

2017



WEEK

16



EFL

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

In our 11th season and still going strong!

February 5, 2018

2017



WEEK

16

EAST



CENTRAL



WEST



NORTH



COASTAL



SOUTH



BLOUNT INSTRUMENT!



LeGarrette Blount
Cowtown Corn Kings

LeGarrette Blount ploughs through the Blue Eagles' line to score the winning touchdown in Overtime, to put Cowtown into the playoffs. The score capped off an unlikely comeback that saw the Corn Kings score 11 points in the 4th quarter after trailing 14-3. A *Jamison Crowder* fumbled punt set up the game-winning TD.



*Who was slick
in Week
Sixteen?*

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



Russell Wilson
QB
Iowa City
Cubs

23 of 41, 228 yards, 5 TD passes. He passed in the clutch in rout of Chino.



Melvin Ingram
OLB
Virden
Violators

10T, 4 Sacks, 2 STF, 2 FF. Finished record setting year with 4 sacks.



OFFENSIVE PLAY OF THE WEEK

4th Qtr, 0:29 left, **Chris Hogan** (COW) takes a dump-off 44 yards to the SBE 3 to set up tying TD.



GAME CENTER 2017 Week Sixteen


GAME BLITZ!



By Chris Sherman



DEFENSIVE PLAY OF THE WEEK

4th Qtr, 12:11 left, Brooklin up 7-0. **Brent Grimes** (BRH) scores a 42-yard pick-six for game-winning TD

	14	Connor Cook started at QB for Mohave in place of injured Andrew Luck and struggled badly. Brent Grimes picked off a bad throw from Cook to set up an 11-yard TD pass to James Develin in the 1 st . That would be all the scoring until the 4 th when Grimes picked off Cook again and ran it back 44 yards for a TD. Tevin Coleman scored on a 65-yard run but that was all Mohave could muster in the loss.
	7	
	28	A 25-yard pass to Terrelle Pryor Sr was the big play of an opening drive that saw Marcus Mariota sneak it in for a 1-yard TD. The Bombers added 2 more TDs before half time, the last a 50-yard TD pass to Emmanuel Sanders to make it 21-0. The Chargers opened the 3 rd with a FG drive, but a failed onside kick set up a 22-yard TD pass to Sanders. Bruxelles ran out the clock in the 4 th .
	11	
	14	A grueling 17-play drive capped by a 4 th &1 dive for a TD by Ezekiel Elliott put Virden on the board first. The Triumph responded with a 13-yard Melvin Gordon TD run but the Violators countered with a Mark Ingram TD run and a FG following a strip-sack by Melvin Ingram. A 56-yard TD pass to Antonio Brown brought TC within 3, but a pair of defensive TDs and a safety in the 4 th quarter allowed Virden to pull away.
	33	
	14	Lamar Miller scored the first of his 2 TDs to cap the Pats' first possession. But a Stephon Gilmore interception set up Erieau's reply: a 6-yard TD run by Christine Michael to tie the game. Aqib Talib sparked a 14-point 2 nd quarter for the Pats with a 43-yard pick-six and set the stage for more of the same in the 2 nd half as interceptions by HaHa Clinton-Dix and Brandon Mebane set up two more Pats TDs for an easy win.
	38	
	40	Andy Dalton hit on two deep TD passes – 59-yard to Jordan Matthews and 62-yard to DeVante Parker – in the 1 st half but Seattle matched with a 40-yard TD run by Bilal Powell and a 39-yard pick-six by Kareem Jackson. Mid-way in the 3 rd LA started pulling away. Tre'Davious White's 2 nd INT set up a TD pass to Dalvin Cooks and Mike Adams' pick set up a FG to help spark a 26-point Knights' barrage in the 2 nd half.
	21	
	3	A snap over the head of punter Bradley Pinion resulted in a 26-yard loss and great field position for the Cubs' first TD. A Convicts' goal line stand checked the Cubs' early momentum, but a personal foul penalty gave it back and soon the Cubs had their second TD. Chino miscues – 0 for 6 on 4 th downs and 4 picks – turned the game into a rout, helping Russell Wilson to regain some of his MVP form with 5 TD passes.
	41	
	7	A fake-punt pass by Swordfish punter Jordan Berry on the game's first series went awry when Thomas Davis picked it off to set up a 16-yard TD pass to Eric Decker. Then a Richard Sherman pick on their next possession set up a FG to make it 10-0. Doug Baldwin got 7 back with a 59-yard TD catch, but Cam Newton came in to direct an 82-yard TD drive to make it 17-7. The Durham D took over in the 2 nd half for the win.
	20	
	14	A fake-punt pass by Johnny Hekker was picked off and returned for a TD by Eric Weddle to give the Eagles an early lead. The score held up, as neither offence could move, until a 51-yard TD pass to Jamison Crowder made it 14-3 Scarborough in the 4 th . Cowtown tied the game on a 52-yard FG and a LeGarrette Blount TD run & 2-point run with 0:06 left. In OT, a Crowder PR fumble led to another Blount TD for the win.
	20	
	6	York came out on a mission, scoring touchdowns on each of their first three possessions, including 2 TD passes by Tom Brady, while holding the North Stars to 3-and-out on each of theirs to take a 19-0 lead. The only York hiccup in a dominant 1 st half was two blocked extra points. Two York FGs in the 3 rd made it 25-0 then the defence finished it off, holding Budapest to 2 token field goals. Von Miller had 3 sacks.
	25	
	14	In a penalty-filled, sloppy game the Wrecking Balls scored first when KJ Wright forced a fumble that Craig Robertson returned for a TD. But the Spartans chipped away at the lead with 3 Caleb Sturgis FGs to take a 9-7 lead at the half. A static 3 rd quarter broke for Pickering when Philip Rivers hit Zay Jones for a 49-yard TD pass. The Spartans added a 45-yard TD pass to Golden Tate to start the 4 th to run away with it.
	23	
	31	Three TDs in the first 3 minutes set the pace for this shootout. Tyreek Hill returned the opening kickoff for a TD and Jalen Ramsey scored a pick-six on the Glads' 1 st possession for a 14-0 lead. But Big Ben got in gear with a 55-yard strike to Cole Beasley followed by a TD pass to Jesse James. It was back-and-forth from there, with Matt Asiata scoring on a 1-yard run with 3:54 left and Sean Smith picking off Ryan Tannehill to secure the win.
	35	
	31	The Mustangs scored on the opening drive then the game turned into a punting duel until Ted Ginn Jr fumbled a punt inside the Regs' red zone. Three plays later Matt Ryan hit Julian Edelman for a 6-yard TD pass, the first of 3 TD passes for Ryan. Turnovers continued to hurt the Regs, with 2 more lost fumbles leading to 2 more Aurora TDs as the Mustangs finished off a perfect regular season with an easy win.
	7	

HAWKS		PASSING: Alex Smith, 16 of 29, 157 yds, 2 TDs, 1 INT RUSHING: Jonathan Stewart, 19C, 50yds, (2.6), 0 TD RECEIVNG: Alshon Jeffery, 7 for 84 yds, 28LG, 0 TD DEFENCE: Markus Golden, 7 T, 3 SK, 3 FF KICKING: Carpenter, 1 of 1 XPA / Parkey 1 of 1 XPA, 2 pts		HELLFIRE		PASSING: Connor Cook, 11 of 22, 63yds, 0 TD, 2 INTs RUSHING: Tevin Coleman, 24C, 139yds, (5.8), 1 TD RECEIVNG: Allen Robinson, 6 for 35 yds, 10LG, 0 TD DEFENCE: Bruce Irvin, 6T, 1 SK, 1 STF, 1 HUR KICKING: Sebastian Janikowski, 1 of 1 XPA, 1 of 2 FGA, 4Pts	
	14						7
02-06-2018 The Fiery Depths Temp: 92 Wind: Calm None MVP: Brent Grimes							

CADILLAC



14

PASSING: Matt Stafford, 11 of 26, 139 yds, 1 TD, 4 INTs
RUSHING: Christine Michael, 11C, 17yds, (1.5), 1 TD
RECEIVING: Hunter Henry, 3 for 60yds, 49LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Stephon Gilmore, 8 T, 2 INT (22yds)
KICKING: S. Gostkowski, 2 of 2 XPA, 2 pts

PATRIOTS



38

PASSING: DeShaun Watson, 15 of 17, 135 yds, 1 TD, 1 INT
RUSHING: Lamar Miller, 25C, 53yds, (2.1), 2 TDs
RECEIVING: Dez Bryant, 9 for 115yds, 39LG, 0 TD
DEFENCE: Jamie Collins, 9T, 1 SK, 1 PD, 1 STF, 1 FF
KICKING: Ryan Succop, 5 of 5 XPA, 1 of 2 FGA, 8pts

02-06-2018 Patriot Place Temp: 75 Wind: MVP: Lamar Miller						
	1	2	3	4	Tot	
2017 Erieau (3-13)	7	0	7	0	14	
2016 Charleswood (8-8)	7	14	7	10	38	
Scoring Summary						
1 9:12	Charleswood	TD Miller 2 run (Succop) (10-52-4:50)	0-7			
1 1:24	Erieau	TD Michael 6 run (Gostkowski) (5-34-2:20)	7-7			
2 10:54	Charleswood	TD Talib 43 interception return (Succop)	7-14			
2 1:53	Charleswood	TD Watson 10 pass to Watkins (Succop) (14-72-8:44)	7-21			
3 8:58	Charleswood	TD Miller 4 run (Succop) (2-10-0:52)	7-28			
3 2:45	Erieau	TD Stafford 49 pass to Henry (Gostkowski) (2-51-0:54)	14-28			
4 13:25	Charleswood	TD Johnson Jr. 3 run (Succop) (2-1-0:51)	14-35			
4 3:24	Charleswood	FG Succop 41 (15-37-8:56)	14-38			
						<div>ERI</div> <div>CHP</div>
First Downs						725
Rushes						16-4147-100
Passes						26-11-13932-22-216
Sacked						2-180-0
Fumble						11
Penalties						3-162-20
Turnovers						52
Missed Tackles						53
Blitzes						1810
Time						17:0043:00
Third Down						2-1010-16
Fourth Down						0-00-0
Red Att/Td/Fg						1/1/06/4/1
Net Offense						162316


KNIGHTS



40

PASSING: Andy Dalton, 13 of 28, 245 yds, 4 TDs, 1 INT
RUSHING: Paul Perkins, 11C, 80yds, (7.3) 0 TD
RECEIVING: DeVante Parker, 5 for 120 yds, 62LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Tre'Davious White, 3T 3 PD, 2 INTs (9yds)
KICKING: Greg Zuerlein, 4 of 4 XPA, 4 of 5 FGA, 16 Pts

PILOTS



21

PASSING: Eli Manning, 18 of 43, 193 yds, 1 TD, 4 INTs
RUSHING: Bilal Powell, 13C, 81yds, (6.2), 1 TD
RECEIVING: Allen Hurns, 7 for 85yds, 18LG, 0 TD
DEFENCE: Kareem Jackson, 2 T, 1/5 ATT, 1 INT (39yds-TD)
KICKING: Josh Lambo, 3 of 3 XPA, 3 Pts

02-06-2018 Kingdome Temp: 70 Wind: MVP: Andy Dalton						
	1	2	3	4	Tot	
2016 Los Angeles (9-7)	7	7	17	9	40	
2016 Seattle (2-14)	0	7	7	7	21	
1 12:19	Los Angeles	TD Dalton 59 pass to Matthews (Zuerlein) (2-74-1:03)	7-0			
2 12:59	Seattle	TD Powell 40 run (Lambo) (11-88-3:04)	7-7			
2 1:55	Los Angeles	TD Dalton 62 pass to Parker (Zuerlein) (1-62-0:16)	14-7			
3 14:05	Seattle	TD Jackson 39 interception return (Lambo)	14-14			
3 11:09	Los Angeles	FG Zuerlein 42 (7-45-2:45)	17-14			
3 6:23	Los Angeles	TD Dalton 6 pass to Cooks (Zuerlein) (5-38-3:00)	24-14			
3 1:39	Los Angeles	TD Dalton 17 pass to Cooks (Zuerlein) (9-51-4:13)	31-14			
4 12:34	Los Angeles	FG Zuerlein 40 (4-2-1:30)	34-14			
4 6:42	Los Angeles	FG Zuerlein 24 (4-3-1:40)	37-14			
4 2:28	Los Angeles	FG Zuerlein 20 (5-15-2:13)	40-14			
4 1:38	Seattle	TD Manning 49 pass to Hollins (Lambo) (4-75-0:50)	40-21			
						<div>LAK</div> <div>SEA</div>
First Downs						1415
Rushes						36-12819-92
Passes						28-13-24543-18-193
Sacked						2-216-49
Fumble						02
Penalties						11-986-37
Turnovers						15
Missed Tackles						46
Blitzes						2012
Time						32:2227:38
Third Down						2-164-18
Fourth Down						1-10-1
Red Att/Td/Fg						4/2/20/0/0
Net Offense						352236


CONVICTS



3

PASSING: Dak Prescott, 18 of 44, 148 yds, 0 TD, 4 INTs
RUSHING: Christian McCaffery, 8C, 35yds, (4.4), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Greg Olsen, 5 for 58yds, 37 LG, 0 TD
DEFENCE: Johnathan Joseph, 9T, 4 PD
KICKING: Dan Bailey, 1 of 1 FGA, 3 Pts

