

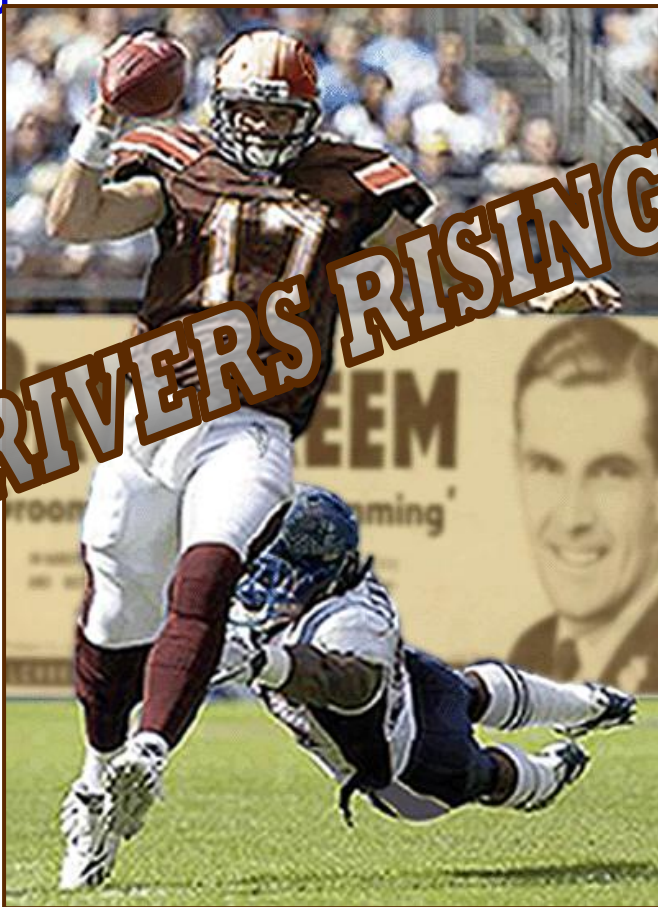
2010



2010

WEEK EIGHT IN REVIEW

November 28th, 2010



DURHAM – The Durham Thunder Lizards think they have their leader back. For the third straight week *Philip Rivers* has looked and performed the part. More importantly for Durham’s prospects moving forward, he has done the job against some of the best defences in the league. This week, he faced the intimidating “Blue Shield” from Los Angeles. They made some plays, but Rivers made more; and in the process kept his team rolling to recovery from a shaky start.

Rivers got the T-Lizards off on the right foot by using his feet. On 3rd down and goal from the 5, with all his receivers covered and the pass rush converging on him from the edges, Rivers sprinted through a gap in the center of the field and dashed past an outstretched *Yeremiah Bell* to break the plane of the goal line and the

Philip Rivers opens the scoring against the Knights with a 5-yard TD scramble – his first rushing TD of the season – as Yeremiah Bell tries to make the stop. (STORY BEGINS

LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

THE GAMES

- RIVERS LEADS DURHAM PAST KNIGHTS
- SPEARS BEAT SWORDS
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- VIRDEN BREES BY HAWKS
- MOHAVE MAULS MUSTANGS
- RICE IS NICE FOR FLORIDA
- GOLDEN BEARS SHUT DOWN GLADS

COMMENT

“ADMISSIONS OF WEAKNESS,” “REVENGE,” “THANKSGIVING TURKEY,” “MANIAC MARTZ,” “EFL MID-TERM REPORT CARD,” – Spats McChad



Who was slick in Week Eight?

“BRYLCREEM” THE EFL’S OLDEST SPONSOR



Drew Brees
QB

Virden Violators

24 of 31 for 343 yards, 3 TDs.
Passed at will to beat Hawks.



Mario Williams
DE
Iowa City Cubs

3 sacks, 4 pressures. An unrelenting force in Corn King’s backfield.

LIZARDS ROLL ON, KNIGHTS FALL DOWN!

RIVERS THROWS 3 TD PASSES, RUSHES FOR 1 MORE



DURHAM

38



LOS ANGELES

30

scoreless tie to give Durham a 7-0 lead. The Knights got 3 of those back on a 26-yard field goal by Chris Carpenter and then got the ball right back on Nnamdi Asomugha's third interception of the season as Rivers attempted to force a long ball through to Steve Breaston. But the Lizards defence forced a 3-and-out to nullify the damage from the turnover.

