

2014



EFL NEWS

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

2014

Week Five

Week Five

November 16, 2014



MOH	10	CHI	24	CAR	31	MVM	10	LAK	13	COW	31	SC	31	YOR	3	SBE	7	SEB	15
CHP	21	VIR	41	TCT	19	ICC	24	SCB	38	MAR	28	DTL	35	PIC	27	AUR	35	GWG	24



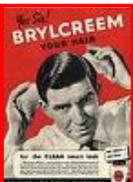
Durham's *T.Y. Hilton* scoots across the middle for a 15-yard gain in 3rd quarter action at Jurassic Park. The Thunder Lizards jumped out to a big lead only to see the Regulators wipe it out and take the lead in the 4th quarter. Hilton would catch the final TD in a 35-31 Durham victory.

LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

- DURHAM ESCAPES OWN PARK WITH WIN OVER REGS
- SWEET VICTORY FOR VIRDEN
- SLUGGS' D SLAMS DOWN PESKY KNIGHTS
- PATRIOTS DOUSE FIRE
- CANNIBALS UNBEATEN AFTER BEATING DOWN TRIUMPH
- SPARTANS DISARM SWORDS
- GLADIATORS NO LONGER WINLESS
- AND MUCH MORE.....

Also in this issue

- SPATS FEATURE, 'CONFESSION,' 'NO LAUGHING MATTER,' 'THE SPIRIT OF FOOTBALL,' 'VETERAN'S DAY.'
- JIMMY THE GEEK
- THIS WEEK IN EFL HISTORY



Who was slick in Week Five?

"BRYLCREEM" THE EFL'S FIRST SPONSOR



Joe Flacco
QB
Cowtown
Corn Kings

33 of 47, 435 yards, 4 TD passes.
Spread the ball to beat the Stars.



Robert Mathis
OLB
Santa Clara
Banana Slugs

8 Tackles, 5 Sacks, 1 Hur, 2 FFs.
One-man wrecking crew vs LA.



3-2-0

South Carolina

31



MVP

Nick Foles

35



4-1-0

Durham

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Romo	33	53	345	2
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Gore	20	92	4.6	1
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Green,AJ	9	117	13.0	1

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
South Carolina	0	7	0	24	-	31
Durham	7	14	7	7	-	35

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Brees	25	33	293	3
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Bush	10	43	4.3	0
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Johnson	6	93	15.5	1

Play of the Game

Trailing 31-28 after giving up 24 points in the 4th quarter, **Nick Foles** relieved **Drew Brees** at QB for Durham. Foles threw a perfect pass to **Vernon Davis** for 49 yards to set up the winning TD.

SUMMARY: For the first 3 quarters of the game Durham appeared to be firmly in control with **Drew Brees** having completed 17 of his first 22 pass attempts for 234 yards and 3 TDs in building up an imposing 28-7 lead. The Regulators' offence, mostly quiet in the 1st half, started picking up steam in the 3rd quarter, but was thwarted by two fumbles after catches, one by **Frank Gore** – which set up a 2-yard TD pass to Durham HB, **Lee Smith** – and one by Marcel Reece, which squandered a red zone opportunity. But starting early in the 4th the South Carolina defence stepped up and **Tony Romo** caught fire. After pulling within 14 points on a 1-yard sneak by Romo for a TD, the Regs started pressuring Brees, sacking him to end a drive and answering with a 54-yard drive for a TD to pull within 7. Then, with **Tamba Hali** in his face, Brees threw a pass into the hands of corner **Bradley Fletcher**, who returned it 23 yards to the Durham 43, setting up a 13-yard pass to **AJ Green** to tie. Durham's collapse continued when **Sam Shields** picked off Brees at the Regs' 40, setting up a 44-yard **Justin Tucker** FG to give the Regs a 31-28 lead. But **Nick Foles** came in and led an 80-yard drive capped by an 11-yard TD pass to **TY Hilton** to regain the lead. **Richard Sherman** clinched the win by picking off Romo in the end zone.

QUOTES: "This was a close game in every aspect. We're disappointed in the loss but looking at the positive message here. We are at the point where we can compete with the top teams in the league. Our next step is to beat them." – South Carolina head coach, **Hal Corson**.

"I'm the best corner in the game! You throw to the other side, I'm gonna pick it off. You throw at me, I'm gonna....ah....ah....pick it off again! You tick me off, I pick you off!!!" – Durham cornerback, **Richard Sherman**, yelling at sideline reporter **Andrea Erin** after picking off **Tony Romo** to end the game.



ANGRY FAN



titter

HAPPY FAN



Champ @littlepigs

Darn it! #Regulators were so close I could taste it. Win would have been as sweet as my melt-off-the-bone BBQ ribs!



Deano @Deantempleton

@**DrewBrees** not getting it done in the clutch. Does @**NickFoles** get the start next week or stay as stopper in the bullpen?

11-11-2014 Jurassic Park Temp: 82 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Nick Foles**

Scoring Summary

1 3:57 Durham	TD Brees 18 pass to Johnson (Dawson) (7-61-4:11)	0-7
2 12:44 South Carolina	TD Gore 4 run (Tucker,J) (14-66-6:06)	7-7
2 7:38 Durham	TD Jackson 1 run (Dawson) (11-80-5:06)	7-14
2 1:23 Durham	TD Brees 29 pass to Davis (Dawson) (7-87-2:58)	7-21
3 11:45 Durham	TD Brees 2 pass to Smith (Dawson) (5-28-1:37)	7-28
4 14:54 South Carolina	TD Romo 1 run (Tucker,J) (9-62-3:57)	14-28
4 11:06 South Carolina	TD Romo 12 pass to Jennings (Tucker,J) (6-54-1:26)	21-28
4 6:32 South Carolina	TD Romo 13 pass to Green (Tucker,J) (8-43-1:51)	28-28
4 3:43 South Carolina	FG Tucker 44 (7-34-1:06)	31-28
4 1:40 Durham	TD Foles 11 pass to Hilton (Dawson) (5-80-2:03)	31-35

	SC	DTL
First Downs	29	28
Rushes	24-109	23-101
Passes	53-33-345	36-28-366
Sacked	3-23	2-18
Fumble	2	1
Penalties	7-40	8-61
Turnovers	3	2
Missed Tackles	7	6
Blitzes	13	29
Time	29:55	30:05
Third Down	7-18	5-8
Fourth Down	5-6	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	5/4/0	5/4/0
Net Offense	431	449



EFL
ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

QUICK COUNTS!!

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



HELLFIRE	3	0	0	7	0	10
1-4-0						

Andrew Luck
19 of 37, 188 yards, 1 INT



PATRIOTS	7	7	7	0	0	21
2-3-0						

Blake Bortles
18 of 22, 206 yards, 2 TDs

The Patriots drove 66 yards to a TD on their first possession, scoring on a 9-yard fly from **Blake Bortles** to **Terrance Williams**. The Hellfire answered with a 28-yard FG then mounted a 15-play drive that came up empty when **Matt Prater** missed from 51 yards. The Pats quickly replied with a 32-yard TD pass to **Jason Avant** to take a 14-3 lead at the half. The Pats made it 21-3 early in the 2nd half when **Chris Ivory** crashed into the end zone on 4th and inches. **Andrew Luck** was intercepted by **Ha Ha Clinton-Dix** late in the 3rd quarter to snuff out a scoring opportunity and the Hellfire comeback.



EXCALIBURS	3	0	0	0	0	3
2-3-0						

Tom Brady
16 of 27, 163 yards



SPARTANS	0	17	10	0	0	27
2-3-0						

Peyton Manning
16 of 25, 199 yards, 2 TDs

York turned the ball over on downs at the Pickering 3 yard line on their first possession and had to settle for 3 points after reaching the 10 yard line on their next. The Spartans' offence got in gear early in the 2nd quarter. A 13-yard TD pass from **Peyton Manning** to **Golden Tate** set off a string of 27 unanswered points for the Spartans as the Excaltiburs' offence ceased to be effective. The Spartans' defence forced five three-and-outs by the visitors in the final 3 quarters of the game while **Chris Johnson** and **Jordan Todman** combined for 137 yards on 33 carries to keep control of the ball.



