

WEEK 1

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# 2012 EFL 2012

October 14, 2012



EAST			WEST			NORTH			SOUTH						
Commonwealth	1	0	0	Chino	1	0	0	Durham	1	0	0	Garland	1	0	0
Virden	1	0	0	Death Valley	1	0	0	Pickering	1	0	0	Scarborough	1	0	0
York	1	0	0	Iowa City	0	1	0	Twon Cities	1	0	0	Gwinnett	0	1	0
Charleswood	0	1	0	Los Angeles	0	1	0	Cowtown	0	1	0	Sebastian	0	1	0
Mohave	0	1	0	Mission Viejo	0	1	0	Markham	0	1	0	South Carolina	0	1	0

# INDEFENSIBLE!



Death Valley QB, **Drew Brees** delivers deep down field to favourite target **Andre Johnson** as guard **Brandon Moore** keeps the pocket intact. Brees threw for an EFL record-setting 620 yards and 7 TDs, all to Johnson, as the Undertakers torched the 'Blue Shield' and blew past the defending Champion LA Knights 49-41 at Round Table Stadium. In other EFL Week One action, Durham upset Markham, and rookie **RGIII** led the Spartans to victory in his EFL debut. (More Inside)



*Who was slick in Week One?*

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



**Drew Brees**  
QB  
Death Valley  
Undertakers

35 of 45, 620 yds, 7 TDs, 158.3 Rating. Record-setting day.



**Tommy Kelly**  
DL  
Durham  
Thunder Lizards

7 tackles, 3 sacks, 1 QB Pressure, 1 FF in Durham upset of North Stars.





1-0

49

EFL

# GAME OF THE WEEK



0-1

41

## BREES BLOWS UP KNIGHTS!

### OFFENSIVE EXPLOSION ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS!

#### UNDERTAKER OF THE GAME

Drew Brees

35 of 45, 620 yds, 7 TDs, 0 INT

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
DEATH VALLEY	14	14	7	14	-	49
LOS ANGELES	7	17	7	10	-	41

#### KNIGHT OF THE GAME

Darren Sproles

19 carries, 150 yards

**GAME SUMMARY:** The memory of the EFL Champion Knights ending the Undertakers' 2011 season in a 35-33 playoff barn-burner created an atmosphere of excitement for the teams and their fans as they squared off to begin the 2012 campaign at Round Table Stadium. What followed was a stunning, record-setting display of offence that had both defences wondering what hit them. The Undertakers built a 28-24 half time lead on 4 TD passes from **Drew Brees** to **Andre Johnson** in their first four possessions. Johnson was able to get past the safeties on a pair of long slants for the first two scores then beat the short zone to find pay dirt from 18 and 13 yards for the next two. The Knights almost matched Death Valley TD-for-TD but had to settle for a 24-yard field goal from **Chris Carpenter** after falling 6 yards short of converting 3<sup>rd</sup>-and-long inside the Undertakers' red zone. New Knights' QB **Alex Smith** was involved in all three 1<sup>st</sup> half LA TDs, throwing for two and scrambling for another from 10 yards out in a wild first half that had the partisan crowd up and down for 30 breath-taking minutes. The Knights charged out of the gate to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, taking the lead for the first time when utility half back **Earnest Graham** turned the corner for an 11-yard TD run to make it 31-28. The lead did not last long. Brees found **Ryan Mathews** open in the flat and the running back turned it into a 50-yard gain that set up a lightning quick 7-yard strike to Johnson in the end zone to make the score 35-31. Death Valley got a rare big play from their defence when rookie corner **Janoris Jenkins** made up for sloppy coverage by chasing and punching the ball out of the hands of **Steve Smith** for a turnover. Brees turned it into 6 more points with a 31-yard long slant to Johnson to increase the DV lead to 42-31. After an LA field goal, Brees and "AJ" connected for their 7<sup>th</sup> TD hook-up of the evening on a 23-yard slant to make it 49-34. The Knights added a TD before the 2-minute warning to make it 49-41, but could not get the ball back to finish the comeback attempt. It was a record-setting evening as both teams combined for a record 1,244 yards of total offence and 90 total points; while Brees set a single-game record with 620 passing yards. Johnson set a single-game receiving scoring record with 7 TD catches.

#### QUOTE OF THE GAME

"Andre wasn't happy about being ignored by media this pre-season, but I didn't know he was that angry about it!" – *Death Valley coach, Chris Worthley.*

"I just threw it up there and AJ found it." – *Undertakers' QB, Drew Brees.*

"Our defence struggled a bit. Right now you can call them the LA Defence – I don't know where the 'Blue Shield' is." – *LA coach, Jeff Dohrn.*



#### FANS' THUMB UP

Ball control = Pats' Points

#### FANS' THUMB DOWN

17 mins with ball for York



#### FAN RATING



10-11-2012 Round Table Stadium Temp: 86 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: Drew Brees

1 10:00	Death Valley	TD Brees 47 pass to Johnson (Gano) (6-87-3:18)	7-0
1 5:36	Los Angeles	TD Smith 8 pass to Gonzalez (Carpenter) (7-77-4:18)	7-7
1 3:21	Death Valley	TD Brees 39 pass to Johnson (Gano) (4-77-2:09)	14-7
2 14:57	Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 24 (9-66-3:22)	14-10
2 12:38	Death Valley	TD Brees 18 pass to Johnson (Gano) (5-80-2:19)	21-10
2 8:51	Death Valley	TD Brees 13 pass to Johnson (Gano) (7-73-3:06)	28-10
2 5:01	Los Angeles	TD Smith 10 run (Carpenter) (7-76-3:41)	28-17
2 0:10	Los Angeles	TD Smith 2 pass to Graham (Carpenter) (12-71-3:00)	28-24
3 9:35	Los Angeles	TD Graham 11 run (Carpenter) (10-68-3:48)	28-31
3 7:54	Death Valley	TD Brees 7 pass to Johnson (Gano) (3-80-1:41)	35-31
4 14:47	Death Valley	TD Brees 33 pass to Johnson (Gano) (8-78-4:58)	42-31
4 9:54	Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 26 (11-61-4:44)	42-34
4 4:19	Death Valley	TD Brees 23 pass to Johnson (Gano) (11-77-5:29)	49-34
4 2:11	Los Angeles	TD Smith 17 pass to Smith (Carpenter) (9-90-1:55)	49-41

	DVU	LAK
First Downs	28	33
Rushes	14-49	31-260
Passes	45-35-620	42-28-334
Sacked	0-0	3-19
Fumble	0	2
Penalties	8-65	2-20
Turnovers	0	2
Missed Tackles	10	9
Dropped Passes	0	2
Bad Passes	0	2
Passes 25+	8	2
Runs 10+	0	12
Blitzes	6	23
Time	28:52	31:08



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



**PATRIOTS**

0-1-0

0

7

7

7

0

**21**

Michael Vick

18 of 22, 199 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT



**VIOLATORS**

1-0-0

17

17

0

7

0

**41**

Matt Stafford

21 of 25, 322 yards, 4 TDs

Virden capitalized on a **Sammie Stroughter** fumble with a 15-yard TD pass from **Matt Stafford** to **Dez Bryant** to open up a 10-0 first quarter lead. On the Pats' next series, **Michael Vick** was stripped of the ball at his own 25, setting up a second TD pass to Bryant, this one from 4 yards out. With Virden up 24-0 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, Stroughter returned a kick-off 101 yards but was tripped up one yard short of the end zone. **Arian Peterson** scored on the next play to put the Pats on the board, but it would be token resistance. The Violators carried a 34-7 lead at half time and never looked back.



