The Derailers continue to feature Lamar as a passer – or Lamar is opting to pass more in the RPO – and have not gotten their backfield consistently involved. Yet, in all their wins, a running back had the most carries; while it was Lamar who carried the ball most in all of their losses. Hmmm...pattern alert! Another pattern: the Bombers have a pattern of 4th-quarter collapse that warns of more failure to come. **PICK: BUFFALO**

SEBASTIAN @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 13)

INJURIES: Sebastian – Jordan Jenkins (OUT); Durham – Rashaad Penny (OUT).

This is the most interesting game of the week on paper. The league’s most efficient and dangerous defence vs the league’s top offence in efficiency, gross yardage and points. The other match-up; good-but-underperforming Durham offence vs abysmal Swordfish defence is not nearly as intriguing, but how hard Josh Allen will have to crank up the Lizard war machine will depend on how well his counterpart, Kirk Cousins can keep the pressure on. The red flag for Sebastian is turnovers; both the real kind (picks, fumbles) and the virtual kind (perilous 4th down gambles and surprise onside kicks that fail). Durham leads the league in takeaways, generating an average of two per game. The Fish may opt to go their usual route with a high-risk, high-reward game plan, or they could opt to hammer out the ground game and play keep-away. This has blowout or classic written all over it. Mark me down for classic. **PICK: SEBASTIAN**

COWTOWN @ SCARBOROUGH (line – CORN KINGS by 2)

INJURIES: Cowtown – Eric Saubert (OUT); Scarborough – Zack Martin (QUESTIONABLE), Nick Bosa (OUT), Landon Collins (OUT), DeSean Jackson (OUT), Shaq Lawson (OUT), CJ Uzomah (OUT).

Jimmy Garoppolo is back for Cowtown and not a moment too soon as Ryan Fitzpatrick struggled in his last two starts, generating a total of 20 points. The Blue Eagles, currently lurching through a six-game winless streak, hope to get Zack Martin back here to stabilize an offensive line that has exposed Joe Burrow to too many hits and pressures. This lack of protection is having a deleterious effect on the overall performance of the offence, which has shown sporadic flashes of brilliance in the midst of long dry spells that overall have it ranked at the bottom of the league in yards-per-game. The Corn Kings have been more consistent and effective, but their offence is not going to scare a respectable Scarborough defence into catatonia. Cowtown will rely again on its defence to win the field position battle and maybe steal a possession with a takeaway. Do not discount the Eagles here, but don’t count on them either. **PICK: COWTOWN**

BUDAPEST @ ERIEAU (line – NORTH STARS by 10)

INJURIES: Budapest – None; Erieau – Brian Poole (QUESTIONABLE).

Just when the Cadillac start to get on a slow roll, with two straight wins, they slam into the brick wall of Budapest. It is tough to envision a winning scenario for the Caddies that does not involve a mass casualty event for the North Stars, but since it is one of my jobs to think through the plausible possibilities, here is a glimpse of what a winning formula for Erieau looks like: Najee Harris carries the ball at least

20 times, Kyler Murray flushes himself from the pocket on every drop-back and either scrambles or checks down to the receiver farthest away from Minkah Fitzpatrick, Myles Garrett has a career day and Aaron Rodgers tests positive for COVID-19 with Tyrod Taylor deemed a close contact. Yep, that should do it. Barring that, it could get very ugly, very fast for Erieau. **PICK: BUDAPEST**

BROOKLIN @ OSHAWA (line – HAWKS by 2)

INJURIES: **Brooklin** – Austin Ekeler (DOUBTFUL), Taylor Lewan (QUESTIONABLE), Carlos Hyde (OUT), Xavier McKinney (OUT); **Oshawa** – Julian Edelman (OUT), Dallas Goedert (OUT), Eric Kendricks (OUT), K’Waun Williams (OUT).