CANNIBALS	7	7	7	10	0	31
5-0-0						

LeGarrette Blount
13 Carries, 76 yards, 1 TD



TRIUMPH	7	3	3	6	0	19
4-1-0						

Tre Mason
19 Carries, 116 yards, 1 TD

Triumph QB **Jay Cutler** threw a TD pass to **Antonio Brown** but was also intercepted twice before he had to leave the game trailing the Cannibals 14-7. Rookie **Johnny Manziel** led the Triumph in relief to a pair of FGs to pull within 1 point before the Cannibals' **Eddie Lacy** broke a 24-yard TD run to make it 21-13. Manziel hit Brown with a 32-yard pass to set up a 4-yard TD run by **Tre Mason**, but the convert failed, keeping the score 21-19. Interceptions by **Lavonte David** and **Harrison Smith** kept the Triumph off the board and set up 10 more Cannibals' points to raise Carthage to a perfect 5-0.

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



KNIGHTS

0-5-0

7	3	3	0	0	13
OT					

Le'Veon Bell

18 Carries, 54 yards, 1 TD



SLUGGS

5-0-0

7	3	14	14	0	38
OT					

Knowshon Moreno

23 Carries, 93 yards, 4 TDs

Mike Glennon completed his first 3 passes for a total of 68 yards to set up a 10-yard TD run by **Le'Veon Bell** to put the Knights in front 7-0. Santa Clara answered with **Knowshon Moreno** breaking a 20-yard run to set up his first of 4 rushing TDs on the day. The teams traded FGs in a hard fought 2nd quarter to end the 1st half tied at 10. Moreno put the Sluggs in front to stay with a 3-yard TD run to cap the opening drive of the 2nd half. Moreno would score twice more while the defence dominated, sacking LA QBs 8 times, with **Vontaze Burfict** returning a fumble to the house to seal the win.



CORN KINGS

3-2-0

0	10	14	7	0	31
OT					

Joe Flacco

33 of 47, 435 yards, 4 TDs



NORTH STARS

3-2-0

0	14	0	14	0	28
OT					

Alex Smith

24 of 40, 243 yards, 3 TDs

A 45-yard fumble recovery for a TD by **Michael Griffin** gave Markham an early 14-0 lead. But Cowtown got back in the game on a 40-yard TD pass from **Joe Flacco** to **Cecil Shorts** to cap a 98-yard drive to end the 1st half. Flacco found rookie **Mike Evans** for TD passes of 3 yards and 38 yards to give Cowtown a 24-14 lead in the 3rd, but the Stars struck back with a 4-yard TD pass from **Alex Smith** to **Jordy Nelson** to pull within 3. An 80-yard TD pass to **Larry Fitzgerald** on a short hitch re-established the 10-point lead, leaving the Corn Kings' defence to hold off a determined Stars' comeback bid.



BLUE EAGLES

1-4-0

0	0	0	7	0	7
OT					

Terrelle Pryor

11 Car, 115 yards, 46.4 QB Rate



MUSTANGS

5-0-0

7	21	0	7	0	35
OT					

Matt Ryan

29 of 37, 314 yards, 4 TDs

Matt Ryan tossed a 40-yard bomb to **Anquan Boldin** for a 1st quarter Mustangs' TD to open the scoring in a lop-sided game. Aurora scored majors on their next 3 possessions, led by 2 TD passes to **Julian Edelman**, to take a 28-0 lead into the locker room. An ineffective **Aaron Rodgers** was pulled in favour of **Terrelle Pryor**, but the switch did not turn the tide for the Blue Eagles. Rodgers was reinserted late in the 3rd and was intercepted by **Eric Weddle**, who returned it 31 yards to set up the final Mustangs' TD. Scarborough broke the shutout with 2:54 left on a 5-yard TD run by **Ray Rice**.

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



CONVICTS
3-2-0

7	10	7	0	0	24
OT					

Cam Newton
24 of 36, 238 yards, 2 TDs



VIOLATORS
1-4-0

7	17	3	14	0	41
OT					

Jamaal Charles
25 Carries, 138 yards, 3 TDs

Jamaal Charles finished off a pair of long Virden drives with a pair of rushing TDs and receiver **Dez Bryant** sprinted 50 yards for a TD to give the Virden the 24-17 edge in a high-scoring 1st half. The Convicts stayed in the game with a 40-yard TD pass from **Cam Newton** to **James Jones** with seconds remaining in the 1st half then took advantage of a 3rd quarter interception by **Darryl Sharpton** to tie the game at 24 on a 13-yard TD run by **Adrian Peterson**. A 49-yard FG by **Mason Crosby** put Virden back in front then a pair of running TDs, including Charles' 3rd of the day, put the game away.



MONARCHS
2-3-0

0	0	3	7	0	10
OT					

Ryan Tannehill
19 of 35, 179 yards, 1 TD



CUBS
2-3-0

7	7	0	10	0	24
OT					

LeSe
26 Carries, 126 yards

Jason Pierre-Paul blocked a punt by **Sav Rocca** to give the Cubs the ball at the Monarchs' 20 and set up the game's first score – a 6-yard TD pass from **Russell Wilson** to **Steve Smith**. After that, neither offence was able to muster any points in a 1st half dominated by defence. But the Cubs' **Dexter McCluster** added to his team's lead with a 63-yard punt return TD before half time. The Monarchs broke the shutout with a FG set up by an interception and 38-yard return by **Kareem Jackson**. But a penalty-assisted 59-yard drive in the 4th capped by a **Bishop Sankey** 1-yard TD run gave the Cubs control.



SWORDFISH
1-4-0

0	6	9	0	0	15
OT					

Dwayne Harris
4 KR, 154 yards, 98 Long, 1 TD



GLADIATORS
1-4-0

3	14	0	7	0	24
OT					

Jarvis Landry
6 Receptions, 93 yards, 1 TD

Swordfish QB, **Andy Dalton** was intercepted twice in the 1st half, leading to a FG and a 2-yard TD run by **LeSean McCoy** to give the Glads a 10-0 lead. **Orlando Scandrick** picked off **Big Ben** soon after to set up the Fish in Gwinnett territory, but **Zac Stacy** was stuffed by **Lance Briggs** on 4th down to take away the scoring opportunity. McCoy added another TD before the half to give Gwinnett a 17-6 lead. Sebastian rallied with a 98-yard KR for a TD by **Dwayne Harris** to open the 2nd half, but could not move the ball. Rookie **Jarvis Landry** caught a 9-yard TD pass in the 4th to cap the Glads' first win.

WEEK FIVE

STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Carthage	5	0	0	1.000	169	33.8	118	23.6	10.2	2 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0
Twin Cities	4	1	0	0.800	140	28	106	21.2	6.8	2 1 0	3 1 0	4 1 0
Charleswood	2	3	0	0.400	97	19.4	129	25.8	-6.4	2 1 0	2 2 0	2 3 0
Mohave	1	4	0	0.200	119	23.8	147	29.4	-5.6	0 2 0	1 3 0	1 4 0
Virден	1	4	0	0.200	139	27.8	141	28.2	-0.4	1 2 0	0 4 0	1 4 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Santa Clara	5	0	0	1.000	171	34.2	104	20.8	13.4	3 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0
Chino	3	2	0	0.600	134	26.8	136	27.2	-0.4	2 0 0	3 1 0	3 2 0
Iowa City	2	3	0	0.400	138	27.6	139	27.8	-0.2	1 1 0	2 2 0	2 3 0
Mission Viejo	2	3	0	0.400	105	21	127	25.4	-4.4	2 1 0	1 3 0	2 3 0
Los Angeles	0	5	0	0.000	94	18.8	159	31.8	-13	0 2 0	0 4 0	0 5 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	4	1	0	0.800	125	25	97	19.4	5.6	3 0 0	3 1 0	4 1 0
Cowtown	3	2	0	0.600	124	24.8	117	23.4	1.4	1 1 0	2 2 0	3 2 0
Markham	3	2	0	0.600	109	21.8	92	18.4	3.4	2 1 0	2 2 0	3 2 0
Pickering	2	3	0	0.400	109	21.8	102	20.4	1.4	2 1 0	2 2 0	2 3 0
York	2	3	0	0.400	88	17.6	129	25.8	-8.2	0 2 0	1 3 0	2 3 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Aurora	5	0	0	1.000	187	37.4	61	12.2	25.2	2 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0
South Carolina	3	2	0	0.600	137	27.4	142	28.4	-1	1 1 0	3 1 0	3 2 0
Scarborough	1	4	0	0.200	107	21.4	136	27.2	-5.8	0 3 0	1 3 0	1 4 0
Gwinnett	1	4	0	0.200	78	15.6	133	26.6	-11	1 2 0	1 3 0	1 4 0
Sebastian	1	4	0	0.200	98	19.6	153	30.6	-11	0 2 0	1 3 0	1 4 0