**HELLFIRE**

0-1-0

0

0

0

0

0

**0**

Jimmy Graham

8 Receptions 54 yards



**EXCALIBURS**

1-0-0

14

14

14

0

0

**42**

Michael Turner

20 carries, 105 yards, 3 TDs

The Excaltiburs scored TDs on all four of their 1<sup>st</sup> half possessions while shutting down the Mohave attack with a goal line stand and a **Rashean Mathis** interception of rookie Hellfire QB, **Andrew Luck**. York signal-caller **Tom Brady** connected with **Donald Jones** for TD passes of 16 and 35 yards while **Michael Turner** punched it through to the end zone three times in short yardage situations and **Brandon Jacobs** added a 10-yard TD run to account for all of the scoring. #1 rookie pick Luck had a tough EFL debut, completing just 17 of 29 for 131 yards and getting sacked 4 times.



**MONARCHS**

0-1-0

0

3

6

8

0

**17**

Colt McCoy

19 of 31, 16 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT



**COLONIALS**

1-0-0

7

17

7

10

0

**41**

Josh Freeman

22 of 36, 278 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT

**Josh Freeman** hit **Jeremy Shockey** for a 23-yard TD pass and rookie **Lavonte David** returned a **Colt McCoy** pass for a pick-six to stake the Colonials to an early 17-0 lead over their expansion rival Monarchs. **Neil Rackers** cracked the goose egg with a 48-yard FG, but **Fred Jackson** closed off the half with a 1-yard TD run to give Commonwealth a commanding 24-3 lead at half time. The Colonials stayed in control in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. Defensive end **Greg Hardy** kept the pressure on McCoy, sacking him twice and hurrying him 3 times as the Mission Viejo starter tried vainly to lead a comeback.



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



## NORTH STARS

0-1-0

7	7	0	9	0	23
				OT	

DeAngelo Williams  
15 Carries, 109 yards, 1 TD



## T-LIZARDS

1-0-0

0	21	7	0	0	28
				OT	

Calvin Johnson  
10 Receptions, 140 yards, 2 TDs

Markham opened the scoring on an 11-yard TD run by **DeAngelo Williams** but the Lizards replied with 3 consecutive TDs, the third a 24-yard TD pass from **Philip Rivers** to **Calvin Johnson** after a **Richard Sherman** interception of **Eli Manning**. An 11-yard TD catch by **Jared Cook** brought Markham within a score, but Durham regained the 14-point lead on an 8-yard run by **Michael Bush**. The Stars came back with a 24-yard TD pass to **Wes Welker** in the 4<sup>th</sup>, but **Carlos Rogers** picked off Manning late to shut the door. **Matt Schaub** started for Durham but was injured in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.



## CUBS

0-1-0

0	3	0	6	0	9
				OT	

Jean Pierre-Paul  
7 Tackles, 2 sacks, 1 FF



## CONVICTS

1-0-0

0	14	3	0	0	17
				OT	

Cam Newton  
166 pass yards, 56 rushing, 2 TDs

After a 1<sup>st</sup> quarter stalemate, a 59-yard drive led to a 25-yard **Greg Zuerlein** FG to open the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and give the Cubs a 3-0 lead. The Convicts' offence woke up soon after, with **Cam Newton** rushing off tackle for an 11-yard TD and passing 10 yards to **Jason Avant** for another on consecutive scoring drives, to lead 14-3 at the half. The Cubs' D held firm on a 3<sup>rd</sup>-quarter Chino foray into the red zone, forcing a 21-yard FG; but their offence, led by rookie QB, **Russell Wilson**, could find no answer for Chino's Lockdown Crew, settling for 2 long FGs in an unsuccessful comeback attempt.



## CORN KINGS

0-1-0

0	7	7	0	0	14
				OT	

Joe Flacco  
23 of 42, 272 yards, 1 TD, 2 INTs



## SPARTANS

1-0-0

7	0	0	10	0	17
				OT	

Robert Griffin III  
20 of 35, 227 yards, 1 TD, 2 INTs

**Josh Scobee** booted a wind-assisted 58-yard field goal with 4 seconds left on the clock to give Spartans' rookie **Robert Griffin III** a victory in his EFL debut. On a windy day in Pickering, the team with the wind at its back scored and the Spartans had that in the final quarter, as Griffin led a 71-yard TD drive that he finished off himself with a 1-yard sneak into the end zone to tie the game at 14. A costly holding penalty on **Jordan Gross**, his third of the day, stalled a late Cowtown drive, setting up Pickering's game-winning rally. **MJD** rushed for 109 yards and a 1 TD in a losing cause.



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



<b>SWORDFISH</b>
0-1-0

3	3	0	0	0	<b>6</b>
OT					

**Mark Sanchez**  
14 of 18, 152 yards



<b>TRIUMPH</b>
1-0-0

3	21	7	0	0	<b>31</b>
OT					

**Jay Cutler**  
16 of 17, 217 yards, 2 TDs

**Jay Cutler** connected with rookie **Kendall Wright** for a 17-yard TD pass early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter to break a 3-3 tie. The Triumph added two more touchdowns before the half, capitalizing on an **Ike Taylor** interception of **Andy Dalton** with less than one minute remaining that led to Cutler finding Wright again for a 14-yard major. A 76-yard kickoff return by **Marcus Sherels** set up a Sebastian FG to end the half, but it would be their final score as Twin Cities posted a shutout the rest of the way. Dalton was intercepted 4 times, **Mark Sanchez** none, as both Swordfish QBs saw action in the loss.



<b>BLUE EAGLES</b>
1-0-0

3	10	10	10	0	<b>33</b>
OT					

**Ray Rice**  
23 Carries, 104 yards



<b>GLADIATORS</b>
0-1-0

0	7	0	0	0	<b>7</b>
OT					

**LeSean McCoy**  
13-53 rush, 5-35 receiving, 1 TD

Undrafted free agent **Da'Rel Scott** returned a kick-off 100 yards for a TD to give the Blue Eagles a 10-7 lead in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. **Sebastian Janikowski** added a 32-yard FG before the half after **Richard Marshall** picked off **Ben Roethlisberger** and returned it to the Gwinnett 20. **Aaron Rodgers** broke the game open with a 3-yard bootleg for a TD to make the score 23-7 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter after a 75-yard drive. The Scarborough defence went after Big Ben, creating pressure that resulted in 4 interceptions, 1 lost fumble, and 3 sacks on the day. The Gladiators were penalized 15 times for 140 yards.