CUBS



41

PASSING: Russell Wilson, 23 of 41, 228 yds, 5 TDs, 1 INT
RUSHING: CJ Prosise, 10C, 85yds, (8.5) 0 TD
RECEIVING: Marqise Lee, 8 for 85yds, 21LG, 2 TDs
DEFENCE: Alec Ogletree, 9T, 1 PD, 1 STF, 1 FF 1 INT (12yds)
KICKING: Justin Tucker, 5 of 5 XPA, 2 of 3 FGA, 11 Pts

02-06-2018 Joe Ferguson Stadium Temp: 42 Wind: Calm None MVP: Russell Wilson						
	1	2	3	4	Tot	
2016 Chino (8-8)	0	3	0	0	3	
2016 Iowa City (12-4)	7	17	7	10	41	
Scoring Summary						
1 6:07	Iowa City	TD Wilson 6 pass to Lee (Tucker) (5-28-1:21)	0-7			
2 14:03	Iowa City	TD Wilson 5 pass to Prosise (Tucker) (5-48-2:09)	0-14			
2 7:22	Iowa City	TD Wilson 19 pass to Wallace (Tucker) (5-43-1:47)	0-21			
2 2:22	Chino	FG Bailey 37 (10-48-4:49)	3-21			
2 0:04	Iowa City	FG Tucker 24 (12-73-2:08)	3-24			
3 9:17	Iowa City	TD Wilson 5 pass to Lee (Tucker) (6-33-2:23)	3-31			
4 9:38	Iowa City	TD Wilson 12 pass to Wallace (Tucker) (5-29-2:25)	3-38			
4 5:37	Iowa City	FG Tucker 29 (6-24-2:50)	3-41			
						<div>CHI</div> <div>ICC</div>
First Downs						1028
Rushes						20-2639-234
Passes						44-18-14842-23-228
Sacked						1-90-0
Fumble						10
Penalties						3-307-55
Turnovers						41
Missed Tackles						84
Blitzes						192
Time						25:0934:51
Third Down						2-167-15
Fourth Down						0-60-1
Red Att/Td/Fg						1/0/19/5/2
Net Offense						165462

SWORDFISH**7**

PASSING: Jameis Winston, 14 of 38, 190 yds, 1 TD, 4 INTs
RUSHING: CJ Anderson, 22C, 89yds, (4.0), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Doug Baldwin, 5 for 98yds, 59LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Chandler Jones, 12 T, 2 SK, 1 PD, 1 STF
KICKING: Adam Vinatieri, 1 of 1 XPA, 2 Pts

T-LIZARDS**20**

PASSING: Drew Brees, 11 of 22, 112 yds, 1 TD, 1 INT
RUSHING: Theo Riddick, 8C, 19yds, (2.4), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Eric Decker, 6 for 91yds, 31LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Richard Sherman, 4 T, 2 PD, 2 INT (1yd)
KICKING: Phil Dawson, 2 of 2 XPA, 2 of 2 FGA, 8 pts

02-06-2018 Jurassic Park Temp: 76 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Eric Decker**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2016 Sebastian (7-9)	0	7	0	0	7
2016 Durham (10-5-1)	10	7	3	0	20

Scoring Summary

1 12:30	Durham	TD Brees 16 pass to Decker (Dawson) (2-16-0:51)	0-7
1 9:12	Durham	FG Dawson 31 (8-27-2:59)	0-10
2 14:34	Sebastian	TD Winston 59 pass to Baldwin (Vinatieri) (1-59-0:20)	7-10
2 1:52	Durham	TD Newton 2 run (Dawson) (10-87-5:11)	7-17
3 10:36	Durham	FG Dawson 20 (9-43-4:12)	7-20

	SS	DTL
First Downs	13	18
Rushes	25-92	27-30
Passes	39-14-190	37-21-228
Sacked	1-9	4-45
Fumble	0	1
Penalties	8-56	6-45
Turnovers	5	1
Missed Tackles	0	1
Blitzes	29	13
Time	26:27	33:33
Third Down	3-14	4-17
Fourth Down	2-5	1-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	1/0/0	6/2/2
Net Offense	273	213

BLUE EAGLES**14**

PASSING: Aaron Rodgers, 12 of 27, 152 yds, 1 TD, 1 INT
RUSHING: Jordan Howard, 7C, 32yds, (4.6), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Jamison Crowder, 3 for 66yds, 51LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Derrick Morgan, 17 T, 1 SK, 3 STF, 1 HUR
KICKING: Mason Crosby, 2 of 2 XPA, 2 pts

CORN KINGS**20**

PASSING: Joe Flacco, 18 of 45, 191 yds, 0 TD, 2 INTs
RUSHING: LeGarrette Blount, 27C, 97yds, (3.6), 2 TDs
RECEIVING: Adam Humphries, 4 for 43yds, 14LG, 0 TD
DEFENCE: Chris Long, 3 T, 1 PD, 1 STF, 2 HUR, 1 FF
KICKING: Nick Novak, 2 of 2 FGA, 6 pts

02-06-2018 Tillman Field Temp: 35 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: **LeGarrette Blount**

	1	2	3	4	5	Tot
2016 Scarborough (9-6-1)	7	0	0	7	0	14
2016 Cowtown (9-7)	0	3	0	11	6	20

Scoring Summary

1 10:56	Scarborough	TD Weddle 43 interception return (Crosby)	7-0
2 3:02	Cowtown	FG Novak 31 (13-48-6:09)	7-3
4 12:20	Scarborough	TD Rodgers 51 pass to Crowder (Crosby) (1-51-0:16)	14-3
4 4:32	Cowtown	FG Novak 52 (14-41-7:43)	14-6
4 0:06	Cowtown	TD Blount 3 run (2 - Blount) (8-88-1:25)	14-14
5 8:53	Cowtown	TD Blount 6 run	14-20

	SBE	COW
First Downs	4	25
Rushes	20-42	52-177
Passes	27-12-152	45-18-191
Sacked	1-7	1-6
Fumble	3	0
Penalties	4-45	8-65
Turnovers	4	3
Missed Tackles	5	2
Blitzes	51	13
Time	19:32	46:35
Third Down	2-14	5-23
Fourth Down	0-0	3-4
Red Att/Td/Fg	0/0/0	7/2/1
Net Offense	187	362

NORTH STARS**6**

PASSING: Brian Hoyer, 8 of 16, 66yds, 0 TD, 0 INT
RUSHING: David Johnson, 11C, 28yds, (2.5), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Demaryius Thomas, 3 for 28yds, 13 LG, 0 TD
DEFENCE: Cameron Jordan, 8 T, 1 PD, 2 STF
KICKING: Kai Forbath, 2 of 2 FGA, 6pts

EXCALIBURS**25**

PASSING: Tom Brady, 23 of 34, 267yds, 2 TDs, 0 INT
RUSHING: Eddie Lacy, 15C, 82yds, (5.5), 1 TD
RECEIVING: Delanie Walker, 5 for 87yds, 37LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Von Miller., 6T, 3SK
KICKING: Graham Gano, 1 of 3 XPA, 2 of 3 FGA, 7 pts

02-06-2018 Camelot Temp: 51 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: **Tom Brady**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2016 Budapest (12-4)	0	0	0	6	6
2016 York (8-8)	6	13	6	0	25

Scoring Summary

1 5:01	York	TD Brady 6 pass to Benjamin (no good) (13-88-7:30)	0-6
2 14:44	York	TD Lacy 5 run (Gano) (10-75-4:11)	0-13
2 11:01	York	TD Brady 37 pass to Walker (no good) (4-54-2:08)	0-19
3 9:00	York	FG Gano 32 (11-49-5:50)	0-22
3 2:06	York	FG Gano 42 (10-46-4:18)	0-25
4 11:13	Budapest	FG Forbath 45 (10-48-5:48)	3-25
4 2:32	Budapest	FG Forbath 43 (12-37-6:13)	6-25

	BUD	YOR
First Downs	9	25
Rushes	23-72	36-141
Passes	20-10-81	34-23-267
Sacked	3-27	0-0
Fumble	0	1
Penalties	3-15	5-43
Turnovers	0	0
Missed Tackles	5	2
Blitzes	14	10
Time	24:21	35:39
Third Down	3-12	5-13
Fourth Down	1-1	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	0/0/0	3/2/1
Net Offense	126	408

WRECKING BALL**14**

PASSING: Sam Bradford, 13 of 30, 149 yds, 1 TD, 4 INTs
RUSHING: Alfred Blue, 14C, 59yds, (4.2), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Will Fuller V, 5 for 109 yds, 76 LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: KJ Wright, 7 T, 2 PD, 1 STF, 1 HUR, 1 FF
KICKING: Chris Boswell, 2 of 2 XPA, 2 Pts

SPARTANS**23**

PASSING: Philip Rivers, 19 of 35, 274yds, 2 TDs, 1 INT
RUSHING: Jacquizz Rodgers, 19C, 65yds, (3.4), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Golden Tate, 6 for 102yds, 45 LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Telvin Smith, 4 T, 1 FF, 1 INT (25yds)
KICKING: Caleb Sturgis, 2 of 2 XPA, 3 of 3 FGA, 11pts

02-06-2018 Thermopylae Stadium Temp: 33 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: **Philip Rivers**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2017 New Jersey (1-15)	0	7	0	7	14
2016 Pickering (8-8)	3	6	7	7	23

Scoring Summary

1 7:42 Pickering	FG Sturgis 28 (10-60-5:01)	0-3
2 11:32 New Jersey	TD Robertson 41 yd fumble recovery (Boswell)	7-3
2 3:28 Pickering	FG Sturgis 27 (17-63-7:55)	7-6
2 1:40 Pickering	FG Sturgis 27 (4-0-0:47)	7-9
3 0:00 Pickering	TD Rivers 49 pass to Jones (Sturgis) (5-66-1:39)	7-16
4 10:48 Pickering	TD Rivers 45 pass to Tate (Sturgis) (3-50-1:45)	7-23
4 2:26 New Jersey	TD Bradford 76 pass to Fuller V (Boswell) (2-84-1:01)	14-23

	NJ	PIC
First Downs	7	19
Rushes	14-59	39-126
Passes	30-13-149	35-19-274
Sacked	1-9	2-11
Fumble	2	3
Penalties	12-89	13-90
Turnovers	4	2
Missed Tackles	5	3
Blitzes	32	5
Time	21:55	38:05
Third Down	0-11	8-20
Fourth Down	0-0	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	0/0/0	6/0/3
Net Offense	199	389

WOLVERINES**31**

PASSING: Ryan Tannehill, 15 of 23, 158 yds, 2 TDs, 1 INT
RUSHING: Mike Gillislee, 10 C, 38yds, (3.8), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Tyreek Hill, 7 for 86yds, 21LG, 2 TDs
DEFENCE: Jalen Ramsey, 10T, 1 PD, 1 INT (50yds-TD)
KICKING: Zane Gonzalez, 4 of 4 XPA, 1 of 1 FGA, 7 pts

GLADIATORS**35**

PASSING: B. Roethlisberger, 29 of 41, 389 yds, 3 TDs, 1 INT
RUSHING: LeSean McCoy, 22C, 143 yds, (6.5), 1 TD
RECEIVING: Jarvis Landry, 14 for 177yds, 41LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Vic Beasley Jr, 3 T, 2 SK, 1 FF
KICKING: Cairo Santos, 5 of 5 XPA, 5 pts

02-06-2018 Georgia Stadium Temp: 51 Wind: 5-15 None MVP: **Ben Roethlisberger**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2017 Toronto (3-13)	14	10	0	7	31
2016 Georgia (7-9)	7	14	7	7	35

Scoring Summary

1 14:55 Toronto	TD Hill 96 kick return (Gonzalez)	7-0
1 13:57 Toronto	TD Ramsey 50 interception return (Gonzalez)	14-0
1 13:24 Georgia	TD Roethlisberger 14 pass to James (Santos) (2-69-0:25)	14-7
2 12:18 Toronto	TD Tannehill 12 pass to Hill (Gonzalez) (7-77-2:53)	21-7
2 9:39 Georgia	TD Roethlisberger 41 pass to Landry (Santos) (4-91-2:33)	21-14
2 4:54 Toronto	FG Gonzalez 52 (8-39-4:29)	24-14
2 0:36 Georgia	TD Roethlisberger 5 pass to Beasley (Santos) (12-81-4:10)	24-21
3 0:09 Georgia	TD McCoy 4 run (Santos) (17-80-7:51)	24-28
4 12:18 Toronto	TD Tannehill 10 pass to Hill (Gonzalez) (6-71-2:44)	31-28
4 3:54 Georgia	TD Asiata 1 run (Santos) (12-90-8:17)	31-35

	TOR	GEO
First Downs	15	34
Rushes	21-87	33-174
Passes	23-15-158	41-29-389
Sacked	2-13	0-0
Fumble	1	1
Penalties	5-33	9-70
Turnovers	1	1
Missed Tackles	12	3
Blitzes	5	9
Time	21:57	38:03
Third Down	3-10	7-11
Fourth Down	0-1	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/2/0	4/4/0
Net Offense	232	563