After a field goal by Mason Crosby regained the 7-point advantage for the Dinos, Kurt Warner drew the Knights even at 10 apiece with a 7-yard TD pass to Jamaal Charles. When the Knights forced a Durham punt on the next series, it looked like the advantage was turning to the Knights. But Antonio Rodgers-Cromartie put the game back in the Lizard's talons with an opportunistic interception on a short pass from Warner that was rushed due to pressure from Jared Allen. The pick gave Durham the ball at the LA 7 yard line and they took advantage, scoring two plays later on a screen pass to Kevin Faulk. The pumped up "D-No" defence swarmed around the LA receivers on the next series and the offence got the ball back at their own 40. A 4th down and 1 gamble at the Knight's 37 paid off and 3 plays later Breaston made a great spin move on Asomugha to take a short hitch 12 yards for a TD that made the score 24-10 for Durham. With 28 seconds left, the Knights frantically rallied to cover 38 yards in 6 plays and allow Carpenter to nail a 56-yard field goal as time expired in the half to make the score 24-13 for the home team.

The Knights kicked off the second half with another Carpenter field goal to make it 24-16, then Rivers committed a costly blunder by throwing a ball straight into the arms of safety, Jeremiah Bell, who returned it to the Durham 2. Warner hit Steve Smith at the pylon on the next play and suddenly LA was only 1 point behind. The nervous crowd at Jurassic Park went quiet, expecting the worst after Michael Bush was stuffed for a 1-yard loss on 3rd down and inches. But the "D-No" held firm to preserve the narrow lead, giving Rivers an opportunity to redeem himself. He did just that, converting three third downs en route to a 6-yard TD pass on a screen to Kevin Smith that capped off a 76-yard drive. Durham added insurance in the 4th quarter after Charles fumbled at the Knight's 47 yard line. Three Durham running backs took turns running it the rest of the way to build a commanding 15-point lead on a 10-yard TD run by Bush. The Knights added a late TD, but it was not enough – the Lizards kept their streak alive.

11-27-2010 Jurassic Park Temp: 83 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Philip Rivers**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Los Angeles (2-6)	3	10	10	7	30
2009 Durham (5-3)	7	17	7	7	38

1 9:05 Durham	TD Rivers 5 run (Crosby) (9-55-4:12)	0-7
1 4:03 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 28 (10-58-4:48)	3-7
2 12:50 Durham	FG Crosby 45 (10-52-4:20)	3-10
2 8:48 Los Angeles	TD Warner 7 pass to Charles (Carpenter) (11-66-3:51)	10-10
2 4:27 Durham	TD Rivers 7 pass to Faulk (Crosby) (2-7-0:19)	10-17
2 0:39 Durham	TD Rivers 12 pass to Breaston (Crosby) (8-60-3:15)	10-24
2 0:00 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 56 (6-38-0:34)	13-24
3 13:14 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 47 (4-4-1:32)	16-24
3 12:54 Los Angeles	TD Warner 2 pass to Smith (Carpenter) (1-2-0:06)	23-24
3 2:09 Durham	TD Rivers 6 pass to Smith (Crosby) (12-76-6:23)	23-31
4 8:33 Durham	TD Bush 10 run (Crosby) (5-47-2:29)	23-38
4 5:02 Los Angeles	TD Charles 6 run (Carpenter) (10-74-3:17)	30-38

	LAK	DTL
First Downs	17	27
Rushes	26-102	35-140
Passes	31-18-183	37-23-286
Sacked	0-0	0-0
Fumble	1	2
Penalties	7-48	4-37
Turnovers	2	3
Time	25:33	34:27
Third Down	2-13	8-14
Fourth Down	2-2	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/3/1	6/5/0
Net Offense	285	426

< Los Angeles >

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	Sk	25	In	Td	Rate
Warner	31	18	183	0	1	1	2	83.1

Rushing	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	10	Lg	TD
Charles	21	97	4.6	4	2	14	1
Greene	4	8	2.0	0	0	3	0
Warner	1	-3	-3.0	0	0	0	0
Richardson	1	5	5.0	1	0	5	0
Rivers	1	5	5.0	1	0	5	1
Brohm	1	-1	-1.0	0	0	0	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	25	Lg	TD
Smith	7	0	10	61	8.7	5	0	15	1
Heap	5	0	6	41	8.2	2	0	10	0
White	3	0	7	65	21.7	3	1	42	0
Charles	3	0	6	16	5.3	1	0	7	1
Bradley	0	2	2	0	0.0	0	0	0	0

< Durham >

Passing	Att	Cmp	Yds	Sk	25	In	Td	Rate
Rivers	37	23	286	0	1	2	3	90.6

Rushing	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	10	Lg	TD
Faulk	15	67	4.5	2	1	10	0
Bush	10	46	4.6	2	2	15	1
Smith	7	18	2.6	1	1	14	0