<b>REGULATORS</b>
0-1-0

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

**Tony Romo**  
21 of 37, 189 yards, 3 INTs



<b>MUSTANGS</b>
1-0-0

3	13	3	0	0	<b>19</b>
OT					

**Matt Ryan**  
29 of 36, 285 yards, 1 TD

A skirmish between opposing kickers **Robbie Gould** and **Ryan Longwell** had Garland in the lead 9-3 before **Brian Cushing** turned the momentum around decisively with an interception of **Tony Romo** at the Regulator 37. Six plays later **Matt Ryan** hitched up with **Arian Foster** for a 21-yard TD pass for the game's only TD and a 16-3 Garland advantage. The Mustangs' defence shut down the high-powered South Carolina offence, making 3 picks, 2 sacks, and holding Frank Gore to 16 yards on 8 carries. The win came at a price as top two running backs **Matt Forte** and Foster fell to injury.



# BODY COUNT



## WEEK ONE INJURY REPORT



<b>CHARLESWOOD</b>	Shaun Phillips, LB – OUT (5 games)
<b>CHINO</b>	None.
<b>COMMONWEALTH</b>	Jeremy Shockey, TE – OUT (1 game); Lawrence Vickers, FB – OUT (2 games); Morris Claibourne, CB – OUT (2 games); Marcus McNeill, T – OUT (7 games)
<b>COWTOWN</b>	Santana Moss, WR – OUT (4 games); Malcolm Floyd, WR – OUT (5 games); Todd Heap, TE – OUT (7 games)
<b>DEATH VALLEY</b>	William Moore, S – OUT (5 games); Brett Keisel, DE – OUT (3 games)
<b>DURHAM</b>	David Reed, WR – OUT (4 games); Antonio Gates, TE – OUT (4 games); Matt Schaub, QB – OUT (5 games)
<b>GARLAND</b>	Arian Foster, RB – OUT (4 games); Matt Forte, RB – OUT (5 games); Quinn Johnson, FB – OUT (14 games)
<b>GWINNETT</b>	Jim Leonhard, S – OUT (4 games); Dan Connolly, G – OUT (4 games)
<b>IOWA CITY</b>	Trent Richardson, RB – OUT (3 games); Patrick Willis, LB – OUT (4 games)
<b>LOS ANGELES</b>	Brian Bulaga, T – OUT (5 games)
<b>MARKHAM</b>	None.
<b>MISSION VIEJO</b>	Chester Taylor, RB – OUT (5 games)
<b>MOHAVE</b>	None.
<b>PICKERING</b>	Brian Dawkins, S – OUT (2 games); Kerry Rhodes, S – OUT (8 games); Darren McFadden, RB – OUT (11 games)
<b>SCARBOROUGH</b>	None.
<b>SEBASTIAN</b>	Michael Jenkins, WR – OUT (5 games)
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>	Bradley Fletcher, CB – OUT (12 games)
<b>TWIN CITIES</b>	Matt Roth, DE – OUT (8 games); Nate Allen, S – OUT (1 game)
<b>VIRDEN</b>	Vontae Davis, CB – OUT (5 games); Eric Berry, S – OUT (16 games)
<b>YORK</b>	Brandon Jacobs, RB – PROBABLE (1 game); Oshiomogho Atogwe, S (4 games)



# STATS



WEEK ONE

## STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Viriden	1	0	0	1.000	41	41	21	21	20	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
York	1	0	0	1.000	42	42	0	0	42	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Commonwealth	1	0	0	1.000	41	41	17	17	24	1 0 0	0 0 0	1 0 0
Charleswood	0	1	0	0	21	21	41	41	-20	0 0 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
Mohave	0	1	0	0	0	0	42	42	-42	1 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Chino	1	0	0	1.000	17	17	9	9	8	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Death Valley	1	0	0	1.000	49	49	41	41	8	0 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Iowa City	0	1	0	0	9	9	17	17	-8	0 0 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
Los Angeles	0	1	0	0	41	41	49	49	-8	0 1 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
Mission Viejo	0	1	0	0	17	17	41	41	-24	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 1 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	1	0	0	1.000	28	28	23	23	5	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Pickering	1	0	0	1.000	17	17	14	14	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Twin Cities	1	0	0	1.000	31	31	6	6	25	1 0 0	0 0 0	1 0 0
Cowtown	0	1	0	0	14	14	17	17	-3	0 0 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
Markham	0	1	0	0	23	23	28	28	-5	0 0 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Scarborough	1	0	0	1.000	33	33	7	7	26	0 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Garland	1	0	0	1.000	19	19	3	3	16	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Gwinnett	0	1	0	0	7	7	33	33	-26	0 1 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
South Carolina	0	1	0	0	3	3	19	19	-16	0 0 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
Sebastian	0	1	0	0	6	6	31	31	-25	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 1 0

## PASSING

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Stafford	VV	25	21	84.0	322	0	0.0	37	4	16.0	158.3
2	Brady	YOR	15	14	93.3	212	0	0.0	38	2	13.3	158.3
3	Brees	DVU	45	35	77.8	620	0	0.0	50	7	15.6	158.3
4	Cutler	TCT	17	16	94.1	217	0	0.0	28	2	11.8	158.0
5	Rivers, P	DTL	20	14	70.0	153	0	0.0	34	2	10.0	125.6
6	Schaub	DTL	15	11	73.3	143	0	0.0	28	1	6.7	125.1
7	Vick	CHP	22	18	81.8	199	1	4.5	23	2	9.1	115.7
8	Smith, A	LAK	42	28	66.7	334	0	0.0	51	3	7.1	114.6
9	Newton, C	CHI	21	16	76.2	166	0	0.0	21	1	4.8	114.4
10	Ryan, M	GDM	36	29	80.6	285	0	0.0	34	1	2.8	108.9
11	Sanchez	SS	19	14	73.7	152	0	0.0	27	0	0.0	96.8
12	Freeman, J	COM	36	22	61.1	278	1	2.8	61	2	5.6	92.1
13	Rodgers, A	SBE	29	15	51.7	210	0	0.0	73	0	0.0	75.4
14	McCoy, C	MVM	31	19	61.3	162	1	3.2	36	1	3.2	72.2
15	Manning, E	MAR	29	16	55.2	247	3	10.3	42	2	6.9	67.0
16	Flacco	COW	42	23	54.8	272	2	4.8	34	1	2.4	62.8
17	Griffin, R	PIC	35	20	57.1	227	2	5.7	31	1	2.9	62.4
18	Luck	MOH	29	17	58.6	131	1	3.4	22	0	0.0	55.4
19	Wilson, R	ICC	22	10	45.5	90	1	4.5	20	0	0.0	38.1
20	Romo	SC	37	21	56.8	189	3	8.1	22	0	0.0	36.9