MUSTANGS**31**

PASSING: Matt Ryan, 31 of 49, 383 yds, 3 TDs, 1 INT
RUSHING: Kenyon Drake, 5C, 28yds, (5.6), 1 TD
RECEIVING: Julian Edelman, 10 for 123yds, 18LG, 2 TDs
DEFENCE: Willie Young, 12T, 2 SK
KICKING: Wil Lutz, 4 of 4 XPA, 1 of 1 FGA, 7 pts

REGULATORS**7**

PASSING: Kirk Cousins, 17 of 30, 154yds, 1 TD, 0 INT
RUSHING: Ameer Abdullah, 13C, 95yds, (7.3), 0 TD
RECEIVING: Corey Davis, 4 for 42yds, 16LG, 1 TD
DEFENCE: Brandon Graham, 5 T, 1 PD, 3 STF, 2 HUR
KICKING: Jason Meyers, 1 of 1 XPA, 1 Pt

02-06-2018 Carolina Slammer Temp: -4 Wind: None MVP: **Matt Ryan**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2016 Aurora (16-0)	7	14	7	3	31
2016 South Carolina (4-12)	0	0	7	0	7

Scoring Summary

1 10:13 Aurora	TD Artis-Payne 2 run (Lutz) (10-66-4:43)	7-0
2 8:16 Aurora	TD Ryan 6 pass to Edelman (Lutz) (4-17-1:40)	14-0
2 0:09 Aurora	TD Ryan 8 pass to Edelman (Lutz) (2-25-0:14)	21-0
3 11:12 South Carolina	TD Cousins 16 pass to Davis (Myers,J) (9-72-3:43)	21-7
3 0:20 Aurora	TD Ryan 33 pass to Adams (Lutz) (8-92-4:50)	28-7
4 3:09 Aurora	FG Lutz 19 (15-54-8:21)	31-7

	AUR	SC
First Downs	26	19
Rushes	21-42	23-166
Passes	49-31-383	30-17-154
Sacked	0-0	4-35
Fumble	0	5
Penalties	6-44	6-43
Turnovers	1	3
Missed Tackles	6	0
Blitzes	18	13
Time	33:24	26:36
Third Down	6-14	4-10
Fourth Down	2-2	1-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	5/3/1	3/1/0
Net Offense	425	285

WEEK SIXTEEN

STANDINGS

PACIFIC CONFERENCE												
East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Bruxelles (1)	13	3	0	0.813	421	26.3	268	16.8	9.6	7 1 0	6 0 0	11 1 0
Brooklin (4)	11	5	0	0.688	374	23.4	249	15.6	7.8	6 2 0	4 2 0	8 4 0
Mohave	7	9	0	0.438	282	17.6	352	22	-4.4	3 5 0	1 5 0	4 8 0
St. Charles	6	10	0	0.375	240	15	292	18.3	-3.3	5 3 0	1 5 0	4 8 0
Central	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Virden (3)	11	5	0	0.688	351	21.9	300	18.8	3.2	6 2 0	5 1 0	8 4 0
Charleswood	8	8	0	0.5	358	22.4	324	20.3	2.1	5 3 0	3 3 0	6 6 0
Twin Cities	7	9	0	0.438	269	16.8	304	19	-2.2	6 2 0	3 3 0	6 6 0
Erieau	3	13	0	0.188	199	12.4	365	22.8	-10.4	2 6 0	1 5 0	3 9 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Iowa City (2)	12	4	0	0.75	396	24.8	265	16.6	8.2	6 2 0	6 0 0	11 1 0
Los Angeles (5)	9	7	0	0.563	352	22	324	20.3	1.8	5 3 0	2 4 0	6 6 0
Chino	8	8	0	0.5	329	20.6	383	23.9	-3.4	4 4 0	3 3 0	4 8 0
Seattle	2	14	0	0.125	200	12.5	360	22.5	-10	1 7 0	1 5 0	1 11 0
ATLANTIC CONFERENCE												
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham (3)	10	5	1	0.656	384	24	308	19.3	4.8	6 1 1	4 1 1	7 4 1
Scarborough (4)	9	6	1	0.594	248	15.5	240	15	0.5	5 3 0	2 3 1	8 3 1
Cowtown (5)	9	7	0	0.563	336	21	296	18.5	2.5	7 1 0	2 4 0	5 7 0
Sebastian	7	9	0	0.438	337	21.1	375	23.4	-2.4	5 3 0	3 3 0	5 7 0
Coastal	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Budapest (2)	12	4	0	0.75	317	19.8	255	15.9	3.9	8 0 0	5 1 0	9 3 0
Pickering	8	8	0	0.5	344	21.5	323	20.2	1.3	5 3 0	4 2 0	6 6 0
York	8	8	0	0.5	256	16	247	15.4	0.6	5 3 0	3 3 0	6 6 0
New Jersey	1	15	0	0.063	201	12.6	352	22	-9.4	1 7 0	0 6 0	1 11 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Aurora (1)	16	0	0	1	561	35.1	282	17.6	17.4	8 0 0	6 0 0	12 0 0
Georgia	7	9	0	0.438	263	16.4	322	20.1	-3.7	4 4 0	3 3 0	6 6 0
South Carolina	4	12	0	0.25	226	14.1	362	22.6	-8.5	4 4 0	2 4 0	3 9 0
Toronto	3	13	0	0.188	297	18.6	393	24.6	-6	2 6 0	1 5 0	3 9 0

(#)-Conference Seeding

TOP PASSERS												
Rk	Player	Team	Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Ryan,M	AUR	582	367	63.1	4985	13	2.2	86	49	8.4	109.1
2	Mariota	BRX	389	214	55	3081	3	0.8	86	27	6.9	100.9
3	Brady,T	YOR	388	224	57.7	2790	5	1.3	75	19	4.9	91.1
4	Smith,A	BRH	484	284	58.7	3520	8	1.7	58	21	4.3	88.9
5	Wilson,R	ICC	457	257	56.2	3188	8	1.8	69	22	4.8	86.8
6	Palmer,C	TCT	443	251	56.7	3100	11	2.5	75	23	5.2	85.4
7	Luck	MOH	291	165	56.7	2016	7	2.4	75	14	4.8	84.2
8	Carr,D	VV	379	215	56.7	2605	6	1.6	64	14	3.7	83.7
9	Winston,J	SS	537	279	52	3457	13	2.4	60	30	5.6	80.7
10	Prescott	CHI	591	360	60.9	3834	17	2.9	69	20	3.4	79.2
11	Brees	DTL	531	296	55.7	3715	19	3.6	91	25	4.7	78.5
12	Tannehill	TOR	285	167	58.6	1945	11	3.9	58	13	4.6	78.5
13	Taylor,T	BUD	302	168	55.6	1703	2	0.7	66	8	2.6	78
14	Dalton	LAK	542	301	55.5	3557	22	4.1	79	29	5.4	76.6
15	Rivers	PIC	448	232	51.8	3061	14	3.1	59	19	4.2	74.8
16	Rodgers,A	SBE	486	257	52.9	2786	9	1.9	57	17	3.5	74
17	Roethlisberger	GEO	488	274	56.1	2982	14	2.9	63	17	3.5	74
18	Flacco	COW	450	266	59.1	2679	17	3.8	68	17	3.8	73
19	Cousins	SC	590	324	54.9	3580	18	3.1	81	22	3.7	72.8
20	Wentz	STC	482	262	54.4	2840	10	2.1	57	13	2.7	72.3
21	Bradford	NJ	585	364	62.2	2956	18	3.1	76	14	2.4	70.1
22	Watson,D	CHP	393	208	52.9	2230	14	3.6	82	14	3.6	66.9
23	Stafford	ERI	510	263	51.6	2724	18	3.5	65	15	2.9	62.4
24	Manning	SEA	417	213	51.1	1983	17	4.1	84	9	2.2	54.7
25	Foles	BRX	52	33	63.5	528	1	1.9	59	6	11.5	127.7

KICKOFF RETURNERS								PUNT RETURNERS								
Rk	Player	Team	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	Rk	Player	Team	No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Lee,M	ICC	27	833	30.9	101	2	1	Sproles	STC	18	10	225	12.5	24	0
2	Patterson	MOH	49	1457	29.7	44	0	2	Roberts,A	LAK	39	34	481	12.3	90	2
3	Erickson	CHI	50	1453	29.1	77	0	3	Jackson,A	STC	19	6	206	10.8	87	1
4	Hill,T	TOR	19	503	26.5	96	1	4	Crowder	SBE	47	25	451	9.6	82	1
5	Huff	SEA	39	1010	25.9	109	3	5	Ervin	VV	29	15	273	9.4	29	0
6	Thompson,D	GEO	37	875	23.6	62	0	6	Hill,T	TOR	31	6	286	9.2	67	1
7	Peppers,J	ERI	37	874	23.6	40	0	7	Lockett	ICC	37	18	335	9.1	71	0
8	Roberts,A	LAK	29	683	23.6	60	0	8	Richard	CHP	51	14	449	8.8	53	1
9	Smith-Schu	VV	25	588	23.5	34	0	9	Tate,B	BUD	32	16	276	8.6	41	0
10	Richard	CHP	33	776	23.5	54	0	10	Humphries	COW	30	25	257	8.6	18	0
11	Harris,D	TOR	27	627	23.2	36	0	11	Peppers,J	ERI	41	13	349	8.5	74	1
12	Weems,E	NJ	32	727	22.7	40	0	12	Hester	MOH	31	10	259	8.4	19	0
13	Shepherd	BRH	18	407	22.6	44	0	13	Weems,E	NJ	23	20	174	7.6	14	0
14	Whitehead	COW	19	423	22.3	38	0	14	Landry	GEO	31	23	230	7.4	18	0
15	Tate,B	BUD	27	601	22.3	47	0	15	McCaffrey	CHI	43	10	287	6.7	70	1
16	Switzer	PIC	22	485	22	50	0	16	Ginn Jr.	SC	32	14	213	6.7	18	0
17	Thomas,D	YOR	28	601	21.5	34	0	17	Brown,A	TCT	37	23	246	6.6	27	0
18	Clement	SBE	28	575	20.5	54	0	18	Edelman	AUR	20	7	131	6.6	13	0
19	Ginn Jr.	SC	21	417	19.9	61	0	19	Amendola	YOR	38	13	232	6.1	17	0
20	Smallwood	SS	35	669	19.1	101	1	20	Rogers,C	BRX	36	18	201	5.6	17	0

RUSHING LEADERS								RECEIVING LEADERS							
Rk	Player	Team	Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	Rk	Player	Team	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Elliott,E	VV	343	1541	4.5	95	14	1	Crabtree	NJ	122	1188	9.7	58	3
2	Johnson,D	BUD	324	1538	4.7	84	6	2	Landry	GEO	102	1240	12.2	63	8
3	Freeman,D	PIC	277	1503	5.4	62	10	3	Edelman	AUR	97	1346	13.9	86	23
4	Howard,J	SBE	302	1482	4.9	50	6	4	Hilton	DTL	94	1739	18.5	91	16
5	Bell,L	LAK	304	1372	4.5	54	5	5	Baldwin	SS	92	1306	14.2	60	14
6	Crowell	NJ	300	1332	4.4	53	7	6	Cooper,A	VV	91	1369	15	64	10
7	Ajayi	MOH	268	1312	4.9	59	5	7	Hopkins,D	BRH	87	1405	16.1	58	6
8	McCoy,L	GEO	270	1239	4.6	61	9	8	Adams,D	AUR	83	1639	19.7	53	14
9	Blount	COW	254	1184	4.7	43	17	9	Beckham Jr	SS	83	1183	14.3	50	8
10	Murray,D	TOR	313	1162	3.7	39	6	10	Brown,A	TCT	82	1274	15.5	60	12
11	Stewart	BRH	245	1140	4.7	38	7	11	Evans,M	COW	82	1082	13.2	54	12
12	Hyde,C	DTL	227	1135	5	39	10	12	Fitzgerald	COW	81	785	9.7	47	4
13	Hunt,K	SEA	288	1111	3.9	58	3	13	Jones,J	MOH	78	1287	16.5	75	10
14	Gordon,M	TCT	227	1018	4.5	53	7	14	Davis,C	SC	75	1071	14.3	81	7
15	Cook,D	STC	223	1000	4.5	32	6	15	Diggs	BUD	73	761	10.4	33	3
16	Fournette	BRX	221	981	4.4	27	11	16	Kerley	SC	71	787	11.1	39	4
17	Miller,L	CHP	248	900	3.6	55	4	17	Jeffery	BRH	70	993	14.2	46	6
18	Ingram,M	VV	179	847	4.7	55	8	18	McCaffrey	CHI	70	504	7.2	42	0
19	McCaffrey	CHI	187	821	4.4	37	2	19	Cooks	LAK	70	1035	14.8	40	13
20	Mathews,R	BRH	138	808	5.9	37	9	20	Thomas,D	BUD	70	852	12.2	66	4
21	Coleman,T	MOH	134	738	5.5	67	10	21	Olsen	CHI	69	704	10.2	63	4
22	Michael	ERI	180	692	3.8	32	2	22	Beasley,C	GEO	69	753	10.9	55	6
23	Foreman,D	SS	127	654	5.1	40	1	23	Nelson,J	ERI	67	923	13.8	65	6
24	Mariota	BRX	89	646	7.3	43	6	24	Ertz	YOR	66	740	11.2	32	4
25	Hill,J	ICC	149	639	4.3	31	7	25	Rudolph	AUR	66	701	10.6	29	7