PASSING

#	Player	Team	Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Bortles	CHP	123	86	69.9	1170	2	1.6	72	8	6.5	114.9
2	Ryan, M	AUR	166	111	66.9	1293	2	1.2	76	14	8.4	113.4
3	Cutler	TCT	153	104	68	1200	4	2.6	42	15	9.8	113.2
4	Rivers, P	CAR	170	115	67.6	1692	4	2.4	75	10	5.9	109.7
5	Griffin III	SCB	129	84	65.1	1153	1	0.8	65	7	5.4	108.4
6	Brees	DTL	111	83	74.8	909	2	1.8	45	5	4.5	106
7	Smith, A	MAR	129	84	65.1	890	0	0	48	8	6.2	105.8
8	Wilson, R	ICC	133	90	67.7	1123	3	2.3	45	8	6	104.3
9	Newton, C	CHI	161	113	70.2	1210	3	1.9	44	8	5	100.7
10	Stafford, M	VV	176	107	60.8	1669	4	2.3	65	7	4	96
11	Romo	SC	207	130	62.8	1426	6	2.9	71	13	6.3	92
12	Flacco	COW	193	118	61.1	1443	7	3.6	80	11	5.7	88.1
13	Manning, P	PIC	190	116	61.1	1274	6	3.2	43	11	5.8	87
14	Luck	MOH	173	102	59	1221	4	2.3	77	8	4.6	86.4
15	Brady	YOR	118	66	55.9	813	1	0.8	55	4	3.4	85.2

RUSHING

#	Player	Team	Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Moreno	SCB	124	611	4.9	24	10
2	McCoy, L	GWG	120	485	4	35	4
3	Johnson, C	PIC	104	466	4.5	20	1
4	Spiller	ICC	63	464	7.4	55	2
5	Lynch, M	YOR	93	453	4.9	48	4
6	Murray	MVM	100	451	4.5	62	3
7	Gore	SC	85	431	5.1	56	2
8	Charles,J	VV	80	428	5.4	51	5
9	Morris, A	COW	89	416	4.7	21	2
10	Lacy	CAR	107	403	3.8	24	9
11	Peterson, A	CHI	85	355	4.2	26	5
12	Ivory	CHP	82	303	3.7	50	3
13	Ball, M	MOH	60	300	5	21	2
14	Mathews, R	LAK	82	296	3.6	19	2
15	Jackson, F	DTL	70	289	4.1	15	3
16	Forte	AUR	81	279	3.4	23	4
17	Rice, R	SBE	58	247	4.3	54	1
18	Ellington	MAR	41	244	6	38	0
19	Tate, B	VV	31	217	7	41	3
20	Williams, A	MAR	59	216	3.7	24	2

RECEIVING

			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Brown, A	TCT	43	478	11.1	33	6
2	Green, A	SC	41	569	13.9	71	5
3	Woodhead	CHI	33	324	9.8	35	3
4	Gordon, J	CAR	33	639	19.4	75	4
5	Forte	AUR	32	254	7.9	41	0
6	Jackson, D	SBE	32	415	13	49	3
7	Graham, J	MOH	30	439	14.6	65	3
8	Bryant, D	VV	30	515	17.2	50	2
9	Evans, M	COW	29	420	14.5	46	4
10	Garcon	PIC	29	312	10.8	21	4
11	Watkins, S	CHP	29	431	14.9	71	3
12	Jennings, G	SC	28	288	10.3	58	4
13	Hilton	DTL	28	298	10.6	19	2
14	Jackson, V	TCT	26	502	19.3	42	6
15	Boldin	AUR	26	529	20.3	76	9
16	Wright, K	TCT	26	234	9	14	3
17	Jones, J	VV	26	511	19.7	65	3
18	Douglas, H	MOH	25	230	9.2	24	0
19	Johnson, A	SCB	25	304	12.2	40	1
20	Murray	MVM	25	156	6.2	19	2

KICKING

#	Player	Team	FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts
1	Folk	AUR	13	11	84.6	7	4	55	55
2	Zuerlein	ICC	12	11	91.7	5	2	51	48
3	Prater	MOH	13	12	92.3	4	2	56	47
4	Crosby	VV	13	11	84.6	4	1	54	47
5	Henery	SCB	10	8	80	2	0	46	45
6	Bailey, D	CHI	14	10	71.4	5	0	49	44
7	Feely	SBE	13	10	76.9	3	0	49	41
8	Hauschka	CAR	9	5	55.6	3	1	53	37
9	Novak	COW	9	8	88.9	3	0	44	36
10	Vinatieri	SS	10	9	90	2	1	54	36
11	Dawson	DTL	7	7	100	2	1	57	35
12	Tucker, J	SC	11	6	54.5	2	0	44	35
13	Carpenter	MVM	10	7	70	1	0	44	33
14	Gostkowski	TCT	5	5	100	3	0	49	32
15	Brown, J	MAR	8	6	75	1	0	44	31
16	Walsh	YOR	8	6	75	3	1	54	28
17	Lindell	LAK	7	6	85.7	3	1	59	28
18	Suisham	GWG	5	5	100	1	0	45	24
19	Bironas	CHP	3	2	66.7	1	0	47	19
20	Janikowski	PIC	1	1	100	0	0	27	16

Welcome to the

BLOGOSPHERE



WHERE FANS SPEAK

LEAP INTO THE FUTURE!



<http://gladgames.org>

BY JIMMY CARTER (CONTRIBUTOR) ON NOVEMBER 16, 2014



Jarvis Landry

Sadly it appears that our brave Gladiators are finally spent as a force in the EFL's South Division – for this year at least. Perhaps it is for the best that our team takes a much-needed rest this year. While the South looks to be the weakest division overall, with three teams now at 1-4, it is also home to one of the league's most powerful teams, the Aurora Mustangs. The top of the Division appears out of reach, leaving a wildcard berth the only realistic proposition. But even that looks like an unattainable goal for the 2014 edition of our boys in black and gold.

This unfortunately reminds me somewhat of my final run at the Presidency. It had been a good run but my time had come. To put it in football terms, people in 1980 wanted a coach (President) who wasn't afraid to throw downfield. I was, well, a touch more conservative in my play-calling. I thought I was being responsible, but I wasn't scoring many points. Oh well.....

While 2014 will most likely be a losing season for the Gladiators, there remains a lot to hold the interest of the average fan. Losing means more opportunities for younger players to show what they can do on the field against the best competition that other teams can bring. An example of that in the Gladiators' first win of the season was the performance of wide receiver Jarvis Landry. Gwinnett's 5th round pick out of LSU showed off his acrobatic skill with a twisting leap to snare a 25-yard pass from Ben Roethlisberger in the 2nd quarter. Then in the 4th quarter, with the Glads hanging onto a 17-15 lead, he showed he is a savvy route runner by nodding off Kendrick Lewis and working back to the ball to get free for a 9-yard TD catch that gave his team breathing room against the Swordfish.

Landry is still raw. He has been targeted 28 times so far this year but has caught only 12 passes while leading the team in drops with 3. These bumps in the road are to be expected for a young wide receiver. The good thing is that while stepping in for injured veteran Reggie Wayne he showed flashes of skill in Week 5 that he might not have shown this early if not for the opportunity.



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – It turned out that the police were indeed looking for me after my near fatal brush with the **Red Pimple** last week. I was, for a few days, a suspect in the assault and robbery of a nun!