## RUSHING

		Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD		
1	Sproles	LAK	16	150	9.4	25	0	11	Stewart, J	MAR	10	64	6.4	17	0
2	Martin, D	TCT	26	121	4.7	27	0	12	Jackson, S	CHI	15	59	3.9	9	0
3	McFadden	PIC	22	117	5.3	25	0	13	Newton, C	CHI	9	56	6.2	12	1
4	Williams, D	MAR	15	109	7.3	23	1	14	Jacobs, B	YOR	11	55	5.0	11	1
5	Wells, B	VV	21	109	5.2	15	1	15	McCoy, L	GWG	13	53	4.1	12	0
6	Jones-Drew	COW	25	109	4.4	23	1	16	Mathews, R	DVU	12	47	3.9	9	0
7	Turner, M	YOR	20	105	5.3	14	3	17	Jackson, F	COM	10	46	4.6	15	1
8	Rice, R	SBE	23	104	4.5	25	0	18	Gerhart	DTL	9	46	5.1	15	0
9	Mendenhall	MVM	20	87	4.4	19	0	19	Murray, D	MVM	5	46	9.2	18	0
10	Freeman, J	COM	7	81	11.6	25	0	20	Tomlinson	VV	13	44	3.4	14	0

## RECEIVING

		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD		
1	Johnson, A	DVU	11	259	23.5	47	7	11	Rudolph	COM	6	43	7.2	16	0
2	Johnson, C	DTL	10	140	14.0	34	2	12	Gonzalez	LAK	6	40	6.7	8	1
3	Gronkows, R	DVU	9	140	15.6	36	0	13	Bowe	DTL	6	55	9.2	21	1
4	Fitzgerald	COW	9	107	11.9	27	1	14	Harvin	PIC	6	92	15.3	31	0
5	Graham, J	MOH	8	54	6.8	11	0	15	Jones, J	VV	6	110	18.3	35	1
6	Witten	CHP	7	71	10.1	15	1	16	Washington	GDM	6	65	10.8	34	0
7	White, R	LAK	7	94	13.4	40	0	17	Welker	MAR	5	75	15.0	24	1
8	Smith, S	LAK	7	148	21.1	51	1	18	Mathews, R	DVU	5	136	27.2	50	0
9	Foster, A	GDM	7	67	9.6	21	1	19	Nicks, H	MOH	5	30	6.0	8	0
10	Hernandez	DVU	6	56	9.3	19	0	20	Wright, K	TCT	5	95	19.0	28	2

## KICKING

		FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts	
1	Janikowski	SBE	6	4	66.7	2	1	51	15
2	Gould	GDM	4	4	100.0	2	0	41	13
3	Tynes	VV	2	2	100.0	0	0	33	11
4	Gostkowski	COM	2	2	100.0	0	0	32	11
5	Carpenter	LAK	2	2	100.0	0	0	26	11
6	Zuerlein	ICC	3	3	100.0	2	1	51	9
7	Rackers	MVM	4	3	75.0	3	0	49	9
8	Bironas	TCT	1	1	100.0	0	0	31	7
9	Gano	DVU	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	7
10	Walsh	YOR	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	6
11	Vinatieri	SS	2	2	100.0	0	0	28	6
12	Akers	MAR	2	1	50.0	0	0	32	5
13	Scobee	PIC	2	1	50.0	1	1	58	5
14	Bailey, D	CHI	1	1	100.0	0	0	21	5
15	Crosby	DTL	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	4
16	Folk	CHP	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	3
17	Longwell	SC	2	1	50.0	0	0	33	3
18	Kasay	COW	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	2
19	Brown, J	GWG	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	1



## INTERCEPTIONS

No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Griffin,M	SBE	2	14	7.0	9	0	11	Wilson,J	TCT	1	0	0.0	0	0
2	Mathis,R	YOR	1	0	0.0	0	0	12	Winfield	TCT	1	6	6.0	6	0
3	David	COM	1	26	26.0	26	1	13	Taylor,I	TCT	1	14	14.0	14	0
4	Kerrigan	COW	1	0	0.0	0	0	14	Goodman,A	TCT	1	4	4.0	4	0
5	Webster	COW	1	30	30.0	30	0	15	Verner	CHI	1	0	0.0	0	0
6	Allen,J	DTL	1	0	0.0	0	0	16	Martin,S	MVM	1	0	0.0	0	0
7	Rogers,C	DTL	1	0	0.0	0	0	17	Revis	SBE	1	4	4.0	4	0
8	Sherman	DTL	1	20	20.0	20	0	18	Posluszny	VV	1	6	6.0	6	0
9	Joseph,J	PIC	1	0	0.0	0	0	19	Marshall,R	SBE	1	14	14.0	14	0
10	Witherspoo	PIC	1	14	14.0	14	0	20	McClain,J	GDM	1	0	0.0	0	0

## SACKS

1	Kelly,T	DTL	3	8	Reyes	MOH	1	15	Harrison,J	CHI	1
2	Miller,V	YOR	2	9	Tollefson	COM	1	16	Fanene	DVU	1
3	Hardy	COM	2	10	Anderson,M	COW	1	17	Keisel	DVU	1
4	Jenkins,C	YOR	2	11	Williams,D	COW	1	18	Gregg	DVU	1
5	Pierre-Pau	ICC	2	12	Smith,A	VV	1	19	Redding	CHP	1
6	Johnson,M	YOR	1	13	Canty	MAR	1	20	Suh	SBE	1
7	Kruger	MOH	1	14	Abraham	MAR	1	21	Suggs	SBE	1

## TACKLES

1	Smith,D	CHI	13	8	Taylor,P	CHP	9	15	Briggs	GWG	9
2	Chaney	SS	13	9	Ruud	CHP	9	16	Laurinaiti	GWG	9
3	Cushing	GDM	12	10	Wilkerson	ICC	9	17	Angerer	MAR	9
4	Martin,S	MVM	12	11	Bell,Y	LAK	9	18	Joseph,J	PIC	9
5	Mayo	DVU	11	12	Bethea	LAK	9	19	Phillips,K	COW	8
6	Chung	SC	10	13	McClain,R	MOH	9	20	Connor	CHI	8
7	Witherspoo	PIC	9	14	Reed,E	MAR	9	21	Weatherspo	SBE	8

## KICK RETURNS

No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Arenas	SC	2	121	60.5	97	0	11	Banks	MOH	6	138	23.0	28	0
2	Scott,D	SBE	2	119	59.5	100	1	12	Ginn Jr.	TCT	2	44	22.0	26	0
3	Sherels	SS	5	196	39.2	76	0	13	Washington	COM	4	86	21.5	27	0
4	Stroughter	CHP	6	220	36.7	101	0	14	Cribbs	CHI	3	64	21.3	22	0
5	Gates,C	ICC	3	101	33.7	43	0	15	Tate,B	MVM	4	78	19.5	22	0
6	Sproles	LAK	7	229	32.7	80	0	16	Lefeged	VV	2	35	17.5	20	0
7	McKnight	MAR	4	124	31.0	40	0	17	Reed,D	DTL	1	25	25.0	25	0
8	Boykin	PIC	3	83	27.7	32	0	18	Miller,I	CHP	1	24	24.0	24	0
9	Logan	GWG	6	147	24.5	30	0	19	Karim	GDM	1	21	21.0	21	0
10	Cobb	DVU	3	72	24.0	27	0	20	Weems	COW	1	18	18.0	18	0