INTERCEPTION LEADERS								SACK LEADERS				TACKLE LEADERS			
Rk	Player	Team	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	Rk	Player	Team	No.	Rk	Player	Team	No.
1	Rodgers-Cr	DTL	7	46	6.6	34	0	1	Ingram,M	VV	28	1	Ogletree	ICC	145
2	Peters,M	SBE	7	97	13.9	31	0	2	Young,W	AUR	23	2	Mack	SEA	141
3	Smith,S	GEO	5	52	10.4	27	0	3	Miller,V	YOR	21	3	Posluszny	SS	124
4	Hayward	ICC	5	77	15.4	30	0	4	Beasley Jr	GEO	17	4	Wagner,B	TCT	122
5	Jenkins,J	BRH	5	57	11.4	21	0	5	Hunter,D	TCT	16	5	Brown,Z	ERI	120
6	Compton,W	TOR	5	36	7.2	19	0	6	Harrison,J	NJ	16	6	Lee,S	LAK	116
7	Grimes,B	BRH	5	81	16.2	42	2	7	Morgan,D	SBE	15	7	Alonso	CHI	108
8	Jackson,A	STC	5	129	25.8	48	2	8	Dunlap,C	SS	13	8	Alexander	TCT	105
9	Berry,E	VV	5	77	15.4	53	0	9	Peppers	LAK	13	9	Harrison,J	NJ	102
10	Collins,L	SBE	5	63	12.6	51	1	10	Ogbah	BRX	12	10	Collins,J	CHP	99
11	McLeod	COW	5	83	16.6	41	0	11	Orakpo	LAK	12	11	Ramsey	TOR	99
12	Newman	COW	4	96	24	43	0	12	Garrett,M	ERI	12	12	Wright,K	NJ	98
13	Revis	MOH	4	124	31	50	1	13	Murphy,T	DTL	12	13	Murphy,T	DTL	95
14	Ramsey	TOR	4	98	24.5	50	1	14	Kerrigan	COW	11	14	Hicks,J	MOH	95
15	Worley	SS	4	100	25	61	1	15	Flowers,T	ERI	11	15	Woodyard	ERI	95
16	Bradberry	NJ	4	29	7.3	18	0	16	Atkins	YOR	10	16	Bradham	TCT	94
17	Demps	BRH	4	31	7.8	14	0	17	Vernon	SEA	10	17	Timmons	YOR	93
18	Williams,S	TOR	4	68	17	35	0	18	Campbell,C	BUD	10	18	Burfict	BRH	91
19	Sherman,R	DTL	4	32	8	31	0	19	Ngakoue	STC	10	19	Young,W	AUR	91
20	Brown,Z	ERI	4	19	4.8	13	0	20	Donald	MOH	10	20	Cox,F	ICC	91

SCORING													
Rk	Player	Team	FG	xP	2Pt	Run	Rec	Int	KR	PR	Fmb	Sf	Tot
1	Edelman	AUR	0	0	1	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	140
2	Tucker	ICC	29	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	130
3	Lutz	AUR	18	71	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	125
4	Succop	CHP	26	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	116
5	Sturgis	PIC	24	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	110
6	Catanzaro	BRX	20	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	109
7	Blount	COW	0	0	1	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	104
8	Dawson	DTL	19	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	102
9	Folk	VV	20	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99
10	Hilton	DTL	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	96
11	Gonzalez	TOR	21	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	95
12	Elliott,E	VV	0	0	0	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	90
13	Bailey,D	CHI	18	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	87
14	Zuerlein	LAK	14	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
15	Novak	COW	17	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
16	Baldwin	SS	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	84
17	Adams,D	AUR	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	84
18	Gano	YOR	18	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80
19	Vinatieri	SS	14	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79
20	Cooks	LAK	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	78
21	Hyde,C	DTL	0	0	0	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	78
22	Sanders,E	BRX	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	78
23	Santos	GEO	16	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75
24	Crosby	SBE	16	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74
25	Fournette	BRX	0	0	0	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	72
26	Evans,M	COW	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	72
27	Brown,A	TCT	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	72
28	Lee,M	ICC	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	0	0	0	72
29	Parkey	BRH	15	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	72
30	Janikowski	MOH	13	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	72
31	Mathews,R	BRH	0	0	1	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	68
32	McCoy,L	GEO	0	0	1	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	68
33	Coleman,T	MOH	0	0	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	66
34	Freeman,D	PIC	0	0	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	66
35	Hauschka	STC	16	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	66

KICKING LEADERS										PUNTING LEADERS									
Rk	Player	Team	FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts	Rk	Player	Team	No	Yards	Tb	20	Lg	Bk	Ave
1	Tucker	ICC	40	29	72.5	16	7	56	130	1	Lee,A	MOH	64	3169	9	17	79	0	49.5
2	Lutz	AUR	23	18	78.3	6	0	49	125	2	McAfee	BRX	70	3436	13	25	58	0	49.1
3	Succop	CHP	30	26	86.7	7	1	51	116	3	King,M	TOR	80	3874	7	30	64	0	48.4
4	Sturgis	PIC	28	24	85.7	8	1	51	110	4	Morstead	DTL	65	3117	9	23	57	0	48
5	Catanzaro	BRX	24	20	83.3	2	0	44	109	5	Martin,S	LAK	77	3674	13	35	60	0	47.7
6	Dawson	DTL	26	19	73.1	3	0	47	102	6	Nortman	BRH	82	3854	11	25	64	1	47
7	Folk	VV	23	20	87	6	1	50	99	7	Hekker	COW	82	3846	3	37	65	0	46.9
8	Gonzalez	TOR	30	21	70	7	3	54	95	8	Lechler	STC	91	4263	3	38	66	0	46.8
9	Bailey,D	CHI	25	18	72	4	2	50	87	9	Huber	CHP	81	3775	5	28	57	0	46.6
10	Novak	COW	21	17	81	6	3	52	86	10	Jones,D	YOR	79	3657	5	26	60	0	46.3
11	Zuerlein	LAK	22	14	63.6	6	1	54	86	11	Dixon,R	GEO	83	3835	7	29	59	0	46.2
12	Gano	YOR	28	18	64.3	1	0	42	80	12	Bosher	VV	67	3094	3	28	59	0	46.2
13	Vinatieri	SS	16	14	87.5	4	0	44	79	13	Anger	ICC	73	3365	4	37	57	0	46.1
14	Santos	GEO	24	16	66.7	5	0	48	75	14	Colquitt,B	SEA	114	5187	4	34	64	0	45.5
15	Crosby	SBE	20	16	80	5	2	54	74	15	Jones,C	TCT	95	4315	4	25	56	1	45.4



with
Arpin Plunderflunder

FANTASY FREAKZ!

Playoff Forecast

Week 16 Analysis

The **Virden Defence** (25FP) broke out with 2 defensive TDs and 6 more sacks, 4 from defensive MVP candidate Melvin Ingram, while the **Brooklin Defence** (18FP) stole a game for the Hawks. Both are looking playoff ready.

My Smart Play for Week 16, **Ben Roethlisberger** (26FP), came through big time vs **Toronto Defence** (10FP) with 2nd overall FP performance.

Alex Smith (6FP) and **Derek Carr** (3FP) are two QBs who must pick up the pace immediately or risk a first round exit.

Tevin Coleman (20FP), **CJ Prosise** (18FP), **Will Fuller V** (17FP) and **Eric Decker** (15FP) all took advantage of Week 16 injuries and starters resting to become big fantasy contributors.

Greg Zuerlein (16FP), **Justin Tucker** (11FP) and **Wil Lutz** (7FP) finished strong and promise to be the big legs in the post-season.

Brian Hoyer (3FP) or **Tyrod Taylor** (2FP) – who will start? Neither option is looking particularly strong.



Who's Hot?

Russell Wilson (ICC)

23 of 41, 228yds, 5TDs, **29FP**
After periodic struggles Cubs' MVP is picking the right time to start heating up.

Matt Ryan (AUR)

31 of 49, 383yds, 3TDs, **25FP**
Has never really been "unhot" but entering playoffs it bears repeating that he is no.1 QB.

Julian Edelman (AUR)

10-123 yds, 2 TDs, **24FP**
7 TD catches in last 3 weeks. Nobody is more consistently productive at WR position.



Who's Cold?

Joe Flacco (COW)

18 of 41, 191yds, 2 INTS, **4FP**
He has not been very productive down the stretch and has to face SBE again.

DeSean Jackson (SBE)

1 – 4 yds, 1 DP, 0 TDs **0 FP**
Big play threat has been silent last two weeks. Balls not getting near him.

Terrelle Pryor Sr (BRX)

2 – 35yds, 0 TD, **3FP**
Caught just 3 of 10 targets over past 2 weeks as ground game becomes focus in BRX

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

I am in a wildcard teams only, one-game wins all fantasy draft. Who should I pick at no.2? – Cam (Fresno)

LeGarrette Blount just scores, but the Eagles plan to shut him down. Brandin Cooks could cash in if the good Andy Dalton shows up. No Joe Flacco or Aaron Rodgers. Jonathan Stewart will see action but LA D is good against the run. If healthy, go with Jordan Howard.



DeAndre Hopkins, WR (BRH): The Hawks' stud has been quiet, with 0 TDs in last 6 weeks of the season. Don't be fooled – he is a ticking time bomb ready to go off in LA secondary.



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – Identity politics is out of control. But it may have “jumped the shark” recently thanks to the Canadian Prime Minister. In a recent townhall meeting (you know, the ones that don’t actually take place in a town hall and are scripted in advance to make the leader look down-to-earth, not afraid to take the “tough” questions and one-of-the-people?) a woman was posing a “tough,” but tortuously meandering, “question” when she let slip the word “mankind.” The Prime Minister interjected: “we prefer to say ‘*peoplekind*,’ not necessarily mankind, because it’s more inclusive.”

Whether he intended to mock himself, or fell into a trap set by the question, is beside the point. The point is that Justin Trudeau has become such a caricature of the new social order, a pathological proponent of political correctness and hyperactive champion of identity politics, that people across the world, hearing that word come out of his mouth, did not take “peoplekind” as the joke Trudeau now claims it was intended to be. People are prepared to believe that he was serious. As a result, when the quote went viral it was ridiculed across the world as political correctness gone mad – out of control.

I have to disagree. The Canadian Prime Minister did, in fact, exercise a measure of control. Anybody who follows this guy and listens to him talk will understand that Trudeau, although he still self-identifies as “male,” is the feminist’s feminist. If he had his way, he would refer to us all as “*womankind*,” not “peoplekind.”

ROUND ONE

In the four-team race for the final wildcard spot in the Atlantic Conference, the pivotal game in Week 16 took place at Tillman Field in Cowtown where the Corn Kings hosted the Blue Eagles. Cowtown faced a win-and-in scenario, which, if successful, would render any effort by the other three contenders, York, Pickering or Sebastian, meaningless. But a Cowtown loss would open up possibilities for all. In the minds of the Corn Kings and their fans, this was a must-win game. Theoretically they could still advance with a loss, but that would require all three of the above-mentioned teams to lose. With Pickering hosting the banged up and thoroughly demoralized Wrecking Balls, this was almost certainly not going to happen.

Scarborough had their playoff ticket assured – but whether they would enter the post-season as a wildcard or as the North Division titlist remained to be seen. They had officially squandered what had once looked like a stranglehold on the division by losing to Durham last week. In order to regain their lost prize, they needed to beat Cowtown and hope that Durham lost to Sebastian. The Blue Eagles felt that they could get the first part done and – the way the season had been going – anything was possible between the Lizards and the Swordfish.

As is common prior to big games, experts in the media focused much of their attention on the quarterback battle brewing between **Aaron Rodgers** and **Joe Flacco**. But instead of debating which one would prevail, the questions revolved predominantly around which one would screw up less.

The two historically successful quarterbacks had been coming under fire for most of the 2017 season due to inconsistent and sometimes just plain awful play. Playing in Scarborough, this meant that Rodgers had a legitimate reason to fear for his health and safety. But rather than sharpen his survival instincts, this pressure had reportedly caused him to return to the party-hardy lifestyle he had been introduced to by **Chris Dickinson** and his High School buddy and former coach, ‘**Jonesy**’ back in 2011 when the Dragons had first moved to Scarborough. Rodgers was now, once again, a regular in the Toronto bar scene and had renewed his VIP status at strip clubs in most of the EFL cities on the Blue Eagles’ schedule.

In Cowtown, Joe Flacco’s play had been a touchy subject. Joe was married to Emma-Lou, daughter of the Mayor of Cowtown. He was not only one of “Cowtown’s own” by marriage, he was a staunch volunteer in the community, a church-going man, and the face of a number of local businesses through endorsements dating back to his MVP year in 2011. Joe was genuinely popular as one of Cowtown’s most prominent citizens. But his lacklustre play on the field and recent endorsement contract with corporate coffee shop giant, *Dunkin Donuts*, had put a strain on his popularity in certain quarters.