Receiving	No	Dp	Att	Yds	Ave	FD	25	Lg	TD
Gates	6	0	10	94	15.7	6	0	17	0
Breaston	4	0	6	46	11.5	4	0	14	1
Davis	3	0	4	43	14.3	2	1	25	0
Smith	3	1	4	27	9.0	2	0	13	1
Muhammad	2	0	2	25	12.5	0	0	16	0
Bush	2	1	3	20	10.0	1	0	12	0
Johnson	2	0	6	24	12.0	2	0	14	0
Faulk	1	0	2	7	7.0	1	0	7	1

SPARTANS TURN TURNOVERS INTO WIN

GAME POINTS: A 2nd quarter interception of **Tom Brady** by **Jonathan Joseph** pointed the Spartans on the road to victory. Taking over at the York 16 yard line, Pickering broke a 3-3 deadlock on **Chris Johnson's** 14th rushing TD of the season to grab a 10-3 lead. On their next possession, a 16-yard reception by **Anquan Boldin** and a 15-yard personal foul penalty on **Keith Rivers** kick-started a 70-yard drive that led to a 4-yard TD pass from **Brett Favre** to **Tony Gonzalez**. Pickering made it 20-3 after **Jason Taylor** intercepted Brady at the York 25 yard line to set up a 34-yard FG by **Jon Kasay**. Favre came out firing to start the 2nd half, hooking up with Boldin for 20 yards and Vincent Jackson for 25 yard and a TD to take a commanding 27-3 lead. There would be no magical comeback for York. Brady was sacked and lost a fumble on the Excalibur's next possession to set up an easy Kasay FG and the Spartans coasted the rest of the way.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Brett Favre** completed 16 of 29 for 191 yards and 2 TDs, **Chris Johnson** had 18 carries for 100 yards and 1 TD; **Tom Brady** went 15 of 28 for 133 yards, 1 TD and 2 INTs, **Geno Hayes** made 12 tackles, 1 deflection and 6 run stuffs.



30

PICKERING



10

YORK

11-27-2010 Camelot Temp: 61 Wind: 0-5 MVP: **Chris Johnson**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Pickering (7-1)	3	17	10	0	30
2009 York (3-5)	0	3	0	7	10

1 6:45 Pickering	FG Kasay 31 (5-21-1:46)	3-0
2 14:14 York	FG Graham 35 (13-57-6:37)	3-3
2 9:58 Pickering	TD Johnson 8 run (Kasay) (2-16-0:42)	10-3
2 5:06 Pickering	TD Favre 4 pass to Gonzalez (Kasay) (7-70-2:57)	17-3
2 3:10 Pickering	FG Kasay 34 (4-8-1:32)	20-3
3 12:26 Pickering	TD Favre 25 pass to Jackson (Kasay) (4-46-2:19)	27-3
3 6:23 Pickering	FG Kasay 20 (10-60-4:55)	30-3
4 13:32 York	TD Brady 6 pass to Coles (Graham,S) (10-65-4:04)	30-10

	PIC	YOR
First Downs	17	13
Rushes	30-119	27-79
Passes	29-16-191	28-15-133
Sacked	0-0	5-31
Fumble	1	2
Penalties	2-20	4-32
Turnovers	0	4
Time	32:09	27:51
Third Down	2-13	4-16
Fourth Down	0-0	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/2/2	2/1/1
Net Offense	310	181



3

MARKHAM



38

CHINO

MARKHAM MUGGED AT BIG HOUSE

GAME POINTS: The Convicts reversed a 2-game losing streak by laying a beating on the rising Markham North Stars on the strength of a 4-TD pass performance by former North Star, **Donovan McNabb**. The Chino QB stretched the field on a 34-yard TD pass to **Randy Moss** to lift his team to a 7-3 lead in the 2nd quarter. **Steven Jackson** followed with a 38-yard TD run one play after teammate **Greg Olsen** pounced on a fumble by **Knowshon Moreno** to preserve the drive. Chino let the dogs out in the 2nd half as McNabb struck through the air for 3 TD passes on consecutive possessions to build a daunting 35-3 lead before the end of the 3rd quarter. The 4th quarter played out like a pre-season game, with back-ups for both teams harmlessly burning up the remaining minutes.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Donovan McNabb** completed 14 of 22 for 219 yards and 4 TDs, **Steven Jackson** rushed for 121 yards and 1 TD on 15 carries, **Randy Moss** caught 6 passes for 110 yards and 3 TDs; **Jason Campbell** went 17 of 23 for 146 yards, **Jahvid Best** carried 23 times for 57 yards, **Chad Ochocinco** caught 7 balls for 69 yards.