## PUNT RETURNS

No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD						
1	Ginn Jr.	TCT	1	0	15	15.0	15	0	9	Tate,B	MVM	2	0	20	10.0	11	0
2	Arenas	SC	2	0	28	14.0	16	0	10	Mariani	YOR	1	0	9	9.0	9	0
3	Thomas,M	VV	2	1	26	13.0	15	0	11	Adams,J	PIC	2	2	17	8.5	9	0
4	Welker	MAR	1	0	12	12.0	12	0	12	Banks	MOH	1	0	8	8.0	8	0
5	Weems	COW	3	2	35	11.7	14	0	13	Cribbs	CHI	6	0	41	6.8	10	0
6	Jackson,D	SBE	1	3	11	11.0	11	0	14	Edwards,A	ICC	4	0	26	6.5	8	0
7	Washington	COM	3	2	32	10.7	14	0	15	Bess	DTL	1	0	5	5.0	5	0
8	McCluster	ICC	1	0	10	10.0	10	0	16	Logan	GWG	1	1	5	5.0	5	0



# AROUND THE



*With Spats McChad*

NEW YORK – Rarely have I looked forward to a football season as much as this one. This feeling came as a surprise actually, since my cynicism about the integrity of virtually everything relating to pro sports has been growing steadily for years due to the cumulative strain of having my childhood illusions repeatedly blown up in my face. When Lance Armstrong gave up his fight to refute allegations of steroid abuse, all but admitting his guilt after vehement denials, I thought “Why not?” Why would that heroic figure be any different from the countless baseball players who sullied their sport with dope, or the long line of Olympic athletes who have been caught taking the wrong cough medicine? Is anybody important actually *not* cheating? And don’t get me started on the topic of the scandalous collapse of the NFL seven years ago....

Returning to the point, my unusual excitement leading up to the 2012 EFL campaign, now underway, was enough to make me stop and think about why I felt that way. After much contemplation, I came to the simple conclusion that new blood is invigorating. There is new blood in the EFL – four expansion teams and a handful of legitimate new contenders to join the regular cast of prospective champions. Win or lose, history is being made for four brand new franchises. At the top of the league nothing is certain and that means tougher and more meaningful competition. How will that tougher competition play out? All will be answered later on in this column by my alter ego, The Great Spatskin.

## **EXPANSION BOWL I**

The curious decision to lead off the 2012 campaign with a Thursday night contest between two expansion teams was explained thus by EFL spokesman, **Cogswell Cogs II**: “We are proud of our four new franchises; they symbolize growth and progress. We want the entire football world – not just in Minneapolis, Florida, Mission Viejo, and Commonwealth – to know that these teams have arrived. The toughest decision was not the one to introduce them on Thursday night, but which match-up to feature. In the end we decided to run one game on Thursday night and the other on Monday night.”

Despite all of the hype and genuine excitement at seeing new teams in action, the actual game stirred in me a feeling similar to the one I had once when I went to see one of my favourite bands in concert and they kept playing songs from their new album that I hadn’t heard before. This was the EFL for sure, but I didn’t know the words to ‘Sebastian vs Twin Cities’ and I’m not sure they did either; although I could have imagined Swordfish coach **Russ Lemmon** singing the familiar refrain from that old Beatles hit ‘Help!’ when **Andy Dalton** was in the game.

The question of who the starting quarterback would be in Sebastian had not been answered by game time, so both **Mark Sanchez** and Dalton alternated appearances behind center. Dalton threw four interceptions trying to force throws into coverage. In Lemmon’s words, delivered after the game, Dalton was being “aggressive, trying to make things happen.”

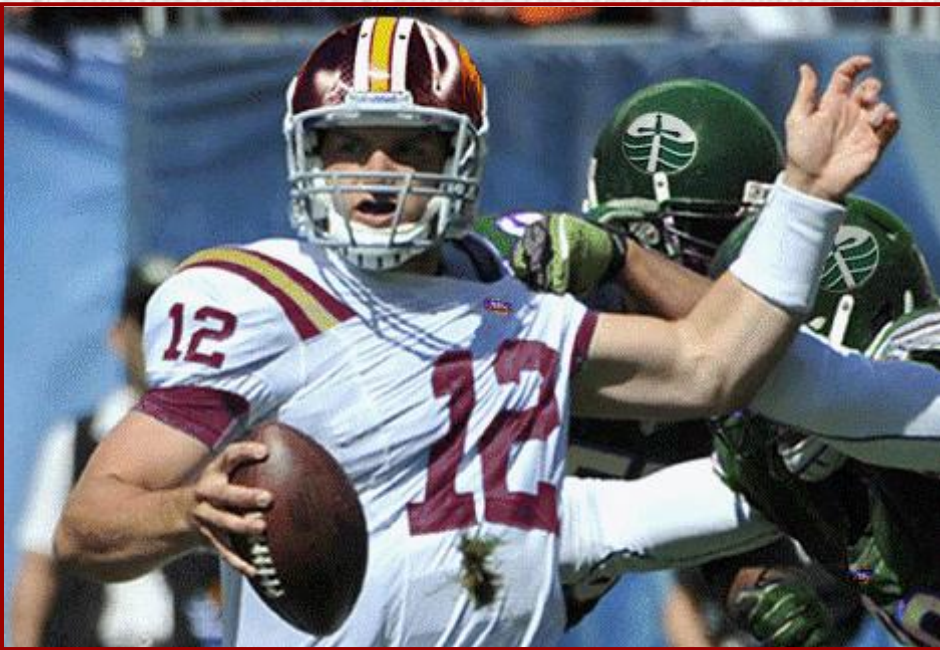
In *my* words, delivered without fear of alienating my franchise QB; he was being stupid and reckless and should be re-named *Dolton*. He made Sanchez look good in comparison, which is not easy to do.

I expected the Triumph to triumph in their inaugural game, motivated by pre-game hype that included a ceremonial kick-off by former Vikings head coach **Bud Grant** that traveled 8 yards, but I did not expect a 31-6 blowout. **Jay Cutler** posted a 158 QB rating, going 16 of 17 for 217 yards and 2 TDs. Yes, you read that right – *Jay Cutler*. The EFL’s most difficult quarterback *not* to sack only hit the turf twice and did not throw an incomplete pass until the 2:57 mark of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. It was a great start for the number one pick in the expansion draft, but the giddy fans in Minny should enjoy this win for as long as it takes for the alcohol to wear off, then temper their expectations as their team travels to Pickering for a Week Two match-up against the Spartans.

## **AIR WAR OVER L.A.**

The fastest-growing rivalry in the EFL exploded into all-out war with the most impressive display of total offence ever witnessed in professional football history. The Death Valley Undertakers (669) and Los Angeles Knights (575) combined for 1,244 total yards and 90 points as **Chris Worthley** exacted revenge for a Conference Final loss in 2011 with a 49-41 victory over LA in Week One of the 2012 season. It was an astounding game, with both defences playing the roles of extras in an epic starring the offences.

**Drew Brees** shredded the Knights’ secondary with a record-setting 620 passing yards and record-tying 7 TD passes, all to wide receiver **Andre Johnson**. The 7 TD passes to one receiver in one game was also a record, although Johnson’s 259 receiving



The No. 1 pick in the draft was the No. 1 target of a York defence that gave no quarter on account of his inexperience. Mohave's **Andrew Luck** is one of three rookie QBs to make EFL debuts under difficult circumstances in Week One.

yards fell 19 yards short of his own previous EFL record of 279 that he set as a Crimson Hawk in Week 16 of the 2010 season.