I don't know what shakes my confidence in the NYPD more: the fact that the initial investigation found me, the obvious victim, to be a suspect in the first place; or the inability of the detectives to find me until five days later, after I had apparently exonerated myself unwittingly through my column. Some sports fan in the detective office of the Midtown North Precinct read my article and deducted that it was evidence. A closer follow-up with witnesses, most notably the staff at Starbucks who know me and saw much of the action, corroborated most of my account.

I was interviewed by a baby-faced detective named Schwartz, who struck me as not being hard-boiled enough to be a New York City cop. He kept asking me if I needed victim support services, as if I had been traumatized into catatonia by the attempt on my life. Eventually I got fed up and told him that he and the NYPD could support me best by arresting and locking up that costumed freak who had tried to skewer me with a sword. He didn't bring up victim services again after that.

Somehow, a guy with a tricorne dressed in bright red, wearing white make-up and carrying a sword with two burly bicorne-wearing cape-cloaked thugs in tow did not catch the attention of officers responding to the fight in progress call that day. They "slipped away" according to Schwartz, which reduced me to tears of laughter. I realize New York is crowded with freaks and derelicts of all descriptions but when a trio like that is able to melt into the crowd it is time for martial law.

On a happier note, Week Five football was pretty awesome overall. Here is my view of the drama:

CONFESSIO

Confirming what much of the Mohave sports media has been saying for a few years now and obnoxious national media personalities such as **Cowan Bullherd** have been increasingly willing to suggest, **Bobby Elder** confessed in his post-game press conference that he has no clue how to coach his team. His surprising admission came on the heels of an embarrassing 21-10 loss to Charleswood just one week after it had appeared that his Hellfire had turned a corner with their 33-24 road upset of the Violators the week before.

When asked what he had done differently this week to inspire such a flat outing against a team many still believe could be the worst in the league, Elder replied bluntly, "I coached." After pausing to let his words sink in, he added: "Last week I didn't coach; this week I coached. It may be that simple."

A Mexican correspondent for Azteca 7 TV in Ensenada posed the question that was stirring in everyone's minds at that moment: "Señor Elder, are you saying that you don't know how to coach?"

"Not exactly," he answered. "I've been doing this for a long time and if I didn't know how to coach you'd think somebody would have pointed that out to me by now...." he was interrupted at that point by a correspondent from the 'Mohave Desert Flame.'

"But we have been pointing that out, coach," piped up maverick reporter **Sterling McDume**. "Just last month I wrote that you should resign or be fired because you don't know what you're doing."

Anger flashed in Elder's eyes. He turned to McDume and with a withering glare replied, "Yes, but what the hell do you know about coaching you little twerp? What I meant was somebody who knows this game inside-out telling me I'm not doing it right, not a little fart weasel like you!"

McDume recoiled then Elder continued: "Look, at some point in this pointless exercise one of you is going to ask me a question that starts like this; '*coach Elder...*'" (he said this last with a nasal sneer), "*what is your answer for....*" (now switching back to his normal voice) you name it – lack of running game, no protection for Andrew, poor play by the secondary – whatever the flavour of the month is. Before you ask me any of that today I'll save you the trouble and tell you I DON'T KNOW. I HAVE NO FRIGGIN' CLUE! I HAVEN'T HAD A CLUE IN A LONG, LONG TIME!"

The room fell completely silent. Most of these reporters had been in this spot before – the moment of calm before a storm of invective from one of the EFL's most volatile post-game personalities. But, instead of a torrent of abuse, Elder seemed to be suddenly enveloped in an unfamiliar air of calm.

“There, I said it!” He surveyed the group for a moment, his hard features softening as his pent up fury melted away. “And it feels GOOD! Ask me anything guys, I can handle it.”

Randy the Desert Rat spoke first. “Okay, coach, what do you think you need to do to get more consistent performances out of Andrew Luck?”

“I don’t know, Randy! I have no clue,” a smiling Elder answered without hesitation.

Pablo del Fortunado of the *Río de Fuego*, a Mexican Hellfire Fanzine, was next up. “What eez yo-ah plan for the defence, señor?”

“Ditto! No friggin idea, Pablo! Can I call a friend?” Elder quipped and burst out laughing at his own joke.

And so the press conference continued in that vein, with a dozen reporters’ questions all being answered with variants of *I don’t know* by the happiest **Bobby Elder** I have ever seen. Call it therapy, call it temporary madness, call it honesty – it all fits.

THE SPIRIT OF FOOTBALL

At Thermopylae Stadium, Pickering got a much-needed win and, in the process, may have saved the life of their overwrought owner by beating division rival York 27-3 in a walk-away contest that contained little drama after a closely contested 1st quarter.

Who knows if it would have made a difference in the bottom line, but the 4th down and inches stand by the Spartans at their 3 yard line to stop York on its opening drive definitely set the tone for an afternoon of futility for the Swords. With Pickering bringing the farm on the blitz and gunning for **Marshawn Lynch** (the Beast) Brady play faked, dropped back and turned to pass, only to find a wall of blue jerseys cracking through his flimsy line of defence. Unable to see his primary receiver he quickly flicked the ball to “The Beast,” who trapped it against the turf for an incomplete pass. York came away with no points and lost its swagger. As expected, the gamble provided fodder for talk show hosts and critical phone-in callers.

Let me add my own, somewhat discordant, tune to the chorus of second-guessers lining up to bash **Jay Hammond**: I definitely *liked* the call to go for it in that situation and, even though some people obviously wish to debate it, I liked the call to go play action, since everybody in the stadium was expecting a safe handoff to “The Beast.” Certainly it was a risk, but a *good* risk with a veteran like Brady at QB. The payoff would have been six points, not a mere first down.

But what I liked even *better* was the all-or-nothing answer that Pickering defensive coordinator, **Leonidis XCVII** had for York in that situation. There are moments in football when sheer brute force and ferocity will devour finesse. This was one of those moments when clever looked too cute and was flattened by an ugly, uncalculating primal force. Leonidis put nine big bodies into the box and sent them all after the biggest threat he could see, Lynch. It didn't ultimately matter that **Kelvin Benjamin** was wide open for a second; Brady couldn't see him at the key moment. All he could see was Lynch and the Spartan defenders converging in on him. This forced him to throw a difficult pass away from the coverage that Lynch couldn't handle. Stop made!

Analytically speaking, Leonidis technically got the play wrong, but he instilled the right spirit and achieved the right result for his team. **Jay Hammond** technically got the play right, but his opponent, not interested in playing chess, simply upended the board and punched him in the mouth. Don't think of it as an injustice; think of it as the spirit of football taking over.

QUICK! HIDE THE HELMET!