The Cowtown Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Cow County Farming Cooperative were the two most powerful business associations in Cow County. Both were strong advocates for local farmers and business owners. They had been highly successful in keeping big corporations on the periphery of the local economy. ‘Buy Local’ was more than a slogan in Cowtown – it was a religion. But in the past decade Cow County had seen a moderate but steady influx of young urban professionals coming to settle in the area. Rising housing costs in rapidly growing Baxter City had forced many young professional couples there to look afield for homes. As a result, Cowtown and its surrounding villages of Husk, Niblett and Udderville, had been



Aaron Rodgers (above) looks at the scoreboard while taking a break on the sideline after another three-and-out. **Joe Flacco** (right) pauses for a *Dunkin' Donut* after burning some calories chasing Eagle CB, **Dre Kirkpatrick** returning one of his passes in the 4th quarter. It was a bad day for the quarterbacks in a sloppily-played showdown between the Atlantic's two wildcard teams.



partially transforming, slowly but surely, into bedroom communities. These new citizens, “city slickers” as the locals referred to them, knew nothing about farming and, while they invariably owned ovens, used microwaves almost exclusively when eating in.

These “slickers,” accustomed to the nightlife and conveniences of the city, soon became exasperated with banks that opened at 11:00 am and closed at 2:00 pm; family diners that shut their doors at 8:00 pm, or even earlier if they were “all out” of the daily special; and one functioning bar, located in the lobby of the Cowtown Arms, that stopped serving after 11:00 pm. Having to shop for tools, commodities and groceries in no less than a dozen different shops, buy their corn liquor from roadside moonshiners (Cowtown Corn Whiskey was famous, but was unavailable in stores by law) and drive 4 miles east toward the tiny hamlet of Cud to ‘Al’s Cold Storage’ for frozen goods, was all but intolerable for people who organized their schedules in blocks of 15 minutes.

In the face of implacable resistance from native Cowtowners, the newcomers had organized. They had become known as ‘Team 21’ – the ‘21’ standing for the century they wished to bring to Cow County – and for nearly two years they had been active in the Chamber of Commerce and Town Council. Over that time, their influence had been felt in the installment of parking meters on Main Street, a Municipal parking lot on the site of an old softball field and a members-only fitness club featuring the first treadmills on Cowtown that were not powered by Clydesdales. But while these were proud achievements, the main focus of Team 21 remained as it had been since its inception: to bring a *Starbucks* to Cowtown.

The fight over *Starbucks* had been an epic one. The locals feared and reviled Starbucks coffee. They had heard the stories of how the brew had affected the people of New York City – the city that *never sleeps*! They had heard how customers were not allowed to order in English and how there were no English words for the drinks they served anyway – apart from coffee, of course. Coffee was not the traditional beverage of choice in Cowtown anyway. Its consumption was mostly confined to *Tim’s Truck Stop* on the outskirts of town, *Fran’s Diner* and families in West Cowtown, where the Jones clan maintained the family tradition of percolating *Maxwell House* beans on Saturday morning before “making the trip to town.” But as much as the locals loathed and feared Starbucks, the “slickers” desperately needed its caffeine. It soon became clear that a compromise was necessary.

After acrimonious debate that threatened to degenerate into violence, **Sarah Green**, a young alderwoman who had the respect of both sides for her website-hosting business and her prize-winning pumpkin pie recipe, stepped in and proposed a compromise. The Chamber of Commerce would invite *Dunkin Donuts* to install a single coffee shop on Main Street at the north entrance to Cowtown. An ‘extra large’ Dunkin Donuts coffee, she had calculated, would provide just enough caffeine to get sleepy

commuters safely to the nearest Starbucks in Baxter City. A ‘small’ Dunkin Donuts coffee, she assured skeptical elder aldermen, would be enough to provide a little “pep” for **Eldred the Milkman**, but not too much as to keep him up too late and risk not waking up in time to deliver milk to the people of Cowntown the following day. Plus, the locals liked donuts. They were not widely available except at the Harvest Festival, where they were given out as prizes.

And so, it came to pass that *Dunkin Donuts* arrived in Cowntown, the first major corporate food chain to appear inside the town limits and only the fourth corporate chain to dot the landscape of Cow County, after the two main North American car manufacturers, *Ford* and *GM*; and the *John Deere* dealership that had been a landmark on the outskirts of Cud for decades.

Having cracked the Cowntown market, such as it was, the donut chain went about doing what big corporate chains do: line up big-name sponsors. The search did not take long. There was only one name with a national profile in Cowntown and that name was **Joe Flacco**. The local hero was only too happy to add the coffee & donut chain to his list of sponsorships and, as was soon apparent, equally delighted to be able to sample its wares free of charge.

Joe became a regular at the Cowntown *Dunkin Donuts*. By Week 16, it was no longer a novelty to see him there during the week of home games and early morning on game day. By then he had tried everything on the menu and had developed a taste for iced macchiato, frozen hot chocolate and almost every donut in the line (he avoided the ‘old-fashioned’ as that was the staple donut at *Fran’s Diner* and Joe the Baker’s shop on McLuhan Street).

Joe’s patronage was definitely good for business – at the beginning. But as the season wore on and his mistakes piled up on the football field along with the inches around his waistline, the people of Cowntown who felt their quarterback was holding the team back began to voice their disapproval in the only way people of small towns know: by shunning him and the brands he promoted.

In a small town, with few places to hide and nosy old church ladies reporting on everyone’s movements, shunning sent a powerful message. It was hard work avoiding somebody. It usually could not be done without making it obvious to the person being shunned. So, when traffic in the *Dunkin Donuts* slowed to a trickle whenever Joe was visiting, the nervous Head Manager of the store understood what was happening and attempted, tactfully, to get ‘Good Ol’ Joe’ to move along, for the sake of the business. But Flacco was not interested in cooperating. He wouldn’t miss the first batch of ‘Choc Full o’ Love’ and ‘Pillow Talk’ vanilla crème donuts for anything – donuts and ice caps had become Joe’s crack cocaine.

Joe still had supporters in town, of course. He was often accompanied by his loyal guard, **Andy Levitre**, who, as a rookie lineman, had protected Joe his whole career. With Levitre ensuring that Joe’s walks about town went smoothly and influential members of the Jones clan of West Cowntown (where Joe had settled) shouting support and encouragement whenever he appeared in public, it was understandable that Joe would not clue-in to growing pro-Garoppolo movement building under the surface of Cowntown’s genteel country etiquette. And addicts being addicts, it followed that Joe’s uncontrollable taste for jelly, crème and sprinkles would blind him to the added pounds that were slowing him down, both physically and mentally.

So, it was a tense and nervous crowd that packed Tillman Field for Sunday’s Week 16 contest against the Blue Eagles. It was a crowd torn between loyalty to a local hero and beloved “in-law” and a burning desire to win; a feat many felt the Corn Kings would not be able to accomplish with Flacco pitching the pigskin.

Coach **Jim Coghlin** had apparently felt the same way. Exasperated with erratic performances and irritated by the sound of his starter’s laboured breathing and open-mouthed munching whenever he laid into a box of Boston Dreams’ on the sideline, he had pulled the trigger on the controversial switch. On the morning of game day, while Joe was stocking up on ‘Pretty in Pink’ and ‘Crazy 4 Chocolate,’ Coghlin announced to his coaching staff that **Jimmy Garoppolo** would start. The third-year back-up, who prior to the 2017 season had 18 lifetime pass attempts and a passer rating of 1.7, would be entrusted with the daunting task of finding the holes in the Scarborough All-World secondary. It was not the first time Garoppolo had faced Scarborough, however. He had appeared in relief in the team’s Week 8 loss and had thrown a touchdown pass without an interception in 22 attempts. Garoppolo had shown the ability to make quick decisions and accurate throws, both things Flacco seemed no longer capable of doing with any consistency.

When the sold-out crowd heard the starting line-up, there was a release of tension and much applause at the mention of Garoppolo’s name, although a smattering of boos made it clear that not everybody was happy. There was not only loyalty to consider, there was playoff experience. Garoppolo had none, Flacco had some – all losses, although most of those were not his fault. Plus, one look at the antics of **Aaron Rodgers** warming up on the Scarborough sideline was enough to convince veteran observers that it would not take much offence to beat the Blue Eagles on this day. Helmetless, smoking a cigarette and pausing frequently for sips from a metal flask with a ‘Gatorade’ sticker plastered on it, Rodgers wielded the football like a basketball, pretending to make free-throws through the arms of **TJ Yeldon** while **Charlie Sims** watched, doubled over in laughter. Putting the team’s fortunes in the hands of a virtual rookie could backfire severely on the coach if things went badly when his opponent was looking ripe for the picking.

The stage was set for the defences of both teams to take control and that is exactly what they did. On the game’s opening drive the Blue Eagles looked like they had something going when **Jordan Howard** got around the end and started dashing down the sideline into Cowntown territory. But as he cut back to make a break inside **Chris Long** ambushed him from behind and knocked the ball out. **Ronald Darby** pounced on it at the Cowntown 34 for the game’s first turnover.

Jimmy Garoppolo took the field almost immediately, running 10 yards ahead of his offence and heading first toward the line of scrimmage before checking himself and dropping back for the huddle. He was obviously raring to go, but was he *too* anxious? The first two plays were handoffs, gaining 2 yards each to bring up 3rd & 6. Garoppolo dropped back to pass on 3rd down and tried to get

the ball to **Larry Fitzgerald**, but the ageless vet was blanketed by **Marcus Peters** and the ball sailed just beyond his reach. That brought up 4th & 6 and the first punt of the game. At least that is what it looked like.

The Corn Kings had been saving this play for the entire season. The time had come when it was needed, as catching Scarborough off guard was likely the only way to knock them off of their game; and the earlier the better. Punter and part-time passer **Johnny Hekker** took the long snap from **Brent Celek** and rolled out to his right looking to pass. But the Blue Eagles looked strangely ready for the play, having left five defensive backs – all starters – in the game along with punt returner **Jamison Crowder**. Hekker looked down field and lobbed a quivering quail in a high arc, trying to find a lurching **Julius Thomas**. But **Eric Weddle** had a bead on the ball from the start. He timed his leap perfectly, plucked the pigskin out of the air, and landed with his feet moving. Seconds later he was in the end zone with the game's first score – a 43-yard pick-six to make it 7-0.

If that wasn't a bad enough start for Cowtown, on the next series Garoppolo was hit hard by **Ndamukong Suh**, who fell on the QB with all of his weight and appeared to knee him in the groin as he got off. Writhing in pain, Garoppolo was tended to by the trainers while the crowd rained boos down on the field. But there was no flag on the play, a sign perhaps that the officials were not overly sympathetic to a Cowtown playoff bid.

It was now Joe Flacco's game to win or lose. According to the *Pro Football Focal-Point* 'Win Probability Calculator,' at that moment the Corn Kings' chances of victory dropped from 26% to 10.4%. Then, after Flacco was picked off by **Landon Collins** on his very first series behind center, that probability plummeted to 2.7%. But the calculator was probably not taking into account Flacco's opponent, **Aaron Rodgers**. He was performing no better, and the prospect of his improvement was slim after the Eagles suffered a key injury of their own. Running back, **Jordan Howard** fell awkwardly after being tripped up by **Cordrea Tankersley** on 3rd and long three minutes in to the second quarter. He had to be helped off the field and would not return to the game.

The display that followed will be referred to by many in the mainstream media as a classic "defensive struggle." The reality is that it was a dreadfully-played "offensive struggle," in that both offences labored to do even the simplest things. Rodgers simply missed most of his throws while Flacco wildly missed most of his throws. By the 4th quarter, trailing 7-3 and miraculously still in the game, the most amazing achievement of the Cowtown offence to that point had been the fact that Flacco had managed to hold the Blue Eagles to one interception. But statistically-speaking, such inept quarterback play against a secondary like Scarborough eventually had to be severely punished. And it was, with **Dre Kirkpatrick** intercepting Flacco at the Scarborough 28 just when it appeared the Corn Kings offence was about to do something good.

The pick was returned to the Scarborough 49 and on the very next play, Rodgers dropped back to pass. With both running backs and the tight end staying in to block, Rodgers wobbled backwards and gazed downfield. He had plenty of time. To his surprise Crowder was wide open, Darby having slipped on the turf. Unable to believe his receiver was open, Rodgers rolled out to buy some time, just to make sure. He looked again. Yes, there he was, even more open than before now that safety **Rodney McLeod** had collided with the ungainly **David Harris**, who had dropped back into coverage. The seconds passed. Crowder made a third dash across the middle, his hand waving frantically. By now the entire Corn King secondary was out of play as **Glover Quin** tripped over McLeod on his way to cover Crowder and **Terence Newman** broke off his coverage of **Pierre Garcon**, (who had given up and walked off the field), to circle back and prevent a dump-off to a now wide-open **Charles Sims**. Rodgers side-stepped Cowtown lineman **Jared Crick**, who had finally shed his block but was, by that point, too exhausted to do more than lunge like a drunk at the Blue Eagle quarterback. **Ryan Kerrigan** bore down on him from the other side, but he too was dog-tired. Rodgers stepped forward and Kerrigan missed, slamming into **TJ Watt** coming in from the other side. **Marcel Dareus** sat down, huffing and puffing, too tired to move; while **Robert Ayers Jr** and **Chris Long** found themselves both double-teamed by extra Scarborough linemen looking for something to do. The entire Cowtown defence was now either down, out of play or neutralized.

