

# 2015



# EFL NEWS

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

# 2015

Week Sixteen

Week Sixteen

February 1, 2016



TCT	45	MOH	25	MVM	32	CHI	0	PIC	31	YOR	27	CHP	27	COW	27	SEB	0	SC	7
CAR	30	LAK	23	BCR	33	ICC	42	DTL	27	MAR	20	VV	3	SBE	23	AUR	45	GWG	31

# PICK FLOWERS!



*Brandon Flowers*

## LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

- CORN KINGS SURVIVE WINDY BLUFFS
- SPARTANS COMEBACK
- CUBS CLINCH NO.3
- NOT A PETTY WIN
- AND MORE.....

- Also in this issue
- SPATS FEATURE, 'EFL ASIA - WE HAVE A WINNER,' 'PLUG'N PLAY,' 'CURSE OF THE EFL' & 'AROUND THE EFL.'
  - JIMMY THE GEEK BREAKS DOWN THE PLAYOFFS
  - THIS WEEK IN EFL HISTORY - WEEK SIXTEEN OF 2009

Corn King cornerback *Brandon Flowers* comes up with an interception of *Aaron Rodgers* in the Cowtown red zone to stave off a Blue Eagles scoring opportunity. Flowers would later tip a pass that would be picked off by teammate, *Ronald Darby* as the Corn Kings capitalized on Scarborough mistakes to survive a few of their own in a 27-23 win. *(Story Inside....)*



*Who was slick in Week Sixteen?*

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



Bryce Petty  
QB  
Beaufort County Ravens

21 of 32, 325 yards, 3 TDs. Led late TD drive and 2-pt convert to win it.



Von Miller  
OLB  
York Exciluburs

7 Tackles, 3 Sacks, 1 FF. Turned it on in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to preserve lead.



9-7-0

**Cowtown**



**GAME OF THE WEEK**



8-8-0

**Scarborough**

**MVP**

**24**

**Joe Flacco**

**23**

TEAM LEADERS				
Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Flacco	20	28	227	3
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Morris	11	48	4.4	0
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Smith Sr	4	61	15.3	1

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
<b>Cowtown</b>	0	17	3	7	-	27
<b>Scarborough</b>	0	3	17	3	-	23

TEAM LEADERS				
Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Rodgers	27	53	209	1
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Yeldon	23	132	5.7	1
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Jackson	5	66	13.2	0

**Play of the Game**  
Trailing 23-20 in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, the Corn Kings faced 1<sup>st</sup> & goal at the Scarborough 11. With the Eagles blitzing, **Joe Flacco** stepped up and delivered a strike to **Mike Evans** for the game-winning TD.

**SUMMARY:** In a winner-take-all match for the final wildcard berth, the red zone accuracy of **Joe Flacco** led the Corn Kings into the playoffs. After a scoreless 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Cowtown caught a break when an unnecessary roughness penalty on Scarborough prolonged an 80-yard drive that ended with a 3-yard TD pass to **Cecil Shorts III**. The Eagles got the next break when **Niles Paul** fumbled a post-FG kickoff return, giving them possession at the Cowtown 22. But a 3<sup>rd</sup> down pick of **Aaron Rodgers** by **Brandon Flowers** turned it around and Cowtown capitalized with a 15-yard TD pass to **Steve Smith**. **Ronald Darby** picked off Rodgers on the next drive to set up a FG before half time and the Kings looked to be in control. Disaster hit the visitors in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half starting with a fumble by **Jacoby Jones** on the opening kickoff that led to a Scarborough TD. Then **Marcus Gilchrist** picked off Flacco to set up an 11-yard TD run by **TJ Yeldon** and **Todd Gurley** fumbled at the Cowtown 15 to set up Scarborough's go-ahead FG. After an exchange of FGs, Cowtown put together a 14-play, 82-yard drive capped by a strike from Flacco to **Mike Evans** for an 11-yard TD and the lead. The Eagles had two shots to come back, but a **Ryan Kerrigan** sack and a **Marcus Burley** interception with 0:22 left stopped both.

**QUOTES:** "I am proud of the grit we showed after that rough start to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. I'm not proud of the rough start, but I am proud of how we pulled it together after coming unglued. We're going to need the same toughness next week," – Cowtown Coach, **Jim Coghlin**.  
"It was not to be this year. Was it because of the curse? I'm not going to use that as an excuse. Teams sometimes get cursed. We have to fight through curses if we're going to win championships." – Scarborough owner, **Chris Dickinson**, when asked whether there was a curse on his team.



**HAPPY FAN**



**titter**

**ANGRY FAN**



**Orville Smucker @Smuckerscoop**  
An up and down regular season finishes on the upside for our Corn Kings.



**Mike Myers @MikeMyers**  
I was looking for that cowed dude all game.

01-29-2016 Bluffs Stadium Temp: 34 Wind: 20-30 None MVP: **Joe Flacco**

**Scoring Summary**

2 13:30 Cowtown	TD Flacco 3 pass to Shorts III (Novak) (12-80-6:13)	7-0
2 7:16 Scarborough	FG Nugent 22 (14-76-6:09)	7-3
2 1:51 Cowtown	TD Flacco 15 pass to Smith Sr. (Novak) (9-82-4:21)	14-3
2 0:15 Cowtown	FG Novak 29 (6-13-0:46)	17-3
3 9:38 Scarborough	TD Rodgers 5 pass to Gresham (Nugent) (9-47-5:17)	17-10
3 9:04 Scarborough	TD Yeldon 11 run (Nugent) (2-11-0:17)	17-17
3 7:15 Scarborough	FG Nugent 30 (4-3-1:31)	17-20
3 2:43 Cowtown	FG Novak 26 (11-45-4:24)	20-20
4 12:43 Scarborough	FG Nugent 35 (11-63-4:55)	20-23
4 6:52 Cowtown	TD Flacco 11 pass to Evans (Novak) (14-82-5:45)	27-23

	<b>COW</b>	<b>SBE</b>
First Downs	22	25
Rushes	27-88	28-141
Passes	29-20-227	53-27-209
Sacked	1-4	1-10
Fumble	4	1
Penalties	6-55	10-80
Turnovers	4	3
Missed Tackles	4	8
Blitzes	23	40
Time	26:27	33:33
Third Down	3-10	9-18
Fourth Down	0-0	2-3
Red Att/Td/Fg	5/3/2	5/2/3
Net Offense	311	340





# QUICK COUNTS!!

Blue 35, Blue 35, hut, hut hut! Red 23, 3, Red 23, 3, hut, hut, hut! Green 49, hut!



<b>TRIUMPH</b>	7	7	7	24	0	<b>45</b>
11-5-0	OT					

**Antonio Brown**  
11 Catches, 163 yards, 3 TDs



<b>CANNIBALS</b>	6	14	7	3	0	<b>30</b>
14-1-0	OT					

**Emmanuel Sanders**  
5 Catches, 179 yards, 1 TD

A long slant from **Sean Mannion** to **Emmanuel Sanders** for a 36-yard TD pass gave Carthage a 20-14 lead in a back-and-forth 1<sup>st</sup> half that saw **Jay Cutler** picked off 3 times. The Triumph regained the lead in the 3<sup>rd</sup> on a 19-yard TD pass to **Antonio Brown** but **LeGarrette Blount** put the Cannibals back in front with an 11-yard TD run. A 47-yard FG to start the 4<sup>th</sup> opened up a 24-point explosion by the Triumph that included a 46-yard TD pass to **Vincent Jackson** and a 66-yard punt return TD by Brown, giving him 4 TDs. Carthage ended their season with a FG as time expired to reach 30 points.



<b>HELLFIRE</b>	0	10	3	12	0	<b>25</b>
4-12-0	OT					

**Andrew Luck**  
25 of 38, 333 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT



<b>KNIGHTS</b>	7	3	0	13	0	<b>23</b>
5-11-0	OT					

**Mike Glennon**  
20 of 31, 278 yards, 3 TDs, 1 INT

**Charles Woodson** recovered a **Julio Jones** fumble and **Mike Glennon** capitalized with a 31-yard TD pass to **Jordan Matthews** to give LA the lead. A 15-yard pick six by **Justin Houston** evened it up and an exchange of FGs kept the score tied at half time. The Hellfire added two FGs before Glennon put LA on top with a 44-yard TD pass to **Brandin Cooks**. A **Cameron Wake** safety put the Hellfire in front 18-17 then **Andrew Luck** made it an 8-point lead with a 27-yard TD pass to **Allen Robinson**. A 61-yard TD pass to Cooks with 1:06 left put LA in position, but they did not convert the 2-pointer.