Brees' accomplishment, impressive under any circumstances, was almost unbelievable coming against a defence that historically is among the best in the EFL. The vaunted 'Blue Shield' has always been the strength of LA Knights, with the corner tandem of **Charles Woodson** and **Nnamdi Asomugha** feared around the league. Not so this Sunday night in LA. Asomugha was often so far out of position when Johnson caught the ball that he wasn't close enough to make the tackle. This pitiful performance by an established star prompted immediate scorn from the national media. But the sober truth is that Asomugha and the rest of the Knights' defence didn't get any help from their coach, who kept just 4 defensive backs

on the field throughout the entire game in the face of a concerted and blatant passing blitzkrieg by the Undertakers.

The decision to stick with standard 4-3 and 3-4 defensive sets was scathingly criticized by **Severin Handfottnar Jr** in his daily blog, *Coaches Call*, as "betraying a complete lack of understanding of the principles of defence from a head coach who prides himself on defence." Ouch! Although I would agree that, at the point where my team had surrendered more than 400 passing yards I might have re-considered my defensive strategy, I can see where **Jeff Dohrn** would hesitate to bring in **Quinton Carter** and **Ashton Youboty** and hope against the odds that pressure from the defensive line and linebackers would force an error by Brees.

On the other side of this record-setting day was starting Knights' QB, **Alex Smith**. With Death Valley scoring on nearly every possession, it took a gritty performance by former SFL star and first-time EFL starter to keep the Knights close. The Death Valley defence is not a very severe test, but with 338 yards passing, 3 TDs and no interceptions, Smith passed it with full honours, signalling that the Knights' offence will be in good shape again this season.

### **ROOKIE ROULETTE**

Three EFL teams have put their immediate futures in the hands of rookie quarterbacks this year and to my mind that's three too many. Rookies have no business starting at QB – even really, really, really good rookies like **Andrew Luck** and **Robert Griffin III**. Starting a rookie at the most important position in the game is dangerous – for the rookie and the team he plays for. If your team is so desperate for a quarterback that it has to contemplate starting a rookie, then it should start a veteran anyway for at least a season to allow proper learning of the position. Throwing the baby into the pool to teach it to swim is good for babies, not professional quarterbacks. So, how did these neophytes fare in Week One?

**Robert Griffin III** – The #2 pick in the draft faced a difficult challenge against Division rival Cowtown but rose to the occasion and played a key role for the Spartans in a narrow 17-14 victory. He was sacked on his first play from scrimmage while staring like a deer into the headlights of a charging **Mark Anderson**, but shook it off and went on to flay the Corn Kings' secondary on his next possession with 59 yards passing that included a 20-yard TD pass to **Vincent Jackson**. He was intercepted twice in the red zone, the second time in the actual *end* zone, and did not show much of the scrambling ability he was known for in college; but he eventually tied the game in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter by bringing the ball across the goal line himself and later completed a critical pass to **Chris Johnson** that put **Josh Scobee** just inside his range for a 58-yard game-winning field goal. [Grade: **B**]

**Andrew Luck I** – The roman numeral is to both signify his draft status and the fact that he is the first Luck we have seen. The luck of the draw determined that the future of the Mohave franchise would start his career facing **Tom Brady** in Camelot against a good Excalibur team still feeling the sting of last year's dismal effort and looking to prove it belongs in the top echelon of teams. As I expected, Luck was overwhelmed by the experience, passing for just 131 yards with 0 touchdowns, 1 interception, and getting sacked 4 times – which is too often when facing a team that blitzed only 7 times all game. The Yorkies appeared to take it easy on Andrew, as if to acknowledge that crushing the first pick in the draft was not necessary to prove it was superior to a ramshackle Hellfire squad that appears to be going nowhere in 2012, with or without Luck. [Grade: **C-**]

**Russell Wilson** ½ - In keeping with the *Logan's Run* atmosphere in Iowa City, **Russell Wilson** was named the starter over **Sam Bradford** in training camp and he has looked up ever since. He has to in order to see over his own linemen. This move really puzzles me because Bradford, a rookie starter himself two years ago, was entering the season that many experts agree is the critical one in determining a QB's future. **Deron Redding** reportedly didn't like what he saw from Bradford in OTAs this year and switched to Wilson without losing any sleep. His favourite got a rough ride against Chino's 'Lockdown Crew' at the Big House, passing for just 90 yards with one interception and posting a game-day QB rating of 38.1 in a 17-9 loss to the Convicts. On the other side, second year starter **Cam Newton** failed to light it up against a questionable Cubs' defence, but he did lead a 2<sup>nd</sup>-quarter 14-point flurry that was more than enough to stay ahead of the newborn Cubs. [Grade: **D**]

#### **THE TEAM THAT HAS EVERYTHING**

Fans of the team that has everything need a reason to complain in order to actually have everything. So, in the wake of Scarborough's 33-7 drubbing of the 2011 Can-Am Champions, Gwinnett, fans of the Blue Eagles and their media spent as much time tossing barbs at **Aaron Rodgers** as they did laurels at the defence that picked off **Big Ben** four times. The reason for their displeasure lay in the fact that Rodgers did not throw a TD pass and fell two incomplete passes short of failing to complete 50% of his passes. Of course, by any objective measure, Rodgers and the offence had a good game against a tough defence; but in comparison to **Drew Brees** and his performance against the reigning EFL Champions, Rodgers' performance fell woefully short.

It is going to be that kind of year for Rodgers, so he had better get used to it. The comparisons with Brees that began even before the season started will continue inappropriately and irritatingly throughout the 2012 campaign. The best thing Rodgers can do is to not allow them to distract him from his *real* purpose: to bring a Championship to Scarborough.

#### **THE TEAM THAT HAS NOTHING**

The riches-to-rags story of 2012 will be set in the pleasant Manitoba community of Charleswood, where **Jason Findlay's** enduring contenders, the Patriots, have finally collapsed along with the health of their leader, **Peyton Manning**. The Pats own an impressive 63-17 record over 5 regular seasons, making it to the post-season every year. They have posted a 6-5 playoff record and have made it to the EFL Championship game twice, losing both times. Sadly, there will be no post-season berth for Charleswood this year. They may not even finish above the expansion Colonials in their Division. The level to which the team has sunk became starkly clear in their Week One tilt against rival Virden at **TERRORDOME**. What little of value remains on the once glorious franchise failed to make a positive impact in a 41-21 beating at the hands of the Violators. **Adrian Peterson** was a factor for the wrong reasons – his ineffectiveness contributing to a scant 19 minutes of possession by the Pats' offence. **Michael Vick** turned the ball over twice in the first 17 minutes of the game, helping to spot Virden to an early 24-0 lead. **Jason Witten** spent as much time blocking as he did trying to get open and the defence was simply ill-equipped to handle **Matt Stafford** and the Violators' passing attack. Virden won't have it this easy every week, but they have a good young QB directing their offence and will make their mark on better teams as the season progresses.