Meanwhile, **Jamison Crowder** was still open. He turned around and started his fifth dash across the middle of the field. This time he hopped up-and-down and waved his arms while his quarterback stood stalk still in the backfield watching him. Finally, **Ronald Darby** picked himself up off the turf and sprinted in the direction of his man, Crowder. Sensing time was running out, Rodgers pump-faked to Darby's back side, causing the Corn King corner to momentarily stop and glance the other way. While Darby was distracted, Crowder yelled at the top of his lungs: "**THROW THE F*CKING BALL!**" Hearing this, Darby recovered and flew back in the direction of the Scarborough receiver as Rodgers threw the ball. It was a rushed throw and off target. Darby dove through the air, looking for a pick while Crowder stopped in his tracks and turned awkwardly in the direction of the pass. As luck would have it, the ball hit Darby's helmet and popped up in the air into Crowder's hands. The Blue Eagle wide-out wasted no time taking off with his long-sought-after prize. There was nobody left to stop him and, in a flash, he was in the end zone for a 51-yard touchdown catch.

With the score now 14-3 for the Blue Eagles in the 4th quarter, fans started to head for the exits at Tillman Field. The signs of defeat were too strong to ignore. Rodgers had thrown a 51-yard TD pass, Flacco couldn't get his act together, and the Cowtown running game was not going to get their team 11 points in 12 minutes. It was all over as far as they were concerned.

The Blue Eagles appeared to feel the same way. Rodgers lit up a cigarette at the bench, took a few swigs of "Gatorade," and pulled out a deck of cards for a few quick rounds of poker with his offensive line. The Scarborough defence stayed in their nickel package, not in the least concerned that the Corn Kings were able to mount a modest drive, built on 11 runs and one completed pass, to get into field goal range for **Nick Novak** to make it 14-6. There was just 4:32 left in the 4th quarter and the Cowtown offence looked

built for field goals at best; and they would need three more of those to squeak ahead.

The Blue Eagles offence was content as well. They had done their bit. Time was on their side. They mounted a three-and-out and punted the ball. The Corn Kings took over at their 19 and, after a nice opening 12-yard run by **Dewayne Washington**, turned the ball over on downs at their own 38-yard line.

The Blue Eagles were in a position to put the game away. With 1:51 left all they needed was a single 1st down, or to get close enough for a field goal. But Cowtown had all of their timeouts remaining and they used them all while stoning **Corey Clement** for no gain on three consecutive carries. Facing 4th & 10, still at the Cowtown 38, Scarborough punted once more, **Dustin Colquitt** angling the ball out of bounds at his opponent's 12-yard line.

Joe Flacco strolled out onto the field to the claps and cheers of a stadium just one-third full. Those who were left were the diehards: the people of West Cowtown and the 'Flacco Fanatics' – a fan club based in Udderville – formed the core of the remaining fanbase, along with a few Greens from South Cowtown and of course, the Browns of Downtown Cowtown. Flacco looked remarkably calm for quarterback who had done nothing all afternoon and was about to be blitzed like France in WWII while going against the best secondary in the league. It could have been that the half dozen 'Roses are Red' donuts he had scoffed down during the Eagles' last series had relaxed him – or put him into a kind of food coma.

With 1:12 left, no timeouts, the season on the line, Flacco suddenly looked poised in the pocket. He hit on 5 of his next 6 pass attempts to pull into Scarborough territory at the 47. But the yards had come in small chunks and there was only 0:29 left. With the Eagles in a zone defence, Flacco tried to get the ball to **Mike Evans**, but the Cowtown star could not find a crease. With no other options he flipped the ball to back-up **Chris Hogan**, who sprinted like a jack rabbit toward the sideline. He moved with speed and elusiveness that nobody expected from a fifth-string wide receiver. For a moment it looked as if he would score, but **Landon Collins** was able to force him out of bounds at the 3-yard line for a 44-yard gain. The crowd jumped to its feet. With 15 seconds left there might be as many as 3 chances to pass the ball into the end zone. But Coach Coghlin had other plans. Risking that this might be the only play he could get off, he handed the ball to **LeGarrette Blount**. Following a block by guard **Andy Levitre** Blount blew up the center of the Scarborough line and tumbled across the goal line for the touchdown.

The hardest part was done, but there was still one more step for the home team. Trailing 14-12 they needed to make the two-point convert. Despite having just witnessed the power of the Cowtown running back, the Scarborough defence stayed in the nickel set and played the pass for the two-point attempt. You could almost hear Flacco say 'thank you very much' under his breath as he handed the ball to Blount, who followed **Ryan Schraeder** untouched into the end zone for the conversion. The crowd erupted in a frenzy. As if to punctuate the momentum change, Dareus sacked Rodgers on the last play of regulation to send the game into overtime.

Cowtown won the toss. They were riding a wave of good fortune but with the short stoppage in play the Eagles had had a moment to pause and collect themselves. Their defence came out angry and forced a three-and-out that actually pushed the Corn Kings all the way back to their 14-yard line. On 4th & 21, Hekker punted the ball to a waiting **Jamison Crowder**. It was a high punt and the wind at Tillman Field played with its trajectory. Crowder signalled for a fair catch but the ball sailed a bit on him and struck his face guard as it fell. The ball squirted through Crowder's arms and onto the field, where **Rob Havenstein** fell on it at the Scarborough 36-yard line. The game was turning into a complete nightmare for **Chris Dickinson**. He threw his headphones away and kicked over a

cooler of Gatorade, prompting a panicked Rodgers to jump into action to rescue what he could of the strangely clear-looking liquid that leaked from the displaced lid.

While Cowtown clearly had the upper hand now, they were still far from home. They were moving against the wind and in order to make this a comfortable kick they would need to reach at least the 25-yard line. The going was not as tough as they might have expected, however. With the Eagles playing a basic nickel, Blount and Washington probed the Scarborough line for a combined 5 yards, bringing up third down. There was no question now that the Corn Kings would have to attempt a pass if they hoped to keep the drive alive; the 31-yard line was not going to be good enough in this wind.

On 3rd and 5, Flacco made perhaps his second-best pass of the day. With the Eagles playing mid-depth, he wasted no time throwing underneath to an open **Adam Humphries**. The fourth WR on the



Foley's NY Pub in Midtown Manhattan is the place to go for fans of the Mohave Hellfire. It was here where local Hellfire fans congregated in Week 16 to witness the final EFL broadcast from the Fiery Depths in Mohave.

depth chart secured the ball and wound his way deftly through to the second level for a 12-yard gain and 1st down. The crowd cheered, the Blue Eagles defenders visibly sagged. Cowtown was at the 19-yard line now – not “gimme” range for a field goal, but close enough that a miss by Novak would be considered a disappointment.

We will never know if Novak would have made the kick. The Corn Kings, taking no chances with a pass, ran the ball four straight times into a tired Blue Eagles’ defence that appeared now to be going through the motions. Blount covered the remaining distance on his own, breaching the Scarborough goal line from 6 yards out for the instant win. Final: Cowtown 20, Scarborough 14. To characterize the home fans and players as ecstatic would be an understatement. Those who witnessed it could scarcely believe their eyes. It was as if they had received an unexpected reprieve while standing on the gallows of their playoff hopes.

The win puts Cowtown into the post-season and sets up a re-match between these teams in the wildcard game. While the ending was certainly unexpected and exciting in its own way, the bulk of the contest must go down as one of the most poorly played critical games in regular season history. Scarborough managed a mere 4 first downs, turned the ball over 4 times, punted 11 times, and gained more than half of their 187 total yards on three plays. Cowtown’s numbers were a lot better: 362 total yards and 25 first downs, but they turned the ball over 3 times, including a pick-six, and Flacco looked much worse than his game day QB rating of 37.8 suggests. The film will not be kind to **Joe Flacco**, even if the Football Gods were to his team on this day.

Round Two goes next week at Bluffs Stadium in Scarborough. I would think of an excuse to miss it except that I am curious to see if the notoriously violent Scarborough fans will go the distance this time and actually lynch **Aaron Rodgers** if he puts in a performance like he did in Week 16.

END OF AN ERA

The Hellfire were, in 2017, one of eight original EFL teams still active in its original home under its original ownership and name. But as of Monday, the Hellfire Era is officially over.

On the eve of the Week 16 match-up between the Brooklin Hawks and the Mohave Hellfire at the Fiery Depths, Hellfire owner, GM and coach **Bobby Elder** held a press conference to announce that he would be stepping down from his role and putting the team up for sale at the conclusion of Sunday’s contest. With the Hellfire still technically alive in the Pacific Conference wild card race, it was a strange time to make such an announcement. But the mercurial Mohave coach is nothing if not controversial. Lighting a fire under his team by inferring prior to the game that they would not survive the day to play again in the Hellfire burgundy and yellow was the type of ploy one could imagine he would have in his psychological playbook. But it was more likely that he was taking one last parting shot at a team that had won just 69 games over its checkered 11-year history in the EFL and that he had come, as a result, to hate with a passion.

Many had seen this day coming from moment Elder trucked in 30,000 replacement fans from Mexico to thwart a local fan rebellion spearheaded by the fan advocate group, F.L.A.M.E. (Fans Liberation Association of Greater Mohave and Everywhere) at the start of a troubled 2012 season. While that was the first overt sign that Elder was losing the fans, there were other red flags prior to that seminal event that suggested the team was losing Elder.

In 2009, following winning seasons and post-season berths in 2007 and 2008, the Hellfire began a streak of seven losing seasons – a run of sub-500 futility that included back-to-back 3-13 campaigns in 2011 and 2012 – that streak was only broken last year with a roller-coaster 8-8 campaign under the unpredictable quarterbacking of **Ryan Fitzpatrick**. As early as Week Five of that 2009 season, Elder was showing that he could be spiteful if his players failed to perform to expectations. In a 24-10 loss to Chino he had quarterback **Kurt Warner** throw just 4 passes. The reason? Warner had struggled in a Week Three loss to Kutztown and in the two games following that performance he threw a total of 11 passes!

In his struggles to deal with his team’s underperformance Elder had several meltdowns, both on and off the field. In 2010, he lashed out at the officials in his notorious “*Didn’t Get the Memo*” rant following a Week Seven loss to Ringgold – a tirade that got him suspended by the league for one game. In 2011 he directed the first of his infamous “no-punt” games, attempting 10 4th downs and converting just three in a 27-7 loss to York in the season’s second week. Later that same year he kicked the water boy in the shins after losing a close game to the Spartans and, 7 weeks after that, drew the ire of feminists across the continent when he publicly derided his team for playing like “girls” – but not “lesbian” girls, just “sissy” girls – in a humiliating 16-0 loss to York.

The F.L.A.M.E. boycott lit the fire of Elder’s combative nature but it did nothing to help him focus on improving the team. Rather, it appeared to have the exact opposite effect. As if trying to punish the fans he would do things like run **Montee Ball** 37 times in one game – 31 times in a row during one stretch – and when the fans complained he would tell them, literally, to “*f*ck off*” while reminding them: “*it’s my team, not yours!*”

It was only when a couple of thousand fed up fans rushed the field in an attempt to lynch Elder after a 27-7 loss to the Regulators in 2013 that the rancorous coach issued a public apology and made a half-hearted attempt to coach like a normal coach. But things did not improve for the Hellfire in the standings and, in 2014, after a Week Five loss to the Pats, Elder confessed to the attending media at his post-game press conference that he had “*no clue how to coach this team.*” The admission seemed to take a big weight off his shoulders and for a while he was relatively quiet; even smiling on rare occasions.

But by the mid-way point of the 2015 season, when it had become clear that his team was once again heading in the wrong direction, Elder suffered a relapse. He had to be restrained from attacking referee **Walt Coleman** during a 28-24 loss to the Gladiators. His long, unkempt beard fueled rumours that he had suffered a crisis and was living under a bridge, foraging for food on

weekdays between home games. In Week 12 he attacked assistant special-teams coach **Perseus Paxton** after **Markus Wheaton** returned a kickoff 78 yards in the final minute to set up the game-winning field goal in a 30-28 loss to the Triumph. At the end of the year he executed another wholesale firing of his assistant coaching staff, the fifth consecutive year he had done so. Firing his assistants and burning the contents of their offices seemed to be one of the few pleasures the team allowed him. Word had spread in the coaching community that “the Mohave gig” was a temporary one at best. But for some it was better than nothing.

2016 had been a season cruelly sprinkled with hope, even in the face of his replacement fans, ‘*Los Entusiasmos*,’ – by now living in a shanty town called Little Mexico, outside of The Fiery Depths – protesting the election of **Donald Trump** by refusing to attend Hellfire games; and the ruling of the EFL Economic Growth Committee that Elder needed to build an enclosure around his stadium to protect fans and players from the extreme heat.

Despite all this and the subsequent falling attendance, the team was competitive under the indiscriminate hand of **Ryan Fitzpatrick**, who had been signed as a free agent in the off-season to replace the injured **Andrew Luck**. By “competitive,” I mean that they were still in contention heading into the season’s final week. They were heartbreakingly eliminated by the Chargers winning over LA even as the Hellfire rung up a resounding 31-10 win over the Monarchs.

This season just past, which was in many ways similar in its ebbs and flows to the last one – but with **Andrew Luck** shakily guiding the team’s fortunes – seemed to suck what little love of football was left in Elder.