<b>MONARCHS</b>	7	7	10	8	0	<b>32</b>
5-11-0	OT					

**Ryan Tannehill**  
23 of 33, 324 yards, 3 TDs



<b>RAVENS</b>	3	12	0	18	0	<b>33</b>
12-3-1	OT					

**Bryce Petty**  
21 of 32, 325 yards, 3 TDs

The Ravens eclipsed an early Monarchs lead with an 11-yard TD pass from 3<sup>rd</sup>-string QB, **Bryce Petty** to WR, **Marquess Wilson** to take a 15-14 lead into half time. The Monarchs started the 2<sup>nd</sup> half with two scores: a 39-yard **Dan Carpenter** FG and a 36-yard TD pass from **Ryan Tannehill** to **Marques Colston** to grab a 24-15 advantage. Petty sparked a wild 4<sup>th</sup> with an 11-yard TD pass to **Jace Amaro** followed by a FG. A 62-yard TD pass to Colston gave Mission the edge, 32-25, but a 26-yard TD pass and dramatic 2-point convert to **Randall Cobb** with 0:24 left gave the Ravens their 12<sup>th</sup> win.

Blue 35, Blue 35, hut, hut hut! Red 23, 3, Red 23, 3, hut, hut, hut! Green 49, hut!



**EXCALIBURS**  
8-8-0

0	10	7	10	0	27
OT					

**De'Anthony Thomas**  
4 PRs, 1 FC, 135 yards, 1 TD



**NORTH STARS**  
3-13-0

7	3	10	0	0	20
OT					

**Alex Smith**  
10 of 13, 64 yards, 59 yds rush

**Alex Smith** rushed for 30 yards and **James Starks** ran for a 25-yard TD on Markham's first series for the only score of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. The teams traded FGs then the Stars held the Swords on 4<sup>th</sup> down to maintain the TD lead. With 1:11 left in the half, York's **De'Anthony Thomas** returned a punt 95 yards for a TD, his 5<sup>th</sup> punt return TD of the year, to tie it. A 53-yard **Josh Brown** FG and 16-yard TD pass from **Eli Manning** to **Brandon Marshall** made it 20-10 Markham, but **Tom Brady** hit back with a 57-yard TD pass to **Kelvin Benjamin** and a 1-yard TD run by **Marhsawn Lynch** to pull out the win.



**REGULATORS**  
7-9-0

0	7	0	0	0	7
OT					

**Ryan Lindley**  
27 of 50, 286 yards, 1 INT



**GLADIATORS**  
10-6-0

7	17	7	0	0	31
OT					

**Ben Roethlisberger**  
20 of 32, 257 yards, 3 TDs

**Big Ben** broke a scoreless deadlock with a 10-yard TD pass to **Jarvis Landry** to close out the 1<sup>st</sup>. The Regs drove back, but **Juwan Thompson** fumbled at the 19 and the Glads capitalized on a 45-yard pass interference penalty to take a 14-0 lead on a 2-yard TD run by **LeSean McCoy**. Making his first EFL start, **Ryan Lindley** followed with an interception that **Thomas DeCoud** returned 32 yards to set up a 15-yard TD to **Jeremy Maclin**. The Regs got on the board with a 1-yard TD run by **Frank Gore** late in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, but a 43-yard TD pass to Maclin set the tone in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half as the Glads' cruised.



**SWORDFISH**  
1-15-0

0	0	0	0	0	0
OT					

**CJ Anderson**  
21 Carries, 103 yards



**MUSTANGS**  
15-1-0

21	14	7	3	0	45
OT					

**Matt Ryan**  
19 of 27, 349 yards, 5 TDs

This game got out of hand early for Sebastian as the Mustangs opened with 3 straight long pass attempts, completing 2, for 31 yards to **Anquan Boldin** and 33 yards to **Riley Cooper** for a TD. Sebastian answered with a drive to the Aurora 20, but **Eric Weddle** picked off **Andy Dalton** to snuff out the scoring chance. After a 2<sup>nd</sup> Dalton pick, **Matt Ryan** found **Anquan Boldin** deep for a 43-yard TD pass then **Patrick Peterson** returned Dalton's 3<sup>rd</sup> INT of the game 39 yards for a TD to make it 21-0 in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Things did not get better for the Fish as Aurora added 3 TDs and a FG to win easily.

Blue 35, Blue 35, hut, hut hut! Red 23, 3, Red 23, 3, hut, hut, hut! Green 49, hut!



**PATRIOTS**  
15-1-0

7	10	3	7	0	<b>27</b>
OT					

**Duke Johnson**  
33 Carries, 180 yards, 1 TD



**VIOLATORS**  
0-16-0

0	0	0	3	0	<b>3</b>
OT					

**Derek Carr**  
6 of 11, 64 yards

Three penalties sent Virden backwards on their first series and 3 defensive penalties helped the Pats forward to score a TD on their opening drive to make it 7-0, Pats early. They would need no more points as the Virden offence barely moved the ball all afternoon, ending up with just six 1<sup>st</sup> downs and 125 total yards of offence. **Peyton Manning** threw 2 TD passes, one to **Andre Johnson** and the other to **Dez Bryant**, and **Duke Johnson** broke a 24-yard TD run off tackle for the final major. Virden capped their only big drive, of 64 yards, with a 34-yard **Mason Crosby** FG to break the shutout.



**SPARTANS**  
8-8-0

0	7	7	17	0	<b>31</b>
OT					

**Philip Rivers**  
20 of 37, 217 yards, 3 TDs



**T-LIZARDS**  
13-3-0

7	10	3	7	0	<b>27</b>
OT					

**Drew Brees**  
27 of 37, 279 yards, 3 TDs, 1 INT

**Drew Brees** hit **Calvin Johnson** for a 26-yard TD pass in the 1<sup>st</sup> and a 4-yard TD pass to **TY Hilton** in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to help build a 17-7 half time lead for the Lizards. A **Phil Dawson** FG made it 20-7 before **Philip Rivers** got Pickering back within striking distance with a 32-yard TD pass to **Golden Tate**. A second TD pass to **Megatron** gave Durham a 27-17 lead, which they held until the 1:47 mark of the 4<sup>th</sup>, when Rivers capped a long drive with a 17-yard TD pass to Tate. The Spartans recovered the onside kick and drove 55 yards in 8 plays to win it as time expired on a 5-yard TD pass to **Matt Forte**.



**CONVICTS**  
8-8-0

0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
OT					

**Cam Newton**  
19 of 29, 135 yards, 2 TDs



**CUBS**  
11-4-1

7	7	7	21	0	<b>42</b>
OT					

**Russell Wilson**  
24 of 37, 262 yards, 3 TDs

The Cubs' **Jeremy Hill** broke a 23-yard run to help set up a 6-yard TD pass from **Russell Wilson** to **Brandon LaFell** to open up a one-sided season finale. On their next drive, the Cubs charged up the field on a 33-yard pass to **Rueben Randle** and scored on a 17-yard TD run by **Darren Sproles** to make it 14-0. The Convicts reached the Cubs' 10 with 1 second left in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, but **Cam Newton** was intercepted in the end zone to end the threat. After a tough early 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Cubs put it away with TD passes to **Brian Quick** and **Sproles** and added a pair of late TDs in the dying minutes.