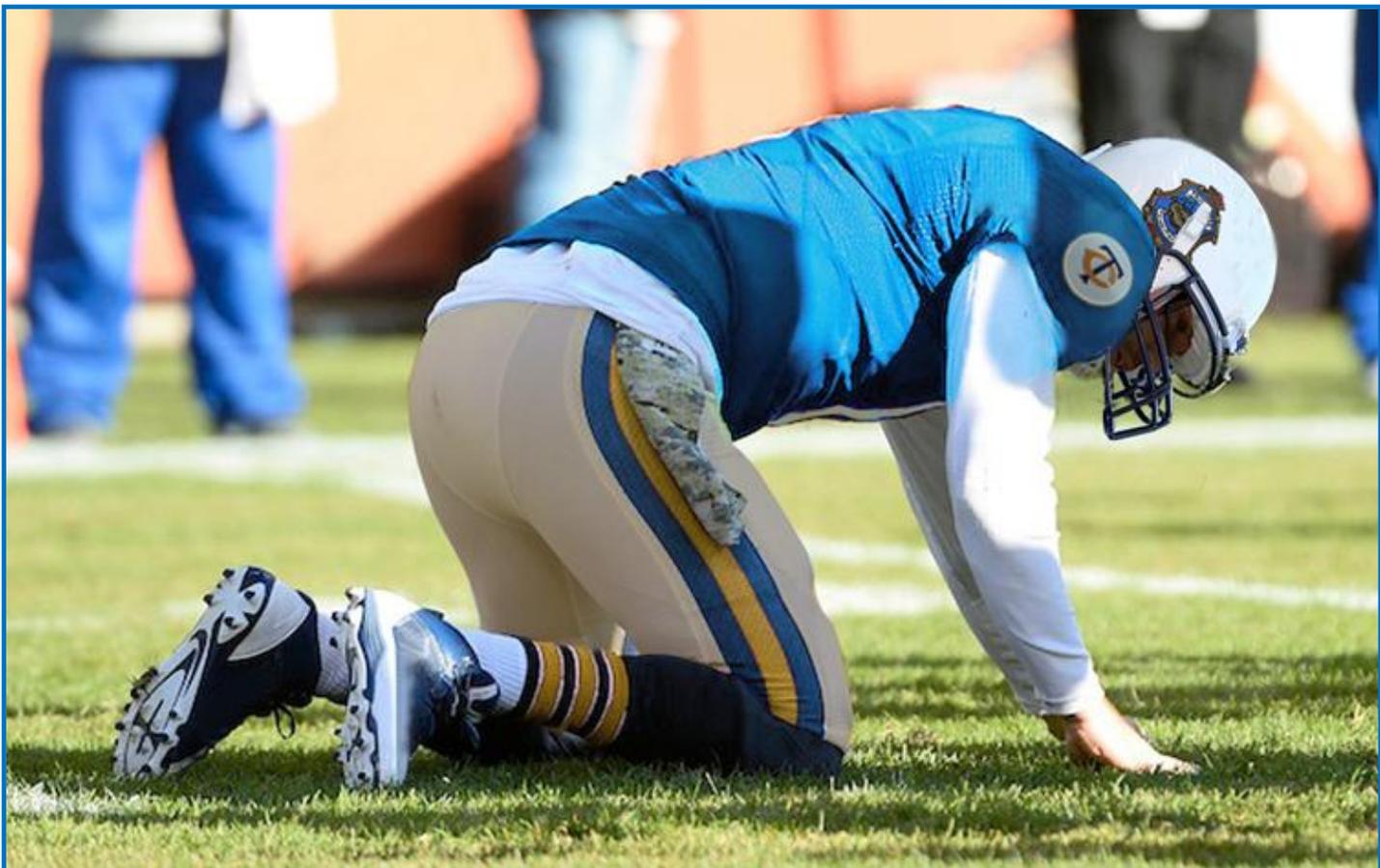
The week's most thrilling contest played out at Jurassic Park with the Durham Thunder Lizards recovering from a near-epic 4th quarter collapse to defeat South Carolina 35-31. In the process, the case for **Nick Foles** being the regular starter for Durham got a little stronger.

Drew Brees was in his historical hall-of-fame form for three quarters of the game, calmly picking apart the Regulators' standard zone defence for 3 touchdown passes while building what looked like an insurmountable 28-7 lead heading into the 4th quarter. Then **Hal Corson** woke up and his team with him. Digging the emergency playbook out of his workout bag (a red loose leaf binder with a sticky label affixed to the cover that reads *'NEVER USE THESE PLAYS!'*) Corson unleashed **Tamba Hali** on an unsuspecting Durham front that had dialed down to cruise control. Having blitzed but once all day, the results were almost immediate. Pressure caused a drive-ending sack and played a role in two interceptions that, in all, led to 17 of 24 Regulators' 4th quarter points.

Brees, no stranger to pressure over his illustrious career, looked unusually flustered by the sudden push from the Regulators. Being the true competitor that he is, he did not cower from it, but he did become very annoyed and defiant in its face. As if to say, 'how dare you!' Brees took aim at the tightest coverage he could find. He sought out those receivers who were blanketed and, in taunting fashion, threw directly at the defenders covering them. It was more than bold, it was reckless. Once the Regulators absorbed the surprise of it all, they started to make plays. Two interceptions led to the tying touchdown and go-ahead field goal with less than 4 minutes remaining in the game.

Durham coach **George Kaldis** had seen enough. He pulled Brees from the game in a most humiliating way – by hiding his helmet in a 'Dino-ade' cooler. This was partly for effect, but also partly out of necessity.

When Brees had seen his coach give the sign for the switch, he had started openly interfering with **Nick Foles'** sideline warm-up by stepping in front of back-up tight end **Jeff Cumberland**, catching a pass and throwing it back 50 yards over Foles' head. While his bewildered back-up had stared at the football bouncing toward the tunnel, wondering what to do next, Brees had tried to snatch Foles' helmet from a startled equipment manager, who had managed to hold on to it with some difficulty.



The big news of the week was bad news for the Triumph. **Jay Cutler**, the EFL leader in TD passes through the first five weeks, went down hard in a 31-19 loss to division rival Carthage. Cutler is expected to be out 4 to 5 weeks, dealing a potential fatal blow to **Guy Williams'** hopes for an East Division title. Rookie QB **Johnny Manziel** saw his first action in relief and will now get the chance to live up to his 1st round pedigree.

Brees was determined to finish the game, no matter what, but he could not play without a helmet. While he searched frantically for his, **Nick Foles** jogged on to the field to take over at the 20 yard line. Throwing to open receivers, Foles marched the Lizards 80 yards in just 2 minutes, scrambling for 15 yards, surviving a sack, and completing all 3 of his pass attempts, including a 49-yard beauty to **Vernon Davis** and a game-winning 11-yard strike to **TY Hilton**. Calm, cool, collected was Foles, while Brees frantically ran up and down the sidelines tossing equipment around until finally restrained by the combined efforts of **Jared Allen** and **Larry Foote** before he was able to attack his coach.

It is only Week Five and the Thunder Lizards already have a full-blown quarterback drama on their hands. They are 4-1 in spite of it all, but not looking as dominant as most pundits had predicted. All eyes will be on coach Kaldis to see who he puts out behind center next week for Durham's all-important showdown with Southern powerhouse, Aurora.

VETERAN'S DAY

The Triumph lost more than a game this week; they lost their starting quarterback for at least one month. **Jay Cutler** went down and stayed down after **Karl Klug** of the Cannibals knocked him down as he released a pass in the 2nd quarter. Cutler fell on his left shoulder and was favouring it as he laboured off the field in obvious pain. Cutler will undergo an MRI tomorrow but the preliminary diagnosis is ligament damage due to a partial separation.

For **Guy Williams**, it was a particularly hard blow. The Triumph jet has been flying high despite one of its engines being down – the turbo-charged Cutler was more than compensating through the air for the loss of ground engine **Doug Martin**. But with the early season MVP now out, questions arise about the ability of 1st round pick **Johnny Manziel** to keep up the pace Cutler had set over the first quarter of the season. Those questions were only partially answered by Johnny Football's baptism by fire as Top Gun for Air Triumph. Unlike his first action of the year, mopping up against a beaten Pats squad in Week Two, Manziel entered a game-in-progress against a tough Cannibals squad – the Triumph's principal rival.

Reviews of Manziel's performance against Carthage were mixed: Texas A&M alumni and Johnny Football's parents were generally positive; everyone else was not impressed. His best moment came in the 4th quarter when he scrambled away from imaginary pressure and threw a ball downfield to **Antonio Brown** for a 32-yard completion. His worst moments (and there were many) came late in the 4th quarter when his team needed him to make a play. Back-to-back interceptions wrecked any chance for a Twin Cities comeback and allowed the Cannibals to salt away a 31-19 victory.

For the fans at TCF Bank Field in Minneapolis it was a sad ending to a day that began with a stirring tribute to veterans. Jets from the 148th Fighter Wing flew overhead during the National Anthem while the 1st Battalion 216th Air Defence Artillery fired a volley of stinger missiles in salute. The spectacular explosion of the lead fighter jet and successful parachute ejection by the pilot onto the field was breathtaking to watch, and brought a rousing ovation of patriotic fervor from the crowd.