By now widely despised in his home town; his team operating at a loss due to falling attendance at Hellfire games; nothing inside the trophy case in his office except for a framed front page of the *Mohave Torch* from February 4, 2008, commemorating his team’s only playoff win (a 28-13 decision over Florida); and his few attempts at charitable work in the community being held back by whispers that his holding company, Hellfire Consultants Ltd., was a front for Satan; the man many accused of “destroying” **Andrew Luck** could be forgiven for wanting it all to end. And given all of the above (and more if I had the space to print it) it would be equally likely that the football world would be eager to say good riddance to him.

But in spite of Elder’s irascibility, cruelty, irresponsibility and general coaching incompetence, it was a sad day for me when I tuned in to ESPN to hear him hang up his clipboard. What would the EFL be like without **Bobby Elder** and his terrible football team that every now and then looked like a really good football team?

I called **Randy the Desert Rat**, Hellfire beat writer for the *Mohave Torch*.

“Why didn’t you warn me Randy?” I fired at him, without so much as a ‘hello.’ “*I would have come out to Mohave to watch the last game at the Fiery Depths! Now it’s too late!*”

“Hey Spats, I honestly thought you knew!” Randy protested, without so much as a ‘hey buddy!’ “*I mean, the writing was on the wall. The talk was out there. You have connections. Since when do I have to spoon feed you?*”

“Well, yes, I.....” I stopped in mid-sentence. Of course, I had known. I had even written early this year that the Hellfire were in trouble and that somebody on the Board of Hellfire had “leaked” the sale plans to the Press in an effort to turn the tide. But talking about something that is likely to happen and actually dealing with it happening are two different things.

“No word on a buyer yet, if that’s your next question,” Randy said to fill the silence. “*No locals that I am aware of. Shit, nobody around here can afford a professional football team.*”

Luckily for me, New York City has the world inside of it. There was a restaurant for every conceivable international cuisine and a bar for every EFL team – yes, even the Hellfire.

Foley’s New York Pub in Midtown Manhattan is the place to go in New York City if you are a Hellfire fan. An Arizona Cardinals hangout in the old NFL days, the bar still hosts St. Louis Cardinals fans during baseball season. But in the Fall and Winter, it is the place to go to follow the Hellfire. I decided that I would spend my Sunday at Foley’s, not only to watch the last game at The Fiery Depths, but to get reaction from the New York Hellfire faithful to the news of their team being on the move.

I arrived in time for the 1:00 pm games, so as not to miss the Scarborough-Cowtown and New Jersey-Pickering games that would, most likely, determine the Atlantic Conference wildcards. The Hellfire game was not on until 4:00 pm, along with the pivotal West Division contests, LA-Seattle and Chino-Iowa. For some reason Mohave had always been in the East Division, but played in the Western time zone. Jet lag might have been one small reason, among many, that the Hellfire had been so erratic over the years.

My impression upon arrival was that Foley’s was more of a baseball pub. While the bar area was crowded, the seating area was only about half full and the mood rather subdued. Football paraphernalia and jerseys were not as ubiquitous as I was accustomed to seeing at a sports bar during football season. Signs of Hellfire fandom, whether displayed on walls, shelves, or on people, did not jump out at me upon entering the place. They were there, but they were modest. A group of about half a dozen guys wearing Hellfire jerseys were moving two tables together off in the corner with a clear view of the giant screen. A jacket or jersey here and there could be seen around the bar. A few pennants and a life-sized cardboard cut-out of **Andrew Luck** were on display past the inner doors on your left as you entered – noticeable, but not ostentatious.

I settled in near the bar to take in the games that were about to start. I felt it was not yet time to canvass the Hellfire faithful for their opinions, as I usually need a few drinks in me before I can strike up a conversation with strangers. An hour in it appeared I was going to need more than a few drinks to muster the courage to crack the social iron dome that surrounded the patrons of Foley’s. These people knew each other well in the way bar flies do, clustered in cliques and speaking in their own quirky dialects born of familiarity over the years. Rarely, someone would catch my eye but would take no more interest in me than one would a passing

stranger on the street. I was not wearing anything that would identify me as a fan of a particular team, so no reason to reach out and share high fives or commiserate over events unfolding on the TV screens scattered throughout the bar.

By no means were the patrons of Foley's all Hellfire backers. There was a smattering of Wrecking Ball jerseys. New Jersey being right next door, some New Yorkers had adopted them as their team. Those patrons were not paying much attention to the wreck of a game unfolding in Pickering, however. The outcome would only come into play if Cowtown lost to Scarborough which, at that time, looked more likely than not. But there was nothing in a win for the Wrecking Balls; they were long ago out of the race and they had traded their no.1 pick to the Hellfire for **KJ Wright**. The Hellfire fans were paying more attention to the NJ-Pickering game, hoping for a New Jersey loss to lock up the first overall pick in the upcoming draft.

Off to the side was a quartet of Swordfish fans wearing a mix of CLOWNEY and BECKHAM JR jerseys. They were focusing glumly on a screen above them where the Thunder Lizards had jumped out to a 10-0 lead in the first quarter of a must-win game for Sebastian. I had only noticed them because they had erupted as one with loud expletives when punter **Jordan Berry** was intercepted attempting a pass on 4th & 5 at his own 26-yard line on their opening possession.

"What the f&k are they doing?" a swarthy 30-something in a crew cut bellowed at the TV screen as **Thomas Davis** and **Jalen Collins** celebrated the easy turnover. Loud groans from all four could be heard when, two plays later, **Drew Brees** found **Eric Decker** in the end zone for game's opening touchdown. I had grinned at the time, not in satisfaction that the Swordfish were losing, but in anticipation of watching **Russ Lemmon** try to explain that gamble in his post-game press conference.

There was, of course, the lone **Tom Brady** fan among the gathered. He was not really alone – he appeared to know the two guys on either side of him – but he was the only identifiable York fan in the bar. I smiled inside. No matter where I went over the years to watch the EFL, there was always at least one guy in a BRADY jersey. The York star had won just one EFL Championship – long ago with a stacked Dragons team – and had achieved no notable success in with the Outlaws and Excaliburs in the intervening 9 seasons. Yet the guy continued to have a cult following going back to his three Super Bowl wins prior to the implosion of the NFL. Foley's token *Brady Fan* seemed to be enjoying himself watching his Excaliburs manhandle the North Stars. The game had started at a weird time, 11:30 am, to accommodate fans watching in Budapest and to satisfy **Jay Hammond**'s request to "get it over with." By the time I noticed *Brady Fan* the game was already into the 3rd quarter with York in front 22-0. This was another game that would mean something only if Cowtown and Pickering lost, but the Swords were doing their part in style. The North Stars were also doing their part to lend York those "style points," with **David Johnson** failing to gain traction and **Brian Hoyer** looking uncomfortable all game. Budapest, locked into the no.2 seed, was clearly looking ahead.

The best game of the early afternoon slate was one of only two Week 16 games that were totally meaningless in the playoff picture. It played on a single screen that happened to be near my seat at the bar. I was apparently the only one watching it. The Wolverines had jumped out to a 21-14 lead over Georgia mid-way through the second quarter, aided greatly by a **Tyreek Hill** 96-yard kick return for a touchdown on the opening kickoff and a **Jalen Ramsey** pick-six on **Big Ben**'s first pass from s scrimmage. One minute into the game, Toronto had led 14-0. But that Toronto defence, as opportunistic as it had been all year, was fundamentally bad; the kind of defence one would expect to blow a lead of almost any size. In the end they did – the much-maligned Georgia quarterback teamed up with **LeSean McCoy** to rack up 560 yards of offence in a thrilling 35-31 Glads win. By the end of that game I had enough of a buzz on from the half dozen *Ommegang Nirvana* I had consumed that I asked myself the football version of the tree-falling-in-the-forest question: "If a team wins a thriller and nobody is watching, does it count?"

The other "meaningless" game actually carried historical significance. The Aurora Mustangs were looking to become the first team in EFL history to post two perfect regular seasons. This they were expected to do against the lethargic Regulators. The idea that anything could happen "on any given Sunday" did not apply to the Mustangs; especially when they were playing the Regulators; a team that also did not qualify for the "any given Sunday" faint hope clause. A pair of obnoxious Aurora fans sat at the far end watching **Matt Ryan** pick apart the South Carolina secondary, cheering every completed pass as if the Gale Sayers Trophy was riding on it. **Rich Liotta** was running his offence hard, probably hoping to get Ryan his 50th TD pass of the season – a bonus individual milestone to go along with the team effort. It was an obnoxious game plan and the obnoxious pair of Aurora fans were loving it. Their loud <yahoos!>, <yeaahhs!> and "<that's-what-I'm-talking-about!>" grated on everyone's nerves. At the conclusion of the game, they stumbled out, index fingers raised, shouting "*Mustangs #1!*" At least Ryan fell short of 50 TD passes!

The early afternoon games played out with everything hinging on the "overtime thriller" in Cowtown. As bad as that game had been from an execution standpoint, its importance and the unexpected Corn King comeback had put some passably attractive lipstick on that pig of a contest. There did not appear to be any Cowtown or Scarborough fans in the house, but there was one loud-mouthed Spartan fan who, proudly wearing a RIVERS jersey and flush with his team's victory over hapless New Jersey, was concentrating with energy on the large flat screen displaying that game.

"AAARRRGGGGGHHHHHHH!" <thump!> <psshhh!> <bonk!> CROWDER YOU IDIOT!" was clearly audible above the din when the Blue Eagles' return man had muffed the punt in overtime. The <thump!> <psshhh!> <bonk!> part was the sound of *Pickering Fan* pounding the table and rising in fury, causing a beer glass to smash on the floor and his chair to fall backwards. I laughed inwardly as I observed how closely fans could resemble their team's owners and coaches in demeanour and temperament.

While all this was happening there had been a rather modest build-up to the main event at Foley's: the Brooklin-Mohave game. By around 3:30 pm, Hellfire fans were visible in sufficient numbers that a reasonable person could agree that Foley's was a

'Hellfire Bar.' But there were also Cubs, Convicts and Knights fans in the establishment, as well as a guy in a Pilots' jersey sitting with the Knights fans. The idea that the Pilots had any fans at all outside of Seattle struck me as odd until I reminded myself that this was New York; there was probably a guy *somewhere* in the city wearing a Thundersnow jersey right now.

About a dozen guys and a couple of gals wearing Hellfire paraphernalia had taken prime seats in front of the big screen, which was currently showing **LeGarrette Blount** running through the Blue Eagles' defence on his way to the game-winning touchdown. The gals wore devil's horns on their heads and white LUCK jerseys. The guys wore a mix of LUCK and DONALD jerseys with the odd JONES and AJAYI sprinkled in. One guy was wearing a maroon SCHAUB jersey. *He is somebody I will have to talk to*, I thought.

While the focus of Foley's – officially – was the Hellfire, the pivotal game in the race for the final Pacific Conference wildcard was taking place in Iowa City, where the Convicts controlled their own destiny. A win and the Convicts were in. If that didn't work out, the Knights would make it in with a victory over Seattle. If the Pilots managed to pull off another remarkable upset (they had upended Chino the week before) things would get messy with a bunch of 8-8 teams potentially battling it out with tie-breakers. Mohave's chances were slim: they needed to win and hope Twin Cities, Charleswood, Chino and LA all lost. They were all but out of the picture, but that did not stop the devil-horned gals from fist-pumping and <woo-hooing!> as the big screen switched to the *Plode Blimp* aerial shot of The Fiery Depths.

The rest of the bar's patrons focused initially on the Cubs-Convicts game, which was on display on the two main TVs behind the bar. For some reason, this important game had not been flexed into the Sunday night prime time slot. Instead, that honour had been bestowed on the Twin Cities at Virden contest. It made no sense. Virden was locked into the no.3 seed and the Triumph needed a lot of help to earn a post-season pass. More than likely they would be eliminated by 7:00 pm ET, rendering the game completely meaningless. However, I had noticed an uptick in Virden mainstream coverage this year that I would not have put past the EFL to have secretly engineered in an attempt to prop up a weak Virden market with primetime exposure. In addition, the Triumph had acquired a bit of a national following in the wake of their perfect season in 2016. The game would be broadcast in bars all over the world – a sizeable number of drunken patrons would be drawn to the Triumph regardless of their playoff standing.

In the event, it was probably better for Chino fans and the Convict brand that their team's humiliation was not broadcast live on primetime. **Dak Prescott**, possibly still reeling from the shock of losing to Seattle in Week 15, had an even worse day at Joe Ferguson Stadium. The second-year pivot threw 4 interceptions and no touchdowns in a 41-3 washout at the hands of the Cubs' defence and a rehabilitated **Russell Wilson**, who countered Prescott's interceptions with 5 touchdown passes. The Cubs fans at Foley's, having spent a season of watching their team do just enough to get by, were enjoying the drubbing a little too much. With Wilson still passing deep into the 4th quarter of a game that had been decided long ago, one particularly drunken Cubs fan wearing a MIXON jersey remarked to a sour-looking Chino fan wearing a SHAZIER jersey: "*this is just too easy, bud!*" To which the Convict fan replied: "*that's not easy – **this** is easy!*" as he knocked over *Cub Fan's* beer. A scuffle ensued but was quickly broken up by pub staff and friends of the two belligerents. This is why, in New York, we mostly have segregated team bars.