## FINAL

# STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Charleswood (z)	15	1	0	0.938	467	29.2	257	16.1	13.1	7 1 0	8 0 0	11 1 0
Twin Cities (y)	11	5	0	0.688	476	29.8	348	21.8	8	5 3 0	6 2 0	9 3 0
Carthage	6	10	0	0.375	470	29.4	470	29.4	0	3 5 0	4 4 0	4 8 0
Mohave	4	12	0	0.250	325	20.3	476	29.8	-9.4	2 6 0	2 6 0	3 9 0
Virден	0	16	0	0.000	198	12.4	487	30.4	-18.1	0 8 0	0 8 0	0 12 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Beaufort County (z)	12	3	1	0.781	462	28.9	375	23.4	5.4	7 1 0	7 0 1	10 1 1
Iowa City (y)	11	4	1	0.719	519	32.4	299	18.7	13.8	7 0 1	5 2 1	9 2 1
Chino	8	8	0	0.500	334	20.9	372	23.3	-2.4	3 5 0	4 4 0	6 6 0
Los Angeles	5	11	0	0.313	307	19.2	456	28.5	-9.3	1 7 0	2 6 0	3 9 0
Mission Viejo	5	11	0	0.313	353	22.1	430	26.9	-4.8	2 6 0	1 7 0	4 8 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham (z)	13	3	0	0.813	455	28.4	266	16.6	11.8	7 1 0	7 1 0	9 3 0
Cowtown (y)	9	7	0	0.563	361	22.6	391	24.4	-1.9	5 3 0	4 4 0	7 5 0
Pickering	8	8	0	0.500	411	25.7	398	24.9	0.8	3 5 0	3 5 0	5 7 0
York	8	8	0	0.500	369	23.1	403	25.2	-2.1	5 3 0	4 4 0	6 6 0
Markham	3	13	0	0.188	281	17.6	342	21.4	-3.8	3 5 0	2 6 0	3 9 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Aurora (z)	15	1	0	0.938	541	33.8	286	17.9	15.9	7 1 0	8 0 0	12 0 0
Gwinnett (y)	10	6	0	0.625	441	27.6	383	23.9	3.6	6 2 0	5 3 0	7 5 0
Scarborough	8	8	0	0.500	365	22.8	436	27.3	-4.4	4 4 0	4 4 0	5 7 0
South Carolina	7	9	0	0.438	388	24.3	437	27.3	-3.1	4 4 0	3 5 0	5 7 0
Sebastian	1	15	0	0.063	335	20.9	546	34.1	-13.2	1 7 0	0 8 0	1 11 0

(z)-clinched division

(y)-clinched wildcard

# PASSING

Rk	Player	Team	Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Griffin II	BCR	233	174	74.7	1990	5	2.1	84	18	7.7	116.7
2	Brees	DTL	544	381	70	4336	7	1.3	65	38	7	111.6
3	Manning,P	CHP	469	329	70.1	3823	9	1.9	88	32	6.8	109.3
4	Wilson,R	ICC	418	269	64.4	3361	4	1	56	29	6.9	108.4
5	Romo	SC	491	332	67.6	3693	8	1.6	56	35	7.1	106.7
6	Mariota	CAR	466	280	60.1	4016	11	2.4	86	37	7.9	104.7
7	Cutler	TCT	478	325	68	3891	13	2.7	80	32	6.7	103.6
8	Hill,S	BCR	260	183	70.4	1948	5	1.9	56	15	5.8	103.2
9	Roethlisberger	GWG	537	344	64.1	4178	9	1.7	72	35	6.5	102.6
10	Rivers,P	PIC	405	242	59.8	3344	8	2	74	29	7.2	101.9
11	Ryan,M	AUR	621	398	64.1	4812	11	1.8	80	37	6	100.3
12	Newton,C	CHI	391	249	63.7	3293	13	3.3	87	23	5.9	96
13	Flacco	COW	531	326	61.4	3555	14	2.6	66	35	6.6	92.1
14	Manning,E	MAR	321	204	63.6	2203	5	1.6	65	13	4	90.6
15	Brady,T	YOR	503	318	63.2	3369	6	1.2	87	19	3.8	90.3
16	Tannehill	MVM	530	343	64.7	3450	9	1.7	62	22	4.2	89.9
17	Bridgewater	LAK	397	246	62	2586	10	2.5	62	22	5.5	88.8
18	Rodgers,A	SBE	624	369	59.1	4235	13	2.1	63	27	4.3	85.4
19	Dalton	SS	574	347	60.5	3874	19	3.3	81	27	4.7	82.5
20	Luck	MOH	639	366	57.3	4538	16	2.5	99	25	3.9	82

## RUSHING

Rk	Player	Team	Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	McCoy,L	GWG	352	1849	5.3	40	13
2	Murray,D	CHI	390	1656	4.2	40	11
3	Forte	PIC	290	1519	5.2	36	12
4	Foster,A	AUR	262	1506	5.7	45	15
5	Lacy	CAR	301	1499	5	31	10
6	Lynch,M	YOR	318	1388	4.4	33	16
7	Bell,L	LAK	356	1342	3.8	26	6
8	Gordon,M	TCT	223	1339	6	44	13
9	Gore	SC	242	1245	5.1	50	5
10	Miller,L	CHP	216	1161	5.4	23	8
11	Anderson,C	SS	238	1136	4.8	24	6
12	Hill,J	ICC	173	1113	6.4	30	8
13	Morris,A	COW	221	1063	4.8	47	3
14	Johnson,D	CHP	192	1034	5.4	29	9
15	Stewart	BCR	196	992	5.1	73	7
16	Yeldon	SBE	190	958	5	50	3
17	Ingram,M	VV	223	945	4.2	36	5
18	Charles,J	VV	216	930	4.3	54	2
19	Coleman,T	MOH	215	914	4.3	80	5
20	Bell,J	MVM	192	898	4.7	60	7

## RECEIVING

Rk	Player	Team	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Brown,A	TCT	120	1605	13.4	80	19
2	Jones,J	MOH	109	1787	16.4	99	11
3	Cobb	BCR	101	1369	13.6	67	12
4	Johnson,A	CHP	91	926	10.2	23	4
5	Maclin	GWG	91	1623	17.8	61	18
6	Landry,J	GWG	87	915	10.5	31	8
7	Graham,J	MOH	87	911	10.5	36	4
8	Bryant,D	CHP	86	1369	15.9	88	18
9	Hopkins,D	BCR	86	1083	12.6	84	11
10	Boldin	AUR	82	1373	16.7	43	12
11	Kelce,T	CAR	81	858	10.6	41	8
12	Johnson,C	DTL	79	1228	15.5	65	17
13	Beckham Jr	SS	78	1083	13.9	66	14
14	Decker	DTL	77	843	10.9	43	8
15	Nelson,J	SBE	76	1075	14.1	47	9
16	Green,A	SC	73	1078	14.8	54	10
17	Jackson,D	SBE	73	1124	15.4	49	6
18	Stills	SS	73	832	11.4	44	6
19	Allen,K	SC	72	850	11.8	42	6
20	Jones,J	YOR	72	774	10.8	50	3

## KICKING

Rk	Player	Team	FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts
1	Parkey	BCR	37	35	94.6	13	3	54	150
2	Folk	AUR	33	26	78.8	6	1	50	143
3	Zuerlein	ICC	33	27	81.8	10	0	49	139
4	Gostkowski	TCT	26	23	88.5	10	0	48	126
5	Succop	CHP	25	23	92	6	1	51	125
6	Dawson	DTL	27	24	88.9	5	0	49	125
7	Brown,J	MAR	35	31	88.6	11	4	56	119
8	Suisham	GWG	25	23	92	11	1	51	119
9	Hauschka	CAR	24	19	79.2	7	2	51	112
10	Novak	COW	27	23	85.2	8	3	53	109
11	Nugent	SBE	23	22	95.7	4	0	43	107
12	Scobee	PIC	23	18	78.3	6	2	53	103
13	Janikowski	MOH	25	22	88	7	3	57	101
14	Bailey,D	CHI	26	22	84.6	15	5	53	100
15	Walsh	YOR	25	18	72	6	1	54	97
16	Murray,P	LAK	23	21	91.3	13	5	53	97
17	Vinatieri	SS	22	20	90.9	10	2	53	95
18	Tucker,J	SC	17	15	88.2	8	2	53	94
19	Carpenter	MVM	15	13	86.7	7	2	55	79
20	Crosby	VV	19	17	89.5	9	1	52	70