COWS AND DAWGS

At the Dawg Pound in Markham, where the Corn Kings always play the North Stars tough, it appeared that **Darrin Jones** would finally be able to relax at home as his team jumped out to a 14-0 lead in the 2nd quarter. A solid drive by the offence ended with **Alex Smith** threading the needle to tight end **Anthony Fasano** from 2 yards out for a TD then, on Cowtown's subsequent possession, a hard hit on **Chris Ogbonnaya** by linebacker **D'Qwell Jackson** jarred the ball loose and **Michael Griffin** picked it up and ran it back 45 yards for a TD. With a two-score lead, the fans barking and howling at the Pound, and **Joe Flacco** looking like his usual confused self, the prospects of a comfortable North Stars victory looked good.

But you just never know when "Joe Cool" is going get hot, which is what he got as soon as **Jim Coghlin** ditched the run as a strategy and started deploying 3 and 4-wide receiver sets. Flacco got warmed up with a field goal drive then fired a warning shot across the bow of the Good Ship Markham with a stunning 40-yard TD pass to **Cecil Shorts III** in the dying seconds of the first half to crown a dizzyingly efficient 98-yard drive executed over the span of 2 minutes and 19 seconds. That was the life-sucking moment for Markham. They still had the lead, but the taste of that drive soured their mood.

In the 2nd half, the Corn Kings picked up where they left off, scoring majors on their first two possessions on passes of 3 yards and 38 yards to rookie **Mike Evans**. In between, Markham kicker **Josh Brown** missed a 38-yard field goal, a gaffe that would come back to haunt the home team. Looking to press their 24-14 advantage, the Corn Kings dodged a bullet when **Alfred Morris** lost a fumble at their own 36 yard line. But a penalty wiped out a 35-yard field goal by Brown and he missed on the re-try. Cowtown was unscathed by the turnover, but the check seemed to cool off their offence. They went three-and-out on their next possession, giving Markham back the ball at their 28 yard line after the punt by **Johnny Hekker**. The dynamic **Andre Ellington** gave his team a lift with a 46-yard catch-and-run on a medium hitch then **Jordy Nelson** finished off the drive with a catch in the end zone from 4 yards out to bring Markham within 3 points.

With new hope for the home team and a rabid crowd creating a deafening din, the stage was set for a Cowtown crumble. But the crowd was soon shocked into silence by a highlight reel 80-yard TD catch by veteran **Larry Fitzgerald**, who snatched a short hitch and darted through a huge gap in the secondary to take it all the way to the house. Watching it on TV, there was no sign of a Markham defender until **Tracy Porter** appeared in the top left corner of the screen as Fitzgerald churned past the Markham 30 yard line; he was gaining ground on the ageing star but not fast enough to catch him. A camera shot showing the location of free safety **George Iloka** has not yet been found and it is unknown where he was on the play. Iloka, on advice of his lawyer, has refused to comment.

The Corn Kings had their 10-point lead back but they would need every point of it to withstand the Markham surge. **Alex Smith** went to work, completing 7 of 10 for 63 yards and a 2-yard TD pass to Ellington on the Stars' next drive, converting a key 4th down along the way. Trailing now 31-28, the Markham defence set the stage for the final drama by stopping the Corn Kings on 3rd and 1 and getting the ball back at their 29 with 1:33 remaining and 2 timeouts left. A pair of 8-yard runs by Ellington and a pass interference penalty against **Terrance Newman** brought Markham across midfield. But there they stalled, turning the ball over on downs when **Trumaine Johnson** wrapped up Ellington for a 6-yard gain on 4th and 10.

With 26 seconds remaining it was a mere formality for Cowtown to kneel down and enter their victory into the books. But only in Markham, in a game between these teams, would there still be something left to get fans' hearts racing. With Markham having burned their remaining timeouts, Flacco set up over center for the final kneel down. To his shock, and the momentary horror of Corn Kings fans across the world, **Evan Dietrich-Smith** hiked the ball early. It ricocheted off Flacco's hands and spilled onto the grass. In the mad scramble that followed, Flacco fell on top of it and was immediately buried under 21 bodies. When the linesmen had sorted out the pile 5 minutes later, the ref signalled Cowtown ball, breaking the hearts of Markham fans in the process and sending Cowtown fans to washrooms to clean up.

Only in Markham.....only against the Corn Kings....I can't wait for the re-match at Tillman Field.

NO LAUGHING MATTER

On the scoreboard all was good for the Banana Sluggs in their 38-13 pasting of the woeful Knights at Metlife Stadium in West Santa Clara. On the actual field, it was not so easy. The Knights charged out of the gate like actual Knights – the kind that run over people. **Mike Glennon**, for a rare and precious moment, looked masterful in leading that early charge, setting up a 10-yard TD run by **Le'Veon Bell** with 3 consecutive passes totalling 68 yards. In terms of pure offence, it was the best effort I have seen from this ramshackle unit so far in this year. But if they were serious about challenging the Mighty Banana Sluggs (I love writing that!) over the course of a full 60 minutes they would need a lot more of the same.

The Knights held the ball for more than 8 minutes on their next possession, taking 20 plays to drive 60 yards and coming away with a field goal to take a 10-7 lead in the second quarter. Santa Clara countered with a field goal of its own, but found the going tough against an inspired 'Blue Shield.' The Sluggs were saved by the gun at the end of the 1st half when, for some reason

not clearly discernible to an independent observer, they ran a play from their own 18 yard line with 6 seconds left. The Knights' **Brian Orakpo** sacked and stripped **RGIII** and LA recovered at the Sluggs' 11 yard line. But time had expired, preventing a free try from 28 yards out for **Rian Lindell**.

At half time it was 10-10 and, frankly, not even Knights fans could believe it. The blueprint for the Knights' success in a game where they were 14-point underdogs was thus laid out: possess the ball for long stretches on offence and trust the defence to be a lot better than anyone expected against one of the league's offensive powerhouses. But those who had dared to dream of a miraculous upset while loading up on snacks at half time would soon have their fantasy bubble burst.

The Sluggs took advantage of a 3rd down pass interference penalty against LA's **Jeremiah Bell** to sustain a touchdown drive to open the 2nd half. **Knowshon Moreno** ran behind a nice block by **Jake Long** to break the plane from 3 yards out to give the Sluggs a 17-10 lead. The illusion of Knights' competitiveness was sustained a little longer thanks to a 69-yard kick return by **Brandin Cooks** that set up a field goal to make it 17-13. But the Knights would get no closer. Santa Clara put together another scoring drive, a methodical mix of short and medium passes garnished with a 10-yard **RGIII** scramble for 10 yards and topped off with another Moreno plunge to pay dirt to make it 24-13.

The Knights' attack had shot its bolt. Not built to move well against an average defence, they were certainly over-matched trying to come from behind against one of the league's most talented defences. **Sam Bradford** entered the game at QB in relief of Glennon and was dumped in the backfield on consecutive plays by **Robert Mathis**, who stripped the ball on the second sack and **Vontaze Burfict** recovered at the Knights' 17. Two plays later Moreno ran in untouched from 6 yards for his fourth touchdown run of the day and a 31-13 lead. The one-two punch of Mathis and Burfict delivered another haymaker on the next Knights' possession with Mathis strip-sacking Bradford and Burfict picking up the loose ball, but this time he ran it into the end zone himself for another touchdown and a 38-13 lead.

The inevitable collapse of the Knights had finally come, prompting **Jeff Dohrn** to play his final card; he put rookie QB, **Terry Bridgewater** into the game to test the rookie's mettle and give him some "experience." Dohrn, for all his coaching acumen, has never really understood quarterbacks or how to use them. Putting a rookie on the field against a crazy-good defence maddened by the scent of blood and performing at its peak was not only cruel, but stupid. Mrs. Bridgewater could be heard shrieking "NOOOOO, not my Terry! NOOOO, PLLEEEASE! Not my Terry!" from the stands as no. 5 took the field. Bridgewater did well to stay alive, but he was not effective. He did, at least, get to "experience" the hard knocks an EFL quarterback must learn to endure by being sacked and getting intercepted, finishing 2 of 6 for 18 yards and QB rating of 13.2.

In the end, the Sluggs laughed their way to what must have felt in those dying minutes of the game to have been an easy victory. But when **Major Gerow** reviews the game film of the first half, he won't be laughing. He will be looking for ways to ensure his team does not start that way against the tougher competition yet to come.