Knights' fans were celebrating early as the Convicts were getting slaughtered. The nightmare scenario of a loss to the inferior Pilots was not going to happen. Despite some tense moments early in the second half, after **Andy Dalton** had thrown one of his trademark pick-sixes to **Kareem Jackson** to enable Seattle to tie the game at 14, LA came to be firmly in control before the end of the third quarter. **Tre'Davious White** got the Knights' steamroller into gear with an interception of **Eli Manning** that set up a Dalton TD pass to make it 24-14. Dalton, who had been a horrifying Jekyll & Hyde for the season's second half, was on his way to a four-TD day and the Knights were on their way to Brooklin for the wildcard game.

The passing of the Hellfire's post-season dream was unmarked by any noticeable reaction from the collection of Mohave fans at Foley's. The Hawks-Hellfire game continued to play on like elevator music in the background while the Hellfire faithful sipped beer, gnawed on chicken wings and scoffed down meatball parm sliders while talking amongst themselves and occasionally peaking over at the Cubs game. It had been that way since early cheering, when **Tevin Coleman** swept right for a first down on Mohave's opening series, turned to groans when back-up **Conner Cook** was sacked and stripped of the ball on the next play by Hawks' defensive end, **Charles Johnson**. In order for the Hellfire to win, Cook would have to play like somebody other than himself. Before the first quarter was done it was clear, from the lack of Hellfire offence and an easy **Brent Grimes** interception at the Mohave 15-yard line, that the real Cook had shown up. **Alex Smith** checked down to **James Develin** for a touchdown two plays later to give the Hawks a 7-0 lead. It was a lead that stood unchanged until Grimes' 42-yard interception return for a touchdown in the 4th quarter doubled Brooklin's advantage to 14-0. Unrecognized and underappreciate, the Hellfire defence had played heroically trying to keep their offence in the game. But the "Cook Factor" was too much to overcome.

With the Hellfire backers apparently indifferent to their team's performance, I felt the time had come for me to talk to them. I strolled casually over to their tables and introduced myself.

"Hi, my name's Spats and I'm new to this bar," I said to the older-looking fellow, perhaps late 30's, wearing the SCHAUB jersey. "I noticed you're all wearing Hellfire gear. Are you guys visiting from Mohave or something?" The IPAs I had been tossing back emboldened me to be familiar. But the 'Bud Light' they were drinking by the pitcher did not appear to have the same effect.

"No, we're from New York," SCHAUB replied, without telling me his name. He reached for a piece of garlic bread and

turned toward one of the LUCK girls. *"Pass the ranch, hon,"* he said, pointing to the dipping sauce. 'Hon' handed him the sauce without saying anything and turned back to the game. One of the DONALDs, a beefy young man with the beginning of a receding hair line, inspected me from two seats away.

He paused from devouring his pizza. *"Where do I know you from?"* he asked me.

I studied him in turn. I was certain I did not know him. *"Do you read a lot of articles on football?"* I asked him.

When I mentioned the word "articles" his eyes lit up in recognition, but he did not smile. *"You're that writer, aren't you?"* he said. *"Chad....McFats?"* he ventured.

"Spats McChad," I corrected him. *"I do sports freelance work, based out of New York."*

"Yeah, that's right," the beefy DONALD said. A slight smirk crossed his face. *"You can be a bit of an asshole,"* he added matter-of-factly; and went back to scoffing down his pizza.

The use of the A-word drew the attention of one of the male LUCKs, who turned to see my reaction. I was taken aback, but not completely – telling it like it is has its price after all.

I chuckled nervously. *"Well, you're certainly entitled to your opinion, but...."* Before I could finish he interjected, unchewed pizza bobbing up and down on his tongue as he spoke.

"You're f^7king right about that Chad!" he barked. A piece of pepperoni flew out of his mouth with the word 'Chad' and landed in front of me. He finished off his mouthful and continued. *"You've been ragging on Bobby Elder and the team for years. Why did you come here today, to gloat?"*

"Gloat?" I was astonished to hear that word. *"No, not at all!"* I protested. *"I just wanted to get Hellfire fans reactions to the team's last game in Mohave."*

"Well, here's a reaction for you," the beefy DONALD looked me square in the eyes and leaned forward. *"It SUCKS!"*

With that, he returned to his pizza and the game. At that moment **Tevin Coleman** found room around right tackle, side-stepped the safety, **Quintin Demps**, and bolted to the Hawks' end zone for a 65-yard touchdown run. The table of Hellfire faithful leaped up and cheered. There was no hope for the playoffs and it was the team's last game, but they still cared about the win.

While they were busy celebrating, I took the opportunity to withdraw from their table. I returned to the bar, paid my tab and left. No, I was not afraid of the beefy DONALD fellow. I have been in enough bars and charmed enough drunks. But the Hellfire fans of Foley's had made me feel, in no uncertain terms, that I was an intruder in their space. For once, my journalistic instincts took a back seat to decency. These people did not want to be "examined" for their reaction, or to elaborate on feelings that should have been obvious. I didn't go over to them with the intention of "gloating" – I did not want the Hellfire to move – but asking Hellfire fans what it felt like to be watching their team play its final game in Mohave while their playoff aspirations evaporated in front of them was kind of like gloating when seen from the other side. Although I might have chosen a different word, "sucks" says it all.

AROUND THE EFL

The 11th regular season of the EFL is now history, giving us 10 preliminary "winners." The Thunder Lizards recovered from an early season stumble to win the North Division while the Blue Eagles caught a wing on a high branch and had to make an emergency landing in the first wildcard spot. The Corn Kings will try to knock them off that perch next week. The North Stars won ugly often enough to claim top spot in the Coastal Division while the Mustangs finished off another perfect season as undisputed kings of the sickly South Division.

In the Pacific, the talented Cubs added some nasty to their game in the final two weeks to win the West with little challenge; the Violators emerged as the most consistent force in the volatile Central Division; and the surprising Bombers locked up the no.1 seed with a convincing 28-11 thumping of St Charles in Week 16. The pre-season favourites to win the East, the Hawks, must be content to host the wildcard game against an LA team that turned out *not* to have the worst quarterback in the clutch after all – that dubious distinction goes to Chino's **Dak Prescott**, who squandered two chances to clinch a playoff berth by throwing 7 interceptions and just 1 touchdown pass in the final two weeks.

So, what about the others – the 14 "losers" of the 2017 regular season? Little about them will be remembered in the years to come, and rightfully so. But to appreciate the victors, one needs to understand the vanquished. And, to that end, I will don my Doctor's robe next week and give you my findings in Dr. McChad's annual Post-Season Post-Mortem. Check it out in the playoff edition of the newsletter!



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RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 16:

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PLAYOFF PICTURE AT A GLANCE

PACIFIC CONFERENCE					
EAST			CENTRAL		
IN	ALIVE	OUT	IN	ALIVE	OUT
 1  W		 	 3		 
WEST			ATLANTIC CONFERENCE		
IN	ALIVE	OUT	IN	ALIVE	OUT
 2  W		 	NORTH		
IN	ALIVE	OUT	IN	ALIVE	OUT
 3  W  W			 2		  
SOUTH					
IN	ALIVE	OUT			
 1		  			

Jimmy's WILDCARD PICKS

PACIFIC CONFERENCE WILD CARD

LOS ANGELES @ BROOKLIN (line – HAWKS by 7)

INJURIES: Los Angeles – Le'Veon Bell (QUESTIONABLE), Jordan Matthews (QUESTIONABLE), Earl Mitchell (OUT);
Brooklin – Rob Gronkowski (PROBABLE), Ryan Mathews (PROBABLE), Charles Johnson (QUESTIONABLE), Stephon Tuitt (QUESTIONABLE), Manti Te'o (IR).

Since their Week 10 high point when they beat the Cubs and appeared poised to make a run at the East Division, the Hawks have fluttered fitfully over the EFL landscape. They ran up a 4-2 record over that final stretch but looked quite vulnerable and sometimes over-matched in the process. Injuries and fatigue played a role in this dubious finish as did the installment of a retrograde game plan designed to take some heat off of a late-stumbling Alex Smith. While the Brooklin pivot still managed to finish the year in the top five of quarterbacks based on passer rating, when compared with his MVP-grade pace over those first ten weeks his fall since then has been comparatively steep. The good news is that they enter this game relatively healthy, with Rob Gronkowski and Ryan Mathews probable to return and only Stephon Tuitt and Charles Johnson as question marks. The Knights have had problems of their

own since falling off a mid-season 6-game win streak. They are 2-3 in their last five games and can thank a total Chino collapse for letting them into the playoffs. The Knights' late season ills are easy to diagnose: quarterback Andy Dalton threw 11 interceptions in those last five games, four of which were returned for his 29 touchdown passes are good for third place among all QBs. He is capable of making plays and did so in Week 6 when he led his Knights to victory over these same Hawks. That game was the beginning of LA's win streak and signalled a return to relevance for the 'Blue Shield.' Le'Veon Bell is questionable, which could throw up a speed bump. But, when shaky versions of two talented teams face each other in a sudden-death situation the team that prepares better and is able to maintain focus on the task will inevitably come out on top. This is where a veteran coach makes his money.

PICK: LOS ANGELES

COWTOWN @ SCARBOROUGH (line – CORN KINGS by 2)

INJURIES: **Cowtown** – Cre'von LeBlanc (PROBABLE), Derrick Carrier (OUT), Aaron Colvin (OUT), Jimmy Garoppolo (OUT); **Scarborough** – Jordan Howard (QUESTIONABLE), Ra'Shede Hageman (DOUBTFUL), Cordy Glenn (OUT), Vincent Jackson (OUT).

The bizarre and mostly painful Week 16 match-up between these teams set us up for more of the same in the playoffs after the Corn Kings' improbable comeback landed both of these teams in wildcard spots. The outcome set up a back-to-back, home-and-away series rarely seen in football. History shows that when such a thing happens the team that wins first, usually loses second. And yet the Corn Kings, on the road, are surprise favourites against a team that has a defence more than capable of shutting them out. The fact that it hasn't happened yet can be attributed to the surprise injection of Jimmy Garoppolo mid-way through their first match-up in Week 8; and a heavy dose of LeGarrette Blount, mixed with a pinch of blind luck, in their dramatic Week 16 overtime win. But in the most recent example of these teams mixing it up, the limited success the Cowtown offence enjoyed was partially the result of the abysmal performance of the Scarborough offence. The Aaron Rodgers-led attack generated just 187 yards – well over half of that on just three plays – and an astoundingly paltry 4 first downs. In all, the Corn Kings offence spent nearly 47 minutes on the field; that is enough to tucker out even the best defences; and the Eagles' fatigue began to show in the final quarter. The Corn Kings, like most teams, seem to have Rodgers' number. But no doubt the hard-pressed Scarborough QB will get a boost if Jordan Howard can return from an injury he suffered in the 1st quarter in last week's loss. On the visitor's side at QB, there was talk of Jimmy Garoppolo possibly starting this game. That chatter was silenced by the back-up entering into concussion protocol after taking a hit last week from Ndamukong Suh. Cowtown's favourite, but lately not much beloved son, Joe Flacco will get the start. This understandably has fans very nervous. Flacco threw 10 "bad" passes last week and it was somewhat miraculous that he was only picked off once by the ball-hungry Scarborough secondary. Derrick Morgan was in Flacco's face all game and with a history of success getting through the Cowtown line, he can be expected to play a role again this week. This is definitely a winnable game for Cowtown, even more so with Scarborough fans in a surly mood and ready to turn on their team at the first sign of trouble. But the fundamentals heavily favour the Eagles and these cannot be ignored. Plus, something has to finally go right for Chris Dickinson! **PICK: SCARBOROUGH**



ANCIENT HISTORY CHANNEL
PRESENTS

This Week in EFL History
With Professor Sterling Smitherman

FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – In the final week of the 2011 EFL season, the Gladiators secured their first ever Division title at the expense of the Blue Eagles with a 24-7 win at Bluffs Stadium. It had been a tightly contested game, with Scarborough carrying a 7-3 lead deep into the late 3rd quarter, before back-up QB **Vince Young** replaced **Big Ben** mid-way through the 3rd and led his team to 21 points in the final 16 minutes. The Scarborough collapse was sudden and total and it knocked them out of the playoffs for the first time ever.

The Corn Kings finished off their most 'Cinderella' of seasons by knocking off the defending champion Pickering

Spartans 22-13 at Tillman Field to take the North Division crown. Cowtown trailed 13-3 at the half and looked stymied on offence well into the 3rd quarter. But the Spartans could not deliver the coup-de-grace and eventually **Joe Flacco** found his groove to lead a TD drive. That was followed by a **Terrell Thomas** 30-yard pick-six, a FG and an **Aaron Kampman** safety to top off a 19-point game-winning run.

The Thunder Lizards slipped into the second wildcard spot with a 31-16 win over the North Stars. **Philip Rivers** threw 4 TD passes and **Tim Tebow** did not see the field for a single snap. But, in a season dominated by 'Tebow-Mania,' the cult figure's absence became the main story line following the game. Coach **George Kaldis** spent more than half his post-game press conference assuring reporters that "*Tim is still very much part of this team's success.*"

The Cubs lost to the Knights 27-24 to fall to 6-10. **Neil Rackers** missed two field goal attempts that would have won the game had he made them, or sent the game into OT if he had made even one. The shocking thing, looking back 7 years later, is the loss did not matter. The Cubs made the playoffs anyway – the worst team, record-wise, to ever do so.