BEIJING RED DRAGONS



SEOUL CALM



PYONGYANG SUN



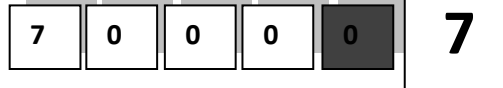
TAIPEI SHARKS

### STANDINGS - WEEK 5

ASIA	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home
Taipei	4	2	0	0.667	130	21.7	90	15	6.7	3 0 0
Pyongyang	4	2	0	0.667	121	20.2	110	18.3	1.8	2 1 0
Beijing	2	4	0	0.333	98	16.3	140	23.3	-7	1 2 0
Seoul	2	4	0	0.333	118	19.7	127	21.2	-1.5	1 2 0



**CALM**  
2-4-0



**Percy Russell**  
23 Carries, 201 yards, 1 TD



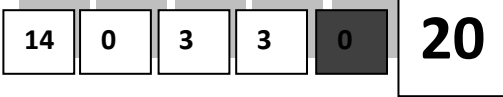
**SHARKS**  
4-2-0

**Wiley Hutcherson**  
23 Carries, 151 yards, 1 TD

**Percy Russell** broke a scoreless tie with a 66-yard TD run in the 1<sup>st</sup> to put Seoul in front 7-0. The teams fought a field position battle until late in the 2<sup>nd</sup> when Sharks QB, **Mitch Souza** found **Erik Jeter** for a 6-yard TD pass to tie it at half time. The Sharks stoned Russell for no gain on 4<sup>th</sup> & 1 at the Taipei 20 as the Calm passed on the FG try. From that point on it was all Taipei. A 34-yard pass to **Burl Rider** set up the go-ahead 3-yard TD run by **Ty Brito** then a 48-yard FG by **Fred Bradley** made it 17-7. **Wiley Hutcherson** added a 2-yard TD run late in the 4<sup>th</sup> to win the Sharks first place overall.



**SUN**  
4-2-0



**David Soto**  
15 of 22, 163 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT



**RED DRAGONS**  
2-4-0

**Wilford Calloway**  
17 of 26, 149 yards, 1 TD, 3 INTs

Beijing LB, **Caleb Lewis** picked off **David Soto** at the Pyongyang 37 and 2 plays later **Wilford Calloway** connected with **Barry Steen** for a 38-yard TD pass for the Red Dragons' only score of the game. The Sun came right back with a 50-yard bomb to **Percy Russell** for a TD and a 1-yard sneak for a TD by Soto to capitalize on a fumble recovery by corner, **Aubrey Swanson** to take a 14-7 lead. An interception by **Bennett Leahy** and a strip-sack by DE, **Seymour Littleton** kept Beijing off the board in the 2<sup>nd</sup>. 3 more Dragons turnovers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half kept the home team from mounting any comeback.





# AROUND THE



## With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – EFL Asia is finally over. At least, it is for now. Using the word “finally” for a season consisting of a mere 12 games is ironic, but since it took a full 12 weeks to get those games in after a prolonged delay at the start, one felt the season might never end. Despite all the troubles, we have a winner: the Taipei Sharks (4-2) beat out the Pyongyang Sun (4-2) to become the first, and probably only, champions of EFL Asia. Pyongyang had already been disqualified from the rookie draft sweepstakes due to the antics of **Kim Jong-un** and the unresolved disappearance of **Pat Crew** and his coaching staff, but EFL Asia purists out there (there are bound to be a few living in mother’s basements around the world) can rest assured that Taipei actually finished first, winning on the 3<sup>rd</sup> tie-breaker with a better combined ranking of points for and points allowed.

What this means is that the Sharks’ sister expansion franchise, the Toronto Wolverines, owned by boy billionaire **Ryan Rich** and expected to be coached by him and his middle school pals via apps over the internet, will select first in the upcoming EFL rookie draft. It is unlikely that any of the players on the Sharks who earned that privilege for the EFL parent team will ever wear a Wolverines jersey, or any EFL jersey for that matter, but each player on the team can be partly consoled with a \$5,000 bonus cheque, a custom embroidered championship ball cap designed by *Goat*, and a \$300 gift card for Manchu Wok. League MVP, Taipei running back **Wiley Hutcherson**, made out like a bandit, winning a brand new 2016 Kia Soul for his role in the Sharks championship run. Hutcherson rushed for a league-leading 697 yards and 4 touchdowns.

In Pyongyang, the citizens are celebrating the Sun’s 6-0 finish and league championship as reported by the State controlled North Korean Media. **Kim Jong-un** formally declared the “*end of US Imperialist Football the Great Country*” due to ease with which he, as Supreme Coach, was able to “master” the strategy. “*This is a children game that helps nothing to the pure race. It is play time of thugs with the mind of an enemy bean sprout,*” the Supreme Leader is said to have said. The infamously shaky translations that come out of World Korea News, the English language North Korean propaganda organ, make many official pronouncements open to interpretation.

Finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2-4 was the Beijing Red Dragons; they stayed out of the basement by virtue of their only two victories coming against the 2-4 Seoul Calm. As a result, Beijing’s sister expansion franchise, the New Jersey Wrecking Balls – owned by Universal Destruction Ltd. CEO, **Jeff Cohen** – will pick no. 2 in this year’s EFL rookie draft and Seoul’s patron, the Erieau Cadillac – owned by **Jamie Rilett** of Rilett Resonators Inc., manufacturers of custom car resonators, specializing in Cadillacs of all eras – will pick no. 3. Now that the Corvallis franchise is de-commissioned, the league is holding a secret vote to decide which of a dozen final stage bids they will bring into the fold, with the result to be announced sometime next week.

### **PLUG ‘N PLAY**

At Beaufort County this week, third stringer **Bryce Petty** became the third quarterback to start a game for the Ravens this season and, except for a permanent goofy smile, looked almost indistinguishable from “starter” **Shaun Hill** and “the other starter,” **RGIII**. Trailing 32-25 to the Monarchs, with time running out, Petty engineered a nearly flawless two-minute drill, leading his team 79 yards in 9 plays to score what appeared to be the tying touchdown on a 26-yard touchdown pass to **Randall Cobb** with 24 seconds left. But, in the spirit of “*who-gives-a-f\*&^,*” **Neil Shannon’s** ‘Coach Squad’ elected to put the game on the line with one play by going for two points. A giggling Petty dropped back and calmly threaded the needle to Cobb for the winning points. The lad just looked happy to be there. And who can blame him? With nothing on the line apart from the prestige of winning three-quarters of their games, the Ravens elected to give their clipboard holder a chance to hold pigskin in a live game. He responded with 325 yards passing, 3 touchdown passes, no interceptions and a 33-32 win.

His Highness, the insufferable **Chris Ferraro**, was not amused. His Pompousness threw a number of fits on the Monarchs sideline as Petty hit his stride in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, leading Beaufort back from a 9-point deficit with a touchdown drive of 87 yards and a field goal drive of 50 yards to put his team in front 25-24. Berating his defence and threatening “dire” consequences for the offence if they failed to regain the lead, Ferraro stomped up to **Ryan Tannehill** as the Ravens kickoff team lined up on the field and roared in his face, “*score a touchdown on this drive or I will cut you!*”

Strangely, Tannehill did as he was told; launching a beautiful long pass to **Marques Colston** for a 62-yard major score to regain the lead and, in the process, missing a golden opportunity to get away from psycho coach. We found out later that Tannehill had believed Ferraro would actually *cut* him, as in physically cut, with a Royal sword or dagger of some kind. It

was a reasonable inference given the young King's hot temper.

The calmness with which Petty drove back up the field as time ticked away on the Ravens was startling. He was deadeye accurate on 4<sup>th</sup> & 18 from his own 30 yard line, connecting on a long slant to **Alshon Jeffery** that the receiver was able to snare in stride for a 44-yard play. A thinking observer would have to conclude that whatever the Ravens 'Coach Squad' is doing, when it comes to instructing quarterback play, is working.