#### **DARING DOUGLAS VS HELLRAISER HAL**

Two chronically conservative coaches faced each other in the EFL's opening week and the result was a tepid 19-3 snuff-out of the Regulators by the Mustangs. This low score came in spite of what appear to have been honest attempts by **Hal Corson** and **Doug Shirley** to show some aggression in their play-calling. South Carolina threw caution to the wind and put the game in the hands of **Tony Romo**, leaving **Frank Gore** as a highly-paid decoy in the backfield. He certainly paid a price for that strategy as Romo was off his game entirely, throwing 3 interceptions that led to 10 Garland points. On the Garland sideline, Shirley tentatively called out 6 blitzes by his defence – more than he called for the *entire season* last year. Actually, he called 7, but the first call was ignored by linebacker **Anthony Spencer**, who apparently thought defensive captain **Brian Cushing** was pulling his leg when he gave him the play in the huddle. It was not easy for the Garland coach to call those blitzes. Hours of off-season hypnotherapy and assertiveness training by "Life Coach" **Jenny Jillson** were thought to have failed when Shirley faintly blubbered, "B-b-b-b....bl-bl-bl..i-i-i-i...ts 93!" into his headset with barely enough time to relay the call onto the field. Jillson, who has reportedly helped Pickering coach **Gus Konstantakos** learn to control his fits of rage, and who played a key role in getting Markham coach **Darrin Jones** to lose weight, stood at Shirley's side the entire time, holding his hand and whispering "you can do it" in his ear. With a stable of emerging thoroughbreds on defence, Shirley will need all his tools to make the most of it; so he better get used to sending the dogs.

#### **HE'S BAAAACCKKK.....!**

The **Matt Schaub** era in Durham has been temporarily suspended and **Philip Rivers** has been re-installed to lead the Thunder Lizards. This after Schaub tried to lay a block on a run by **Michael Bush** and got leveled by Markham linebacker **Rob Ninkovich** in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of Durham's opening day 28-23 victory over the North Stars. Schaub suffered a separated shoulder and will be out for at least 4 games. Prior to that, Schaub had passed for 131 yards and had connected with **Calvin Johnson** for a 7-yard TD pass to tie the game at 7. His loss created a ripple of anxiety through the crowd at Jurassic Park and at least a handful of boos as Rivers put on his helmet and took the field. But in the end, the good **Philip Rivers** showed up, throwing 2 TD passes and not turning the ball over to snatch what will likely turn out to be a very important win against the emerging Markham powerhouse.



Pre-game ceremonies in Commonwealth featured the 'Lady Colonials' – widely considered to be the "hottest girls in the EFL." 'Virden Vixens' captain Nisha (right) would disagree, and she will bite you if you don't.



Markham coach **Darrin Jones**, brimming with confidence and looking slim and fit on the sideline at the start of the game, looked slope-shouldered and down by game's end after watching his worst fears come to life in the form of 3 interceptions by **Eli Manning**. They were the kind of interceptions that turn games around the wrong way if you're on the team throwing them.

"It was disappointing for us, of course, and certainly it was the same for Eli," a soft-spoken Jones said afterwards. "But we played with them and put ourselves in a position to come back at the end. We just didn't get it done and I take responsibility for that."

Jones took some heat from the Markham media for calling a screen pass late in the game against a team that had blitzed only 4 times all day. Durham lineman **Tommy Kelly** wasn't fooled and closed in faster than Eli could pedal backwards, resulting in an 11-yard loss. On the next play, Eli was picked off by **Carlos Rogers** to seal the game for Durham. Jones can lament all he wants, but Eli's penchant for picks was not something he didn't know about in advance. That flaw was the reason Virden was willing to part with him in favour of **Matthew Stafford**. Of course, Eli can also carry a team on his shoulders, and Jones will be hoping that *that* Eli makes an appearance in their upcoming home opener against Garland.

#### **EXPANSION BOWL II**

Week One ended with the final two expansion teams making their inaugural appearances in the league on Monday Night Football. The Commonwealth Colonials prevailed in a 41-17 win over the Mission Viejo Monarchs at Scott Stadium, where the sellout crowd was in full throat and the 'Lady Colonials' stole the show. The Colonials cheerleaders do not look remotely like anything that would have disembarked from the Mayflower in 1620. I've already ordered their DVD, joined their fan club, and booked my ticket to Charlottesville, Virginia for their Week Three contest against Mohave (before the weather gets too cold, if you get my drift). As for the game, it was not as lop-sided as the score suggests, but it was still an embarrassment for the proud **Chris Ferraro**, owner of the Monarchs. He sat on his mobile throne and continually barked his disapproval at his players, the refs, the fans, and even the Lady Colonials. After the game he immediately fired his team's trainer and staff because, "the players looked fat and lazy out there!" Certainly the Monarchs' defence could not keep pace with the fleet-footed Commonwealth QB, **Josh Freeman**, who ran for 81 yards on 7 carries to keep the offence moving. About his quarterback, Commonwealth coach **Will Blandford** offered some backhanded praise: "the offence did an amazing job, although our quarterback got lucky running the ball. He succeeded....this time." On defence, end **Greg Hardy** spent most of the night harassing **Colt McCoy** in the backfield with 2 sacks and 3 hits.

#### **THE GREAT SPATSKIN**

My prediction of a Gwinnett victory in the South Division last year bolstered my reputation at the same time that my prediction of a Death Valley win in the West brought scorn from my detractors. That's why I hate this useless exercise, but I am bound by my contract to give you my predictions, so here is my contract fulfilled: **EAST** – York, because there is nobody else. **WEST** – Death Valley, because they have Drew Brees. **NORTH** – Durham, because I don't trust Eli Manning. **SOUTH** – Scarborough, because they are still loaded with talent. Scarborough will emerge from the Can-Am Conference while Death Valley will steal the Pacific-Atlantic from Tom Brady and the Swords. As for the final....you will have to wait 19 weeks for my flawless prediction.

# BUG THE BOOKIE!

## JIMMY THE GEEK GIVES YOU HIS PICKS FOR WEEK TWO EFL ACTION

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**RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 1:**

**9-1-0**

### JIMMY'S WEEK TWO PICKS

#### **YORK @ CHARLESWOOD (line – EXCALIBURS by 17)**

It's still early, but if their dismal showing in Virden last week is any indication of where the Pats are going it will be a longer season than even the pessimists predicted. Adrian Peterson got little blocking and made no plays against an average-at-best Virden D-line and Michael Vick looked lost until garbage time in the second half. Even worse was the performance of their defence, which gave up over 500 yards. Meanwhile the Excaliburs executed Mohave 42-0 with cold-blooded precision. Everything worked well on both sides of the ball for York and there is no reason to believe things won't go as well, if not better, against the Patsies. Look for another 100+ yard day for Michael Turner and another perfect day for Tom Brady while the Swords' defence attempts to post a second consecutive shutout. **PICK: YORK**