AROUND THE EFL

The bleeding stopped in Virden this week and fans are hoping that a 41-24 clubbing of a strong Chino team signals the beginning of healing. After both teams combined to score on each of the game's first five possessions, the Convicts blinked first, delivering the only punt of the 1st half and falling behind by the difference, 24-17. **Matt Stafford** continued his ulcer-inducing play, throwing two interceptions in the 3rd quarter to open the door for Chino to tie the game on a 13-yard TD run by **Adrian Peterson**. But **Jamaal Charles** came to the rescue in the 4th quarter, touching the ball on all 7 plays of a 58-yard drive and running the last in for a TD to give the Violators some breathing room and top off a 138-yard, 3-touchdown rushing day. In another sign that the Violators could make some noise before the end of the season, despite such a horrific start, the defence that had been so disparaged recently in the Manitoba Media put in a strong 2nd half performance, limiting Chino to 131 net yards of offence and holding down their comeback efforts. There may yet be reason for our **Lance Barrate** to smile.

Remember what I say, dear readers: a confident **Matt Ryan** is capable of winning it all for the Mustangs this year. The Aurora pivot set the tone in a 35-7 butchering of Scarborough by calling an audible for a bomb into the teeth of the wind on 3rd & 6. Veteran receiver, **Anquan Boldin** made it work by sprinting for the spot on the field where he knew the ball would be. Ryan made the throw and Boldin made the catch for a 40-yard TD that sent an early shock through the Blue Eagles. It doesn't take much to stun **Chris Dickinson's** fragile team and that opening score seemed to do the trick. The dominating Aurora defence did the rest, forcing **Aaron Rodgers** out of the game early and toying with his back-up **Terrelle Pryor** the rest of the way.

At the Gwinnett Coliseum the Gladiators finally got into the win column by netting the Swordfish 24-15. Rookie wide receiver **Jarvis Landry** stepped up and made some plays in the absence of **Big Ben's** favourite target, **Reggie Wayne**, catching 6 passes for 93 yards and 1 touchdown. Landry benefitted from a defensive focus on scatback, **LeSean McCoy**, who put up fullback numbers, in rushing for 73 yards on 24 carries and 2 touchdowns.

Finally, at Joe Ferguson Stadium in Iowa, the Cubs defeated the Monarchs 24-10 in a game unlikely to inspire optimism for fans of either team. Special teams came through for **Deron Redding**, playing a role in 17 of their 24 points. **Jason Pierre-Paul's** blocked punt set up their first touchdown and **Dexter McCluster** returned a punt 63 yards for their second major. The worrying sign for the Monarchs is how workhorse **DeMarco Murray** was contained, rather easily, by a Cubs defence that had given up 4.9 yards per carry in the first four weeks of the season. Without Murray as a threat, **Ryan Tannehill** looked lost.

BUG THE BOOKIE!

JIMMY THE GEEK GIVES YOU HIS PICKS FOR WEEK SIX EFL ACTION

Your source for fantasy and on-line betting solutions



RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 5:

30-20-0

JIMMY'S WEEK SIX PICKS

CHARLESWOOD @ CHINO (line – CONVICTS by 5)

INJURIES: Charleswood – Michael Crabtree (OUT), Anthony Spencer (OUT), Sammy Watkins (OUT), Kellen Winslow (OUT); Chino – John Conner (OUT), Roddy White (OUT).

Blake Bortles is the top rated quarterback in the league. If your first instinct was to verify that statement, or you expected my next sentence to read “just kidding; what are you, crazy?” then you are like everyone else who is not paying attention. Check it out; you must see it to believe it. While not leading the league in any single category, Bortles is at the top of it in passer rating, 1.5 points ahead of second. He is the ultimate game manager, sticking to short and medium passes; and he is proving to be extremely accurate. It is a testament to Jason Findlay’s coaching acumen that he has found a way to protect his rookie quarterback and make him effective at the same time. He is a big reason why the Patriots are a surprising 2-3 and why the smart money can no longer dismiss him or the Pats as irrelevant. But this week Bortles takes his offence into hostile Chino without his no. 1 target and lifeline in the passing game, Sammy Watkins. The Convicts are riding a two-game losing streak and are in no mood to take a paddling from a rookie quarterback. Expect a slow-moving game featuring a lot of AP and few opportunities for Charleswood. **PICK: CHINO**

VIRDEN @ IOWA CITY (line – CUBS by 4)

INJURIES: Virden – Antonio Smith (DOUBTFUL), Melvin Ingram (OUT), Justin Blackmon (OUT), Julio Jones (OUT), Nick Perry (OUT), Aldon Smith (OUT), Aqib Talib (OUT); Iowa City – None.

The top rated offences in the league go at two statistically shaky defences, promising fireworks aplenty. The temptation for Virden will be to unleash its receiving corps on a weak Cubs secondary that surrenders 266 yards per game and has picked off just one pass all season. But if the historical trend holds up, a free-wheeling Matt Stafford is probably not in the Violators’ best interests. Jamaal Charles was the main weapon in a desperately needed win last week versus Chino, while Stafford placed the game in jeopardy with two interceptions. Stafford can kill you, but he needs a good running game to be deadly, so look for Virden to establish the run. The Cubs run a balanced offence but will need to be able to throw the ball to keep up with Virden. That’s where the stats are deceiving; the Virden secondary is a lot better than their early season numbers indicate, while the Cubs’ passing game benefits from a running attack that averages a league-high 6.3 yards per carry. In a race for the goal line, Virden moves much faster. **PICK: VIRDEN**

TWIN CITIES @ LOS ANGELES (line – TRIUMPH by 10)

INJURIES: Twin Cities – Clint Bolling (OUT), Jay Cutler (OUT), Jerome Felton (OUT), Doug Martin (OUT), Henry Melton (OUT), Shane Vereen (OUT); Los Angeles – Andre Brown (OUT), Mike Brown (OUT), Cortland Finnegan (OUT), Shonn Greene (OUT).

The Triumph is banged up badly on offence after a disastrous first place showdown last week against Carthage. The Knights’ offence is nothing to admire, but their defence is capable and would be posting much better numbers if they weren’t on the field so much. Johnny Manziel will get his first professional start for the Triumph and will have the opportunity to impress if he can keep drives alive with his legs and distribute the ball to all of his excellent receiving options. Nobody is expecting Cutlerian precision from Johnny Football, but everybody is expecting to see evidence of why the Triumph made him the first quarterback selected at #8 overall. Who will start at quarterback for Los Angeles is a mystery. It may not matter, since there is a good chance all three will dress and see the field at some point in the game and each one stinks in his own special way. Nevertheless, rookie nerves could work in the Knights’ favour when it comes to beating the spread. **PICK: LOS ANGELES**

SANTA CLARA @ MOHAVE (line – BANANA SLUGGS by 7)

INJURIES: Santa Clara – Jairus Byrd (OUT). Mohave – Justin Houston (OUT).

In Mohave's only victory of the season Andrew Luck found success against a pretty good Virden secondary when he was blitzed just once all game. Last week, he struggled severely against a below-average secondary when he was blitzed almost 50 times by the Pats. With time to throw, Luck has the skill and the brain to dissect most defences, so keeping him from getting comfortable is the key to victory for opponents. Making opposing quarterbacks uncomfortable is what the Banana Sluggs under Major Gerow do best. The Sluggs seem content to give up the odd big play, just so long as Robert Mathis gets his quota of sacks and fumbles. The Hellfire just don't have any answers for what they are going to face against the Sluggs' back eleven. As for the Santa Clara offence, it can use the weapon of its choice to execute the Hellfire. **PICK: SANTA CLARA**

MISSION VIEJO @ CARTHAGE (line – CANNIBALS by 11)

INJURIES: Mission Viejo – Brandon Browner (OUT), Brian Cushing (OUT), Kareem Jackson (OUT), Jarret Johnson (OUT), David Nelson (OUT), Mike Williams (OUT); Carthage – Danny Amendola (OUT), Rhett Ellison (OUT).