*"We believe in the 'next-guy-up' philosophy,"* explained **Neil Shannon** in his post-game presser. *"Shaun and RG were due for a rest so it was Bryce's turn. I'm not surprised Bryce had a good game. Everyone does the same thing, the same way and it works most of the time."* Then why name a starting quarterback at all? *"Men need leaders and so we named a leader, based on seniority,"* he went on to explain. *"Shaun's been around the longest so he's our squad leader on the field."*

Shannon heads a world-wide company of mercenaries – he seems to know what he's talking about when it comes to teamwork and leadership. But talent is talent; all things being equal, it must edge out seniority in the merciless world of professional football. It will be interesting to see who gets the nod next week when the Ravens host the cubs in the post-season.

### **CURSE ON THE EFL?**

Journalists are calling it the "Curse on the Blue Eagles," but if there is a connection between the so-called 'curse' and the cowed, large-beaked figure in black that appears to be bedeviling teams around the league, it may be more accurate to call it a "Curse on the EFL." The mysterious figure appeared again this week, causing quite a stir and a small skirmish in a field level section of seats where it was spotted and observed performing a strange ritual by little 7-year old **Johnny Weisman** of Whitby.

This time, a youngster was not the only one to catch a glimpse of the mysterious apparition. A collection of activist nuns from the Sisterhood of The Raging Theotokos, attending the game to draw attention to Creationsim and Intelligent Design, in evidence in the Thunder Lizards' genetically-designed cyborg mascot, *Raptorius Blaster*, bustled excitedly toward the cowed figure after spotting it in the front row. It turns out that they mistook it for someone named **Father Smaragdus**, an orthodox priest from an associated but obscure monastic sect, who apparently has a fetish for bird masks and a thing for the ladies. This frantic descent of dozens of nuns wearing cheap *Raptorius Blaster* masks caught the cowed figure by surprise as it hurried up the stairs from field level. It had appeared on the 'Tyranotron' (the Jurassic Park jumbotron), visible in the background as the TV cameras focused on Pickering's **Marlon Brown** celebrating his recovery of an onside kick with 1:42 remaining in the game and the Spartans trailing by 3 points. It was pretty bizarre comedy to see the cowed figure pausing and rearing in obvious shock before disappearing momentarily behind a mob of masked nuns grasping at his cloak. After a few seconds the nuns suddenly disperse in horror, coughing and wheezing and holding their noses. The cowed figure can be seen briefly slipping out of the cordon and through the tunnel behind the stands.

Little Johnny from Whitby tells of how he watched the cowed figure calmly walk down the stairs and take up an empty seat in the second row near the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter: *"He walked down there and sat down over here,"* he said, pointing out the stairs and the seat. *"He was making funny noises, like bird noises and laughing. Then he stood on the chair and turned around and stuck his bum out and [Johnny snickers] tooted at the field,"* he continued as tried to suppress a laugh.

A detailed overlay of Little Johnny's statement with the sequence of known events suggests that the cowed figure probably

farted in the direction of center field at, or just before, **Josh Scobee** attempted his onside kick. Replays shows the Durham hands team inexplicably pausing before converging on the ball. In that brief moment of hesitation the speedy Brown darts in and snags the ball.

It as a heady moment, but the Spartans had been there before. Last week, they were one two-point conversion away from one of the most miraculous comebacks in league history after recovering an onside kick in a loss to Gwinnett. This time they left nothing to chance.

With 1:42 remaining, starting at their own 45, **Philip Rivers** exacted revenge on his former team with accuracy from the pocket, hitting on a pass to **Demaryius Thomas** for a 1<sup>st</sup> down and scrambling for another before unloading a deep throw to **Matt Forte** for 17 yards to the 5 yard line and spiking the ball with 6 seconds left. Then, with no time on the clock, Rivers found Forte in the back of the end zone for the game-winning touchdown.



The performance of 3<sup>rd</sup>-string QB, **Bryce Petty** in the Ravens nail-biting 33-32 win over Mission Viejo has analysts wondering if anybody off the street could play quarterback in **Neil Shannon's** offensive system.



The Spartans had trailed 27-17 with 3 minutes left in the game. Their gritty determination and fidelity to their motto of ‘Never Surrender’ carried them through the final minutes with such force that it seemed to catch the Lizards’ elite secondary on their back feet. The collapse, or more properly put, the Pickering *surge*, washed over Durham like a tsunami. Spartans players jumped up and down, *Sen’Derrick Marks* and *Orlando Pace* stumbled and fell trying to hoist coach **Gus Konstantakos** onto their shoulders, and the blue Gatorade cascaded over the head of **General Pausanias**. On the other side, the Durham sideline was funereal. For a meaningless game, a lot of players seemed to care.

Once again, the cowled figure made good its escape, although its brush with the Sisterhood of the Raging Theotokos must have left its mark. What part, if any, did it play deciding the final outcome? It was certainly a humiliating finish for Durham – not the way they wanted to end the season. Heading into the post-season, this game will be fresh in their minds. It will either create a better focus, or it will gnaw at their confidence. But All Pro corner, **Richard Sherman**, at least, is putting on a brave face.

*“They say the bird dude was in the house and made this happen,”* Sherman said to sideline reporter **Jennifer Hale**. *“How dare they say that? We’re not afraid of a guy in a bird mask! We*



**Marlon Brown** celebrates his recovery of an onside kick as the cowled figure looks on. It was the pivotal play of a stunning Spartan comeback in a 31-27 win over Durham.

*aren’t afraid of any team! No bird guy can control what we do on the field! They [Spartans] got lucky. They came at us all game, they made some plays, and the ball bounced their way. Credit to them today, but this ain’t happening again!”*

Meanwhile, in Scarborough, where all this talk of a curse started, the growing mob hunting the cowled figure was everywhere in evidence. If there was a curse on the Blue Eagles, it was bound to manifest itself this week in a winner-take-all game at Bluffs Stadium versus Cowtown to decide the final playoff spot. If the cowled figure was involved in that curse, it would certainly be at the stadium. But to the surprise and dismay of many, ‘Big Beak’ was nowhere to be found. (It was in Durham). And the ‘Curse Theory’ took a big hit when the Blue Eagles turned in their customary bumbling performance when the chips were down.

Both offences were slow to get warmed up on a windy, cold day on the Scarborough Bluffs. After a scoreless first quarter it was the visitors who lit the scoreboard first, with **Joe Flacco** checking down to **Cecil Shorts III** in the end zone to finish off an 80-yard drive that had been kept alive by an unnecessary roughness penalty on Scarborough safety, **Marcus Gilchrist**. It came on a 3<sup>rd</sup> down play that would have fallen short and seemed to suck the life out of the defence. The Blue Eagles offence rebounded with a field goal then the Eagles caught a break on the ensuing kickoff when up-man **Niles Paul** fumbled at the 22 yard line. The Eagles did not handle their good fortune well, however. They were flagged for delay of game on the first play after the turnover; 3<sup>rd</sup>-string running back **Charles Sims** was stuffed for a 2-yard loss by **Jared Crick**; and **Aaron Rodgers** felt the pressure of the blitz and fired wildly into the waiting arms of **Brandon Flowers** to literally throw away an opportunity.

The interception turned the momentum around completely. **Steve Smith Sr** took a short slant 30 yards to start the counter-drive and Flacco hit on his next four passes, connecting with the elder Smith in the end zone for a 15-yard touchdown pass to make it 14-3. On Scarborough’s next series, appearing still rattled, Rodgers threw deep to a double-covered **Jordy Nelson**. Flowers got his hand on the ball and **Ronald Darby** snared the deflection, returning it 25 yards to the Blue Eagles’ 24 yard line. The Scarborough defence held them to a field goal, but it was a small victory. At half time Cowtown looked upbeat and in control, leading 17-3.

For ‘Curse’ enthusiasts, there was not much to support their theory after 30 minutes of play. It had not been an unlucky first half for the Blue Eagles, even though they had turned the ball over twice on interceptions. Those picks were on Rodgers, pure and simple, with some credit to Flowers for being in position both times. Scarborough had failed to capitalize on their break, the gift-wrapped fumble by Paul, while the Corn Kings had made the most of their opportunities. The Eagles were coming up short on the playing field and nobody could really argue.