#### **COMMONWEALTH @ VIRDEN (line – VIOLATORS by 5)**

The line on this game started at Virden -2 and has been increasing steadily since. Bettors see the Colonials as over-valued even after they over-whelmed their expansion partner Mission Viejo at Scott Stadium on opening day; so few are prepared to bet on a big performance at *TERRORDOME* against a traditionally stubborn opponent, even with one of Virden's top corners, Vontae Davis, out with a shoulder injury. Highly-touted rookie corner, Morris Claibourne, veteran tight end Jeremy Shockey, and left tackle Marcus McNeill are out for Commonwealth, which will mean negatives on both sides of the passing game. If Josh Freeman can pick up where he left off last week, Will Blandford's squad could make a game of it; but expect that whatever Freeman does, Matthew Stafford will do better. **PICK: VIRDEN**

#### **CHINO @ MOHAVE (line – CONVICTS by 11)**

This is a classic trap game, so beware. Although their offence didn't blow away the Cubs last week, the Convicts looked in complete control – scoring when they needed to while their defence dominated as they used to in the team's glory days. Meanwhile, things could not have gone much worse for Mohave and Andrew Luck in their season opener at Camelot. As often happens with the Hellfire, when they fall out of a game they fall a long way because they do crazy things in an attempt to get back in it, which is sort of what happened in York last week with 7 fourth down attempts. Despite getting beaten up on the scoreboard, Mohave has no injuries to report from last week's debacle while Chino too boasts a clean bill of health. The Convicts have the clear talent edge due to their defence and the improvisational skills of QB, Cam Newton; but the Hellfire secondary has the edge over the Chino wide receivers and could make their opponent's offence one-dimensional. If the Chino wide-outs can't get open, expect a slow-paced grinding game with the Convicts eventually prevailing in the 'W' column, but failing to cover the spread. **PICK: MOHAVE**

#### **LOS ANGELES @ IOWA CITY (line – KNIGHTS by 3)**

The Knights were severely embarrassed by Drew Brees and the Undertakers last week; but when we look back at that game 15 weeks from now it might not look as bad as it looks now. LA failed to make any adjustments to a steady air assault and Brees is arguably the best QB in football. This week the Knights face a rookie QB whose only common quality with Brees is his short stature. Russell Wilson struggled in his first EFL action against the Convicts and you can expect more struggles this week against Jeff Dohrn's angry defence desperately looking to save face. Over-looked with all of the attention on Brees' passing records and the undressing of the 'Blue Shield' last week was the impressive debut of Alex Smith at QB for LA. It looks like the Knights have no worries on offence again this year and they will benefit this week from Cubs' defensive leader Patrick Willis being sidelined with an injury. The Cubs will come out strong on their home field but will fade quickly as their mistakes pile up. **PICK: LOS ANGELES**

## **DEATH VALLEY @ MISSION VIEJO (line – UNDERTAKERS by 12)**

Logic dictates that if Death Valley's attack can gain over 600 yards of offence against last year's premier defence, they can gain even more against an expansion team. But don't bet on that logic here. The Monarchs' top-notch corners combined with their bottom-rung defensive line and incompetent safeties will move the Undertakers' point of attack to the middle of the field. They will run the ball between the tackles a lot and pass to their tight ends, which will be effective at controlling the ball but not effective to the tune of 600+ yards. Colt McCoy may have some limited success against a Death Valley defence that tends to go through the motions on game day, but I stress the word *limited*. At some point DeMarcus Ware will break through the flimsy MV offensive line and force a fumble or a bad throw and then all hope will be lost. It will not be as dramatic as the pyrotechnics in Week One, but the Undertakers will suffocate the hapless Monarchs nonetheless. **PICK: DEATH VALLEY**

## **DURHAM @ COWTOWN (line – CORN KINGS by 2)**

The Corn Kings looked like the better team last week in Pickering but could not gain separation and fell to a rookie QB on a late field goal. Part of the problem was lack of execution on the part of last year's MVP on offence, Joe Flacco, who failed to hit open receivers and was picked off twice, once in the end zone. The Corn Kings were hit with injuries to their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> wide receivers and starting tight end Todd Heap, which caused all eyes to turn onto Larry Fitzgerald and Maurice Jones-Drew late in the game. Expect Durham to pay similar attention to those two players this week as they attempt to force the ball to Kevin Walter and Zach Miller. If Flacco fails to find his targets, it could be a long day for the home team at Tillman Field. On the downside for the T-Lizards, Matt Schaub is out and turnover king Philip Rivers gets the start at QB. Any chance of a Cowtown win rests in their ability to force mistakes by Rivers, a task often as easily done as said. **PICK: DURHAM**

## **TWIN CITIES @ PICKERING (line – SPARTANS by 3)**

Jay Cutler was taking pot shots at his media critics in Chino and around the nation following a banner day against Sebastian in the Triumph's home opener. This week, those critics will get their revenge as Cutler's corps of mediocre receivers goes up against the best corner tandem in the league in Jonathan Joseph and Joe Haden. Expect to see the *old* Jay Cutler at Thermopylae Stadium this week as he re-acquaints himself with real EFL competition. Robert Griffin III played to mixed reviews in his EFL debut against the Corn Kings but made enough plays to win. This week he faces a middle-of-the-road defence with as much experience playing together as he has playing in the pros. I expect to see a more free-wheeling Griffin and a more effective Pickering offence as a result. **PICK: PICKERING**

## **GARLAND @ MARKHAM (line – MUSTANGS by 1)**

Occasionally the Vegas line makes no sense to me. This is one of those times. Count me among those who have respect for the notion that Garland can be a contender, but let's not get carried away and slot them as the favourite to knock off an equally impressive new outfit in Markham on the road. The North Stars fell to Durham, which was a surprise to many (but not yours truly), but the loss was almost entirely attributable to Eli Manning's mistakes. The North Stars still looked pretty impressive despite those mistakes and I can't see them dropping their home opener to a team missing their top two running backs. It will be a tough slog at the Dawg Pound but Wes Welker will keep the chains moving for the home team. **PICK: MARKHAM**

## **GWINNETT @ SOUTH CAROLINA (line – REGULATORS by 4)**

The starting QBs in this contest threw 7 interceptions between them in Week One as both teams fell to classier outfits in the South Division. Gwinnett showed a complete lack of discipline and focus on the field while being routed by Scarborough. They have the better talent pool, but if they enter this game too aware of that they risk another tantrum if the Regulators play them tough on their home field. The hot-and-cold Tony Romo could win this game on his own against a so-so Glads' secondary, but the on-again, off-again Ben Roethlisberger could do the same to a perennially banged up and dysfunctional South Carolina secondary. When two game-maker/breaker QBs face each other, I tend to side with the better defence. **PICK: GWINNETT**

## **SCARBOROUGH @ SEBASTIAN (line – BLUE EAGLES by 19)**

The early betting lines are the most volatile and this one is no exception. Starting at -12, it has risen continuously to its current level and may continue after this article goes to print. This game is such a mismatch that even home field advantage in the first ever EFL game at the Fish Tank is failing to make a dent in Sebastian's favour. This headlong rush to bet Scarborough is the kind of certainty that makes the gypsy in me nervous. However, the football analyst in me sees no reason to disagree with the prevailing wisdom. While *anything can happen* to reduce the margin of victory to sub-20 point levels, even more can happen to push it the other direction. Scarborough's return to Florida will be a memorable one. **PICK: SCARBOROUGH**