It has come to this: a struggling Brooklin team is favoured on the road against the team that once routinely caused panic attacks in opposing defensive coordinators but now simply provokes a wry chuckle and shake of the head. Oshawa’s loss to the Irish last week was the first ring of the death knell for its division hopes and may have permanently crippled their playoff aspirations. They must run the table to regain their standing and that is practically impossible with both Durham and Budapest remaining on their schedule. So, what is there to play for? Well, sheer unadulterated revenge for all the indignities suffered to this point and a warning that next year things will be different. *Oooh, I’m scared*, reply the Hawks. Tom Jones’ band of merry maniacs is well capable of laughing off the beat down their offence experienced against Durham last week and calling it a new day. They never see themselves as out of it. **PICK: BROOKLIN**

GEORGIA @ YORK (line – EXCALIBURS by 10)

INJURIES: **Georgia** – Melvin Ingram III (OUT); **York** – CJ Henderson (OUT), Mike Williams (OUT).

I am officially taking York super-seriously now that they are being discussed in the same breath as Durham and Charleswood. I suppose I could point out that they lost badly to Durham and Budapest and have yet to beat an upper echelon team, but that would be petty of me. Who wants to detract from the narrative of King Henry and Emperor Brady preparing to strike down the mighty with a magic sword at playoff time? This week they host my favourite little dark horse, the Gladiators. “Little” because Georgia is not going to challenge for a playoff berth, but they are definitely going to ruin some team’s hopes for one down the road. Their highly underrated offence is capable of pushing the Swords into the uncomfortable position of having to come from behind, without Mike Williams. **PICK: GEORGIA**

EAST ELMHURST @ PICKERING (line – IRISH by 1)

INJURIES: **East Elmhurst** – None; **Pickering** – Darqueze Dennard (OUT), Richie Incognito (OUT), Miles Sanders (OUT).

This is a virtual “pick’em” game that pits the best of the South against the third-place team in the Coastal. The Irish are certainly the top dog in their division, but their division is the worst in football right now, while the Spartans are regularly steeled against tougher competition. The Spartans are anything but stable, however, having posted some impressive wins along with some perplexing losses. Which version of Philip Rivers will show up, is the eternal and unanswerable question heading into every game. With Miles Sanders out, one might guess the answer. Barring a COVID disaster, the Irish are well-equipped to live up to their billing as road favourites. However, it will be interesting to see how the offence fares with Tyreek Hill locked down by Xavien Howard. **PICK: EAST ELMHURST**



CHANNEL ANCIENT HISTORY CHANNEL PRESENTS *This Week in EFL History* With Professor Sterling Smitherman

FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – In Week 8 of the 2015 EFL season, the game of the week took place in Minneapolis, where the Triumph and Corn Kings got into a back-and-forth mini shootout between **Joe Flacco** and **Jay Cutler**. With neither team able to get the upper hand for long through 59 minutes, the visitors caught the final break when **Antonio Brown** muffed a punt and Cowtown recovered at the Triumph 38. A short pass to **Larry Fitzgerald** got Cowtown into FG range for **Nick Novak**, who sent the home crowd home sulking with the 42-yard game-winner as time expired. While Brown wore the goat horns in the eyes of the

media, the Triumph QB wore a little Billy-goat beard for his unforced interception that flipped the field and set up Cowtown’s tying TD. These were the ‘Cutler Days,’ when a very good Triumph team was always one pick away from disaster.

At Joe Ferguson Stadium, the EFL unveiled its “fresh” line of sports wear: *Colour Rush* jerseys made out of the futuristic fabric *Sensex*. The Cubs, wearing bright red matching jerseys and pants, subdued the North Stars, who were decked out in a full muddy brown outfit that made all the players look like they had been rolling around in the dirt, by the score of 23-16. This garish display of visual crack did not appeal to everyone, but the league announced that it was a success and soon laid down plans for more “colour rush” games.

At the Big House in Chino, Durham QB, **Drew Brees** out-gunned Convict, and future Durham QB, **Cam Newton**, throwing for 287 yards and 4 TD passes in a 49-32 hammering. This was good enough to earn Offensive Player of the Week.

The league’s defensive standout player in Week 8 was Aurora’s **Trent Cole**, who helped the Mustangs bounce back from their first loss under **Rich Liotta** the week before with a 3-sack performance in a 31-17 win over Beaufort County.