ESPN’s top broadcast team, in Scarborough for the week’s only meaningful game, was quick to draw attention away from talk of a curse and to focus on the football: *“The Blue Eagles look a little confused on defence, Bill, would you agree?”* prompted play-by-play announcer, **Phil Winterall**.

*“Yes, they do, Phil,”* replied colour-commentator **Bill Badden**. *“They’re moving around a lot out there, back-and-forth, up-and-down, putting defenders in motion. Rex Ryan likes to confuse the offence, but I have never seen so much useless movement. And Joe Flacco is mostly ignoring it. The Corn Kings are running their plays and most of them are working.”*

*“What do the Eagles have to do to get back in this game, Bill?”* Winterall followed up.

*“Aaron Rodgers has to settle down and stop throwing interceptions,”* replied Badden flatly. *“And they’re going to need a break. The team that loses the turnover battle usually loses the game.”*

The ‘Curse’ theory was about to take another major hit as the second half started off as well as it could for the Blue Eagles. Cowtown kick returner **Jacoby Jones** fumbled away the opening kickoff after a 36-yard return, giving Scarborough possession at the Corn King 47 yard line. Rodgers made the most of the opportunity this time, slinging a low pass toward the sideline that **Jermaine Gresham** dove for in the end zone for a 5-yard touchdown catch. Then on Cowtown’s first play from scrimmage, safety Gilchrist atoned for his 1<sup>st</sup> half penalty with an interception over the middle and 20-yard return to the 11 yard line. Two plays later, **TJ Yeldon** was sweeping into the end zone for the equalizing touchdown. It had taken 5 minutes for Scarborough to wipe out the Cowtown advantage.

The miscues continued for Cowtown. Rookie running back **Todd Gurley** fumbled away the ball on the next play from scrimmage, giving Scarborough the ball at the 15 yard line. They had now turned the ball over three times in three possessions. Chatter on *Titter* began speculating that the ‘curse’ was on the Corn Kings, not the Blue Eagles, and people were on heightened alert for the cowed figure near the visitors’ sideline. This time the Cowtown defence stiffened, holding Scarborough to a 30-yard **Mike Nugent** field goal to give the Eagles their first lead of the game.

Reeling from the sudden turnaround, the Corn Kings turned conservative on their next drive. **Alfred Morris** came into the game and ground out 33 yards on 7 carries while a pass interference penalty on Gilchrist helped set up a 26-yard field goal by **Nick Novak** to tie the game. But the contest was about to enter the final quarter with the strong wind advantage about to turn in favour of the Eagles. The situation was fluid, but Scarborough looked to have the edge.

Rodgers drove his team into the Cowtown red zone, where a hard hit by **Antoine Cason** on **Mohamed Sanu** stopped the drive at the 17 yard line. Nugent’s kick was true and Scarborough was back in front 23-20. But there was still life left in the Cowtown offence. A pair of screen passes to Gurley gained 34 yards and a hitch to Shorts another 16 to put Cowtown in normal field goal range at the 33 yard line, but a strong wind in their faces demanded at least 10 more yards for a field goal. They wouldn’t need it, however, reaching the 5 yard line and winning a fresh set of downs at the 1 after a critical 3<sup>rd</sup> down pass interference penalty on **Tarell Brown** in the end zone. A holding penalty pushed them back 10, but Flacco beat the Scarborough zone on the next play with a perfect pass to **Mike Evans** for an 11-yard touchdown pass. The Corn Kings were back in front, leading 27-23.

The Eagles got two more chances to stay alive, but a 4<sup>th</sup> down sack of Rodgers by **Ryan Kerrigan** and an interception by **Marcus Burley** at the Cowtown 11 with 0:22 left shut them down. The Corn Kings had overcome 4 turnovers in an inhospitable road environment to advance to the playoffs and they appeared to have done so without any supernatural help. By the final gun news had spread about the cowed figure’s appearance on the Jurassic Park ‘Tyranotron’ and surly Scarborough fans, “curse” factors all but ruled out, turned their anger on the players and poor **Chris Dickinson** with their traditional end-of-season riot.

#### **AROUND THE EFL**

With 7 of 8 playoff teams already decided and just two seeding positions on the line, the rest of the Week Sixteen slate had that languid, going-through-the-motions feel about it. The two other games that actually meant something in the standings were total blowouts:

At Joe Ferguson Stadium in Iowa City, the Cubs blasted the listless Chino Convicts 42-0 on the strength of 4 touchdowns by **Russell Wilson** (3 passes, 1 run) and a pair of interceptions of a timid **Cam Newton** still reeling from the humiliating effects of wetting himself on national TV last week. The Cubs laid the foundation for an even more bitter rivalry with their division foes next year by tacking on a pair of “f\*^# - u” TDs late in the 4th quarter. With the win, the Cubs clinched the third seed in the PAC.

At the Coliseum in Gwinnett the Gladiators ensured that they would dodge Aurora in the first round of the playoffs by shutting down Regulator back-up QB, **Ryan Lindley** in a 31-7 cakewalk over South Carolina. Lindley wasn’t cheated for opportunities, attempting 50 passes, but the seldom-used roster after-thought, starting for the injured **Tony Romo**, could not compete with a sizzling **Ben Roethlisberger**, who fired off 3 touchdown passes before switching into auto-pilot in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

For fans willing to temporarily disregard the records of the teams and the meaninglessness of the game, the Knights and Hellfire put on quite a show at Round Table Stadium in LA. **Andrew Luck** survived an aggressive Knights pass rush that forced a fumble and an interception, to throw for 333 yards and a game-winning 27-yard touchdown pass to **Allen Robinson** to pull off a 25-23 win. **Mike Glennon** recovered from a shaky start and a pick-six to **Justin Houston** to finish strong with a pair of long touchdown passes to **Brandin Cooks** to make it close and avoid looking like a total doofuss.

At the Killing Field in Carthage, the Triumph’s **Jay Cutler** made amends for 3 first half interceptions with a pair of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter TD passes – including a 46-yard long fly to **Vincent Jackson** – and **Antonio Brown** showed big-play versatility with a 66-yard punt return for a TD to complete a come-from-behind 45-30 win over Carthage. Even with nothing to play for after the Cubs locked up the no. 3 seed, the thought of losing to Cannibals back-up QB, **Sean Mannion**, forced Cutler and Coach **Guy Williams** to bear down.

In front of family and friends in a private ceremony at **TERRORDOME**, the Violators put forth one of their feeble efforts of the season in a going-through-the-motions 27-3 loss to the Division-leading Pats. With Virden fans planning to “tear down the house” in the final week of the worst season in its history, **Lance Barrate** made the final game of the year an “invitation-only” event. As a parting gift to their loyal fans, the players managed to put together a drive for a field goal to break the shutout.

At the Dawg Pound in Markham, the Fat Lady drew public attention for the first time this year by pledging to eat a chicken wing for every yard gained and a hot dog for every point scored by the struggling North Star offence. Having regained a significant amount of lost weight as Markham’s dismal season progressed, she had to be mechanically assisted into her Row 54 seat. 352 wings,



20 hot dogs and 10 litres of Coke later, the Fat Lady burst in a shower of vomit over dozens of patrons in her section as York's **Tom Brady** and **Von Miller** starred on both sides of the ball in a 4<sup>th</sup> quarter comeback, to give the Swords a 27-20 win.

And finally, at Candlestick Park in Aurora, the Swordfish saved their worst for last as the Mustangs rode over them 45-0. **Matt Ryan** threw 5 touchdown passes, **Arian Foster** rushed for 160, the defence picked off **Andy Dalton** 3 times, and the Aurora offence racked up 509 yards, prompting a huge collective yawn from sports media around the nation.

#### **DR. McCHAD'S POST-SEASON POST-MORTEM**

Before we turn our attention exclusively to the 8 post-season candidates for the championship, let us measure their worth indirectly by pausing one last time to look at those that failed to meet the playoff grade. As a certified Sports Coroner, it is my solemn duty to examine the fallen and determine what caused their failure. Here, dear Readers, are my findings:

**SCARBOROUGH (8-8)** – Cause of Death: *Nervous Breakdown*. Whether it was due to a mystical curse, the pressure of expectations or simply too much coffee while searching game film for the answer to their woes, the jittery Blue Eagles could never find their comfort zone. They played like a team facing a death sentence, with adrenaline-fueled highs and lows messing around with the minds of fans, coaches and players alike. In the end, they collapsed in a frantic, disorganized scramble.