11-27-2010 The Big House Temp: 85 Wind: 0-5 None MVP: **Donovan McNabb**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Markham (4-4)	3	0	0	0	3
2009 Chino (6-2)	0	14	21	3	38

1 9:04 Markham	FG Lindell 30 (11-49-5:43)	3-0
2 9:04 Chino	TD McNabb 34 pass to Moss (Reed,J) (3-55-1:36)	3-7
2 1:47 Chino	TD Jackson 38 run (Reed,J) (5-65-2:15)	3-14
3 11:40 Chino	TD McNabb 34 pass to Ward (Reed,J) (8-61-3:13)	3-21
3 5:23 Chino	TD McNabb 6 pass to Moss (Reed,J) (5-58-2:16)	3-28
3 3:01 Chino	TD McNabb 9 pass to Moss (Reed,J) (4-33-1:25)	3-35
4 2:56 Chino	FG Reed 27 (12-38-7:03)	3-38

	MAR	CHI
First Downs	10	21
Rushes	30-73	32-152
Passes	28-20-162	28-19-253
Sacked	2-16	0-0
Fumble	1	2
Penalties	7-45	3-19
Turnovers	2	1
Time	30:19	29:41
Third Down	3-14	5-12
Fourth Down	2-5	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	1/0/1	3/2/1
Net Offense	219	405

CUBS SOAR LIKE 'BYRD' TO VICTORY

GAME POINTS: **Jairus Byrd** intercepted **Matt Moore** and returned it 49 yards to the Cowtown 15 yard line, setting up a 15-yard TD pass from **Sam Bradford** to **Larry Fitzgerald** that broke a 20-20 tie with 4:06 remaining in the 4th quarter. After jumping out to an early 10-0 lead, the Cubs fell behind late in the 3rd quarter when a blitzing **Stephen Tulloch** forced a Bradford fumble that **Aaron Ross** snatched up and returned 37 yards for a TD and a 17-13 Cowtown lead. **Lee Evans** turned a short slant into a 53-yard pass play to re-ignite the Iowa City offence and regain the lead on a 1-yard TD run by **Ronnie Brown**. The Corn Kings tied it up on a 45-yard FG into the wind by **Olindo Mare** and then forced a three-and-out to set up the would-be drive to take the lead. Byrd turned it around with his game-changing pick, snapping the Cubs' 5-game losing streak.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Sam Bradford** went 14 of 19 for 199 yards and 1 TD, **Ronnie Brown** had 23 carries for 87 yards and 2 TDs, **Lee Evans** had 2 catches for 73 yards; **Matt Moore** went 17 of 27 for 177 yards and 2 INTs, **Marion Barber** had 19 carries for 78 yards and 1 TD, **Santana Moss** had 5 catches for 60 yards.



IOWA CITY



COWTOWN

27

20

11-27-2010 Tillman Field Temp: 66 Wind: 5-15 MVP: **Ronnie Brown**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Iowa City (2-6)	10	3	0	14	27
2009 Cowtown (2-6)	0	7	10	3	20

1 8:55 Iowa City	TD Brown 4 run (Rackers) (8-67-4:29)	7-0
1 0:48 Iowa City	FG Rackers 34 (11-55-6:12)	10-0
2 5:09 Cowtown	TD Barber 27 run (Mare) (4-54-2:00)	10-7
2 1:37 Iowa City	FG Rackers 35 (9-59-3:17)	13-7
3 3:37 Cowtown	FG Mare 32 (12-33-6:24)	13-10
3 1:07 Cowtown	TD Ross 37 yd fumble recovery (Mare) (0-0-2:10)	13-17
4 13:06 Iowa City	TD Brown 1 run (Rackers) (9-80-3:01)	20-17
4 7:28 Cowtown	FG Mare 45 (10-39-5:24)	20-20
4 4:06 Iowa City	TD Bradford 15 pass to Fitzgerald (Rackers) (1-15-0:12)	27-20

	ICC	COW
First Downs	17	14
Rushes	44-145	21-86
Passes	20-15-201	32-19-185
Sacked	1-4	5-35
Fumble	2	1
Penalties	2-5	3-27
Turnovers	2	2
Challenges	0-0	1-2
Time	32:59	27:01
Third Down	5-13	2-13
Fourth Down	0-0	1-2
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/3/1	5/0/2
Net Offense	342	236