Carthage passed its first big test of the season by pounding the Triumph on the road last week, but they are not garnering widespread admiring attention equal to their perfect 5-0 record. Maybe it is because Jay Cutler played less than half a game in that contest, or maybe it is because the competition in the East is not seen as top notch, or maybe it is simply because they play on a dot of sand in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Who knows? In any case, they can win no additional respect this week by toppling the nebulous Monarchs, yet they cannot assume it will be easy. Chris Ferraro's team is much improved over previous editions, but they still carry the reputation of being losers. Any good team with ambition and self-respect expects to beat such a team, but to assume victory here is perilous. The Monarchs are at that point in their development where they can ambush an arrogant opponent, but are unlikely to prevail against a good team well-prepared to handle their strengths. The Cannibals are showing flexibility in their game plans and obviously know their enemies well before they kill them. **PICK: CARTHAGE**

MARKHAM @ SOUTH CAROLINA (line – REGULATORS by 2)

INJURIES: Markham – None; South Carolina – Jacquizz Rodgers (QUESTIONABLE), Sam Acho (OUT), Kevin Zeitler (OUT).

Although both are coming off losses, these two teams are heading in opposite directions in terms of confidence. The Regulators nearly pulled off an historic comeback against one of the best teams in the Conference, while the North Stars felt like they let one get away from them against rebuilding Cowtown. The momentum is in the Regs' favour and they will need every bit of extra drive that brings them against a Markham defence that, before last week's debacle, had contained better quarterbacks than Joe Flacco. Markham fans are hoping that last week was an anomaly and are looking for a stabilizing effort from the defence. But the Regs are averaging 27 points per game, which happens to be the exact number they scored against the best defence in the league when they lost to Aurora. The Regulators should hang at least 20 points on the North Stars; how much they surrender will be the difference. The Regs play a mix of 4 and 3-man fronts to suit the situation and have added the blitz to their repertoire, although the blitz is still considered a treat to give Tamba Hali when he has been good and done that "coverage thing" Hal Corson likes him to do. Expect the North Stars to repeatedly test the Regs' front line to set up deep shots to Jordy Nelson. How well they succeed will depend on how much pressure the Regs can bring. **PICK: SOUTH CAROLINA**

DURHAM @ AURORA (line – MUSTANGS by 9)

INJURIES: Durham – Tyrann Mathieu (OUT); Aurora – Jeremy Kerley (OUT), LaRon Landry (OUT).

The Mustangs have done everything they can do to be ranked no. 1 in nearly every national power ranking. They have crushed their weak opponents and dominated the strong ones. Apart from a curious difficulty running the ball they have no demonstrable weakness. As long as they continue to take the ball away from their opponents at a league-leading pace and stab opposing defences in the heart with the deep ball, they should be able to handle all comers, even Durham. So why do I balk at the 9-point spread that (to those who have drunk the Aurora Kool Aid) might not be considered high enough to attract action on the Lizards? It is precisely because the Mustangs have struggled in the run game that I think they will fall significantly off their 37 points-per-game pace. Richard Sherman is emerging as the best corner in football and will shut down whoever his coach chooses to shut down. The other guy will have to contend with Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, no slouch. If Matt Forte can't get the attention of the Durham front seven Aurora will struggle to score touchdowns. If the Lizards go with the game manager, Nick Foles over Drew "Evel Knievel" Brees, an upset could be in the making. **PICK: DURHAM**

PICKERING @ SEBASTIAN (line – SPARTANS by 7)

INJURIES: Pickering – Miles Austin (OUT), Charles Tillman (OUT); **Sebastian** – Jadeveon Clowney (OUT), Leon Hall (OUT);

The Spartans' designs on the North Division are still achievable, but to succeed they need to win these types of games without spilling too much of their own blood. Fortunately for Pickering, the one player on the Swordfish who might have made life difficult for Peyton Manning is injured; Jadeveon Clowney's absence in the pass rush cannot be filled by the likes of Jeremiah Attaochu. But even with its no. 1 overall draft pick in the lineup, Sebastian has not yet shown this year that it can compete against any decent team. The Spartans' record may be 2-3, but they are, hands down, the best 2-3 team out there. Until I see Andy Dalton play back-to-back good games against a worthy opponent, the Swordfish aren't worth a risk. **PICK: PICKERING**

GWINNETT @ COWTOWN (line – CORN KINGS by 12)

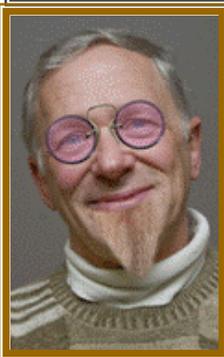
INJURIES: Gwinnett – Bjoern Werner (PROBABLE), Mike Iupati (OUT), Tommy Kelly (OUT), Maurkice Pouncey (OUT), Joseph Randle (OUT), Reggie Wayne (OUT); **Cowtown** – Zack Miller (PROBABLE), Ryan Clady (OUT), Brett Keisel (OUT), Julius Thomas (OUT).

The emergence of Mike Evans as the hottest rookie wide receiver next to Sammy Watkins has sparked a surprisingly dangerous Cowtown passing attack and reignited the debate about whether or not Joe Flacco is an elite quarterback. Take away a 4-interception showing in the first half against Durham and Flacco has a passer rating of 110.8, certainly an elite number. But those who watch him play are less enthusiastic about using the "E-word" as an adjective to describe the Corn Kings quarterback. On the other hand, they might be more willing to use it to describe his opponent in this game, Ben Roethlisberger. Unfortunately for Big Ben he has no Mike Evans to make up for the lack of Reggie Wayne. All he has is one proud tackle in Joe Thomas and a outside running threat in LeSean McCoy who is finding little room to run with defences paying him so much attention. 12 points seems a little high but with so little going for the Glads its hard to imagine a close game. **PICK: COWTOWN**

SCARBOROUGH @ YORK (line – EXCALIBURS by 2)

INJURIES: Scarborough – Kroy Biermann (OUT), Nate Burleson (OUT), King Dunlap (OUT), Jermaine Gresham (OUT), LaMichael James (OUT); **York** – Geno Atkins (OUT), Victor Cruz (OUT), Von Miller (OUT), Nick Toon (OUT), Delanie Walker (OUT).

The worst case season scenario is unfolding in front of a horrified Chris Dickinson and an outraged Scarborough fan base. The fiasco at Aurora last week showed just how large the gap is between the Blue Eagles and a true contender. The situation is not much better in York, where an injury to Victor Cruz is exposing the lack of depth and talent in the receiving corps and injuries to stars Geno Atkins and Von Miller have neutered the defence. One of these unhappy teams can take solace in beating the other this week. But who will prevail? At least the Scarborough offensive line is in good shape. **PICK: SCARBOROUGH**



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

FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – Week Three of the 2008 season saw the 3-0 Florida Dragons standing at the top of the league's power rankings after stomping Ringgold 33-3. The easy win for the Dragons came courtesy of 4 turnovers by the Hawks and the power running of Jonathan Stewart and DeAngelo Williams, who capitalized on their opponent's generosity with 3 TD runs. Tom Brady played a marginal role in the win, passing for a paltry 116 yards. For this he was roundly criticized by a demanding Florida media that had hyped up the Dragons to such heights that anything

less than 40-point margin of victories and 3 TD passes per game was the next best thing to abject failure.

Young fans likely won't recall that the Mohave Hellfire were a good team at one time in history. They smoked the Gladiators 34-20 on the strength of a 230-yard, 2-TD performance by Kurt Warner and a 27-yard pick six by Brian Urlacher to rise to 3-0 and a share of first place with the Dragons.

In the Expansion Division, the Colorado Thundersnow scored their first TD of the season in a 27-10 loss to the Pickering Spartans. Matt Ryan hit Andre Johnson for a 38-yard TD pass in the waning moments of a lost game. With the TD, the Snow had scored a total of 13 points in 3 weeks.

Individual standouts in Week 3 included Philip Rivers of the Thunder Lizards, who threw for 258 yards and a pair of TDs, including an 18-yard game-winning toss to Ronald Curry to spark a much-needed 24-13 victory over Kutztown.

For the defence, Chino defensive end Adewale Ogunleye had 3 sacks and stripped Drew Brees in the red zone to set up a TD run by LaDainian Tomlinson in a 27-14 victory the Convicts over Anchorage.