**YORK (8-8)** – Cause of Death: *Narcolepsy*. When they were awake the Swords boasted a balanced precision attack led by a confident veteran while showing flashes of shutdown defence by Von Miller & Co. But early in the year the offence would sometimes fall asleep without warning, leaving them short in the points-for column. After mid-season, the condition spread to the defence, with sudden snoozing spells at the worst of times causing their overall ranking to plummet along with their record.

**PICKERING (8-8)** – Cause of Death: *Bi-polar Disorder*. The 2015 Spartans were a complex entity, almost impossible to diagnose and even more impossible to medicate. At times they looked as dominant on offence as they have ever been; at other times punchless and dysfunctional. The defence, lacking talent, at times rose to the occasion through manic effort. Just as often it would slip back into a frail and defenceless shell. Great one week and terrible the next, it ended up being a wash.

**CHINO (8-8)** – Cause of Death: *Old Age*. A veteran line-up brought experience and a competitive start to the year. But with 29 years the average age of the starters, production fell as the long season wore on. After 8 weeks, Cam Newton led the league in passing, but as production around him diminished, his play tailed off dramatically. By the end of the year Cam was an old man.

**SOUTH CAROLINA (7-9)** – Cause of Death: *Somnambulism*. High hopes prevailed for this year's edition of the Regulators. Early struggles were written off as bad luck, but as the game plan stagnated and players continued to look like automatons each week, fans and media caught on that the entire team was sleep-walking through the season. An intervention brought temporary relief and a ray of hope, but a Week 14 collapse against the Blue Eagles set them back and they fell asleep again to finish the year.

**CARTHAGE (6-10)** – Cause of Death: *Stunt Driving*. The Young Cannibals may be the only non-playoff team to be able to claim victory despite an overall 14<sup>th</sup> place finish. A star was born in Carthage with the emergence of rookie Marcus Mariota and with it, validation of the attack-based 'Main Game.' Like a teenager on a skateboard or driving a suped-up car the Cannibals were fearless, some say reckless in their approach, and totally defenceless. Inevitably they flamed out in the end but boy did they have fun!

**LOS ANGELES (5-11)** – Cause of Death: *Bell's Palsy*. For the second straight year the Knights' offensive scheme relied almost exclusively on one man, Le'Veon Bell. The problem was, every team knew that Bell would get the ball 30 times a game. While Jeff Dohrn tinkered with his erratic defence in an attempt to rebuild the legendary Blue Shield, Bell ran into a brick wall every week until somebody remembered Teddy Bridgewater was also on the team. But by then it was too late to salvage respectability.

**MISSION VIEJO (5-11)** – Cause of Death: *Madness*. The Monarch defence blitzed like madmen all season and made some big plays in the backfields of their opponents. But they also gave up big plays and did not take away the ball enough to compensate. While the defence was getting pushed back playing for big stakes, the offence played small ball and struggled to stretch the field. They scored, just not enough and it drove their young coach crazy!

**MOHAVE (4-12)** – Cause of Death: *Spontaneous Combustion*. Whether it was the blitz failing to get through or Andrew Luck throwing wildly to the other team, nothing that should have gone right for the Hellfire did. Occasional flashes of what could have been were rare and only served to highlight the developing disaster that was their 2015 season. Never better than a long shot for a division title, playoffs could have been in the picture but for a spectacular, inexplicable flameout.

**MARKHAM (3-13)** – Cause of Death: *Spastic Paralysis*. Two quarterbacks, 7 running backs and a mixed bag of receivers equalled confusion and inconsistency for the North Stars attack. They moved forward slowly, with the shuffling gait of an old man, punctuated by spasmodic, awkward attempts to stretch the field. Before mid-season opponents had figured them out, leaving the average talent of a heroic defence to keep them in games they never should have been in. In the end they weren't, losing 10 straight.

**SEBASTIAN (1-15)** – Cause of Death: *Murder*. Week after week the Swordfish were battered, slashed and gashed by almost every team they faced. They could hardly defend themselves against the numerous deadly weapons in a conference full of predators. They fought back hard, with Odell Beckham and CJ Anderson leaving some marks on their assailants, but they never stood a chance.

**VIRDEN (0-16)** – Cause of Death: *Stillborn*. If ever there was a team that never had a chance, the 2015 Virden Violators would be that team. Vying for the status of worst team in EFL history, with the 2008 expansion Outlaws and the winless Knights of 2014, Virden was the crack whore of the off-season, trading away almost all of its assets in a frantic attempt to rebuild for the future. They apparently forgot they had to play 16 games now. The result was a lifeless stiff of a team that gave away 16 wins.

# BUG THE BOOKIE!

JIMMY THE GEEK GIVES YOU HIS PICKS  
FOR QUARTER FINAL EFL ACTION

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RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 16:

97-58-5

## PLAYOFF PICTURE AT A GLANCE

		PACIFIC-ATLANTIC CONFERENCE		CAN-AM CONFERENCE	
OUT	ALIVE	IN	IN	ALIVE	OUT
			1		
			2		
			3		
			4		

## JIMMY'S QUARTER FINAL PICKS

### PACIFIC-ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

**TWIN CITIES @ CHARLESWOOD (line – PATRIOTS by 6)**

**INJURIES:** Twin Cities – Jerrell Freeman (OUT), Tre Mason (OUT), Bobby Wagner (OUT); Charleswood – None.

The Triumph have the lowest strength of victory percentage of the 8 post-season teams – an unimpressive .281 – and posted just two wins against teams that finished .500 or better. They looked over-matched in their regular season tilts against the Patriots, with 4 turnovers and 25 missed tackles indicating sloppiness on both sides of the ball. Everything starts with the play of the quarterback in the big games and so it is no puzzle that both of the Triumph's losses to their principal rivals in the East Division coincided with the two worst performances of the year for Jay Cutler. Their dismal track record provides no reason for optimism as they go on the road

hoping to steal a game from a fully-supported, future Hall-of-Fame quarterback in Peyton Manning. But even with that uninspiring history it would be foolish to count the Triumph out. They have too many weapons at their disposal, like the top wide receiver in football, Antonio Brown; a dynamic 6-yard-per-carry rookie running back in Melvin Gordon; Vincent Jackson, a premier deep ball threat; and shutdown corner, Al Harris Jr. And even though Jay Cutler's reputation in big games against big teams is not good, he will be looking to prove something to himself and his teammates and therefore cannot be dismissed. On the downside for the visitors, Twin Cities is missing its defensive leader, middle linebacker Bobby Wagner. When he was out of action in Week Two, Lamar Miller rushed for 170 yards against them. Miller was contained to 97 yards in Week 14 with Wagner back in the line-up. But whether they are running to set up the pass or passing to set up the run, the Pats have a diverse attack that methodically takes apart defences. Dez Bryant quietly put together an all-pro grade season at wide receiver, with 18 touchdown catches and a 15.9 yard average; while rookie runner Duke Johnson exceeded expectations as a perfect complement to nifty Lamar Miller in the backfield. Of course, Peyton Manning, who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league in passer rating, makes everyone around him better. Tied for the best record in the league, the 15-1 Pats look to be the clear favourite here, and they are. However, with Mohave and Virden in the division and a last place schedule, theirs was one of the softer 15-1 records you are likely to see. The Pats have not had to really put pedal to the metal this season; they did not look like a champion in their only loss, a blowout by the Cubs – one of just two top grade teams they faced all year. Cutler cannot be trusted, but that doesn't mean he doesn't have a good game in him. Expect the Triumph to protect him in the pocket and for him to finally make a game of it. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

### **IOWA CITY @ BEAUFORT COUNTY (line – CUBS by 1)**

**INJURIES:** Iowa City – None. Beaufort County – Stevan Ridley (OUT), Larry Warford (OUT), Frank Alexander (IR), Jairus Byrd (IR), Alfonzo Dennard (IR).

With the Cubs ranked at the top of the league in offensive efficiency, 2<sup>nd</sup> in defensive efficiency and after blowing away Chino and Twin Cities to finish the season, it is easy to jump on the Iowa City bandwagon. Indeed, the recent play of the magician, Russell Wilson and the 'Fantastic Four' on the defensive line have many already plumping the Cubs as the clear favourite to represent the PAC in this year's championship game in Mission Viejo. If you are searching for a glaring weakness on the Cubs, good luck to you – there are none. Ideally, a Cubs fan might want to see more of a vertical passing game and a better pass-rusher coming from the second level, but neither of these upgrades are critical to the team's chances of success when its quarterback runs almost on par with the league's most efficient running back and its front four ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in sacks despite one of the league's lowest blitz percentages. The Cubs must be one of the best wildcard teams to make the post-season in many years, but it is worth pausing to consider that they are a wildcard team largely because of these Ravens – a team they couldn't beat in two tries. Mindful of limitations at the quarterback position, the Ravens keep the game manageable on the offensive side by picking apart defences with a mix of short, accurate passes and rough-and-tumble off tackle runs that move the chains and wear down the defence. Lest you think they are nothing but grinders, they also have game-breaking talent in Randall Cobb and DeAndre Hopkins and one of the most difficult cover match-ups in Rob Gronkowski – a guy who will run over a corner and out-run a safety. The big question is which quarterback will get the start. RGIII brings a wide range of possible outcomes – feast or famine; while Shaun Hill is steadier, but the less likely of the two to break the game open either way. Then there is the Ravens defence, a unit unafraid to blitz and pay the price but which boasts a pro-bowler at each level of the alignment. The presence of Darrelle Revis and Brent Grimes in the secondary will force the Cubs to establish the run, something they are more than willing to do. Both regular season games were close, with each of the Ravens QBs having a shot at the Cubs – Hill survived to earn a tie in Week Two and RGIII showed his best with a late touchdown pass while the defence held on to win by 3 in Week 14. Expect another very close game here, with overtime a distinct possibility. In the end, it will come down to which quarterback makes the big plays in the clutch, and we all know who is likely to hold the edge there. **PICK: IOWA CITY**

### **CAN-AM CONFERENCE**

#### **GWINNETT @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 8)**

**INJURIES:** Gwinnett – Charles Gaines (QUESTIONABLE); Durham – None.

The Thunder Lizards would have preferred to have had another shot at their lesser rival, Cowtown than have to face the Glads again. In their only match-up of the season, Gwinnett held the Durham offence in check inside the red zone, thwarting five of nine opportunities with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> down stands, and surviving two turnovers to tough out a 24-16 win. That was back in Week Three, before the Durham offence had found its stride. Starting around the second half of the season, the Lizards' offence under Drew Brees has been blazing through the opposition, overcoming an inconsistent running game and injuries to post impressive offensive numbers. The Brees-to-Megatron connection has really come into its own lately, hooking up for 13 touchdown passes in the last 7



games the big wide receiver has been in the line-up. Opposing offences generally prefer to pass on the Gladiators over running on them, attempting a league-high 627 passes against the Gwinnett D this season compared with a league-low 371 rush attempts. This play distribution suits Durham just fine – while the Gwinnett secondary has held its own against the weekly onslaught, it will have its hands full this week against the Lizards’ impressive line-up of receiving targets. When the Glads have the ball they will almost certainly try to establish the ground game with LeSean McCoy before taking flight with the Big Ben-Jeremy Maclin Express. The Glads’ attack is balanced, but the Durham defence is not, being heavily weighted toward stopping the pass with Richard Sherman, Kam Chancellor and Devin McCourty imposing a perilous “no-fly zone” on opponents every week. Big Ben is quite capable of flying under the Durham radar, but even a hot Roethlisberger will need some distraction help from the running game, meaning they cannot afford to fall behind too far early. The 8-point line reflects the vision of a surging Lizards squad surpassing a Glads team that sustained a pair of severe beatings in premium match-ups verses Charleswood and Aurora and nearly blew a 22-point lead in the final three minutes against Pickering. But the Glads, at 10-6, have done well for a team laboring under the weight of a -7 turnover differential. I expect Durham will move on to the next round, but not before a tough fight. **PICK: GWINNETT**

## **COWTOWN @ AURORA (line – MUSTANGS by 11)**

**INJURIES:** Cowtown – Sammie Hill (PROBABLE), (Larry Fitzgerald (QUESTIONABLE); Aurora – None.

The Mustangs are rightfully double-digit favourites against the lucky winner of the free-for-all fight for the final wildcard berth in the Can-Am Conference. But the Corn Kings might not consider themselves lucky when this game is over. Coming off a regular season campaign that has been as ugly as it has been superb – when not being boringly average – it is almost impossible to predict what kind of Cowtown team will take the field at Candlestick Park. It is fairly certain, however, that any version not reaching the level of “superb” will get flattened under the hooves of the Mustangs, even on an average day for the Auroran juggernaut. After looking beatable early in the year and finally collapsing one fateful weekend, mid-season, against the Cannibals, Aurora has been all business since, winning nine straight and making it look easy most of the time. Interestingly, the one hiccup during this string of near-total dominance came at Tillman Field, where they prevailed slowly but surely over a tenacious Corn Kings team that could not catch a break. When it comes to breaks, the ball has bounced Aurora’s way most of the season. On top of being better than most – all things being equal – they enjoy a +8 turnover differential that often turns “games” into exercises in domination. If Cowtown hopes to keep this game at least competitive, they must hold on to the ball. It won’t be easy against a team that can strip the ball as well as it tackles or follow a quarterback’s eyes like a hawk. The Cowtown front five is over-matched by JJ Watt alone – add Cliff Avril, Willie Young and Malik Jackson and you have the equivalent of a twister tearing a path through a corn field. Three things need to happen to give the Corn Kings a shot at beating the spread: their top notch pass rush must pressure Matt Ryan into errors, their linebackers must contain Arian Foster and Joe Flacco needs time in pocket to find his wide receivers. If all of those things click, the Mustangs will find themselves in a game. If not, it could be a very long day for the visitors. When the possibilities for the underdog lie between blowout and honourable loss, it is usually safe to take the favourite. **PICK: AURORA**



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FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – Week 16 saw the final dashing of Garland’s playoff aspirations. Cinderella tried on the slipper and, impossibly, it didn’t fit. Their season was ruined by the 4-12 Ringgold Crimson Hawks, a team that had failed to reach its own lofty goals but seemed to have no trouble keeping the Mustangs from reaching theirs. **Big Ben** threw a 9-yard TD pass to **Andre Johnson** in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to make it 27-21 Ringgold. There was still plenty of time for a Garland comeback, but **Matt Ryan** took a direct hit and had to leave the game with 10 minutes left. **Matt Leinart**

came on in relief but could not rally the Horses.

The Hawks did a disservice to Garland but they did a favour for the Corn Kings, enabling them to back into the post-season. With Garland out, Cowtown was in, despite a haphazard, undisciplined 27-15 loss to Durham in the season finale. The prize – a trip to Florida to face the 15-1 Dragons.

In the PAC, the playoff seeding, from no.1 to no.4 went: Charleswood (13-1), Los Angeles (10-6), Iowa City (9-7), Chino (9-7). In the Can-Am the teams were: Florida (15-1), Durham (14-2), Gwinnett (10-6), Cowtown (8-8). Realignment of the expansion teams out of one division meant that the best teams made the post-season once more.

**Peyton Manning** won the passing title with a 106.2 QB rating, but the presence of rushing leader, **Adrian Peterson** (1,565 yards on 354 carries) in his backfield ensured that he did not rank no.1 in prolificacy in any other category. **Matt Ryan** led the league in TD passes with 33, and total passing yards, with 3,848 because he had to in order to move the Garland offence. **Tony Gonzalez**, Pats, led all receivers with 95 catches while **Ed Reed** (also Pats) led all with 7 interceptions, 3 for returned for TDs. It was a good year for Pats.