VIRDEN



GWINNETT

15

27

DREW "BREESES" BY FLIGHTLESS HAWKS

GAME POINTS: After two possessions, **Drew Brees** had thrown for 135 yards and 2 TDs to vault Viriden into an early lead over Ringgold at the **TERRORDOME**. The teams traded field goals in the 2nd quarter to make it 17-3 for the Violators at half time. The Hawks put together a methodical 13-play drive to open the 2nd half and eventually threatened 4th down and inches at the Viriden 4 yard line. They went for it but **Big Ben** was stuffed for a loss on a busted play. The Violators put the game away later in the 3rd quarter when Brees found **Mario Manningham** downfield for a 30-yard pass play that set up a 9-yard TD pass to **Ricky Williams**. The Hawks managed to strike back, too little, too late, with a pair of TD passes from Roethlisberger to **Andre Johnson** in the final period.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Drew Brees** went 24 of 31 for 343 yards and 3 TDs, **Mario Manningham** caught 7 balls for 133 yards, **Ricky Williams** rushed for 70 yards on 21 carries and caught 2 passes for 23 yards and 1 TD; **Ben Roethlisberger** completed 25 of 3 for 326 yards, 2 TDs and 1 INT, **Andre Johnson** caught 6 passes for 109 yards, 2 TDs.

11-27-2010 **TERRORDOME** Temp: 56 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Drew Brees**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Ringgold (3-5)	0	3	0	12	15
2009 Viriden (3-5)	14	3	0	10	27

1 9:10 Viriden	TD Brees 12 pass to Bryant (Tynes) (9-79-5:43)	0-7
1 3:27 Viriden	TD Brees 27 pass to Holt (Tynes) (7-64-3:22)	0-14
2 12:04 Ringgold	FG Suisham 39 (13-60-6:09)	3-14
2 5:23 Viriden	FG Tynes 37 (14-68-6:28)	3-17
4 14:20 Viriden	TD Brees 9 pass to Williams (Tynes) (5-56-2:06)	3-24
4 11:09 Viriden	FG Tynes 37 (6-20-3:00)	3-27
4 4:28 Ringgold	TD Roethlisberger 13 pass to Johnson (2 - failed) (11-84-	9-27
4 0:27 Ringgold	TD Roethlisberger 34 pass to Johnson (2 - failed) (6-95-1	15-27

	RCH	VV
First Downs	20	26
Rushes	22-55	29-101
Passes	36-25-326	31-24-343
Sacked	1-2	2-14
Fumble	2	0
Penalties	8-50	7-53
Turnovers	1	0
Time	26:29	33:31
Third Down	3-10	3-10
Fourth Down	1-2	1-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	2/1/0	4/2/2
Net Offense	379	430

OFFENSIVE HELLFIRE RUN OVER 'STANGS



31

GARLAND



41

MOHAVE

GAME POINTS: Down by 4 points with 4 minutes remaining, **Rashard Mendenhall** busted a 20-yard run and **Matt Schaub** found **Donald Driver** deep down the middle for 31 yards to set up a 19-yard TD pass to **Terrell Owens** for the winning score. The game was a wild affair from the start with Mohave linebacker **A.J. Hawk** opening the scoring with an 11-yard fumble return after **Trent Cole** knocked the ball loose sacking **Matt Ryan**. **Frank Gore** answered with a 34-yard TD run off left tackle and, after **Jerome Harrison** had put Mohave back in front with a 13-yard TD run up the middle, broke another big gainer around the right corner for a 60-yard TD. Garland took a 31-24 lead in the 4th quarter on a 12-yard TD pass to **Wes Welker** after a Harrison fumble turned the ball over. But the Hellfire offence could not be stopped in fighting back for their 5th win.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Matt Schaub** was 18 of 27, 280 yards, 2 TDs; **Jerome Harrison** had 13 carries, 115 yards and 1 TD; **Donald Driver** had 6 receptions, 124 yards and 1 TD; **Matt Ryan** was 19 of 28 for 233 yards, 2 TDs; **Frank Gore** had 12 carries, 114 yards and 2 TDs; **Wes Welker** caught 10 passes for 136 yards and 1 TD.

11-27-2010 The Fiery Depths Temp: 97 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Matt Schaub**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Garland (1-7)	7	7	10	7	31
2009 Mohave (5-3)	7	10	7	17	41

1 9:26 Mohave	TD Hawk 11 yd fumble recovery (Bironas) (0-0-0:38)	0-7
1 7:05 Garland	TD Gore 34 run (Gould) (6-79-2:15)	7-7
2 6:04 Mohave	TD Harrison 13 run (Bironas) (11-69-4:52)	7-14
2 3:52 Garland	TD Gore 60 run (Gould) (4-71-2:07)	14-14
2 1:52 Mohave	FG Bironas 18 (6-75-1:49)	14-17
3 8:52 Mohave	TD Schaub 18 pass to Driver (Bironas) (10-82-6:01)	14-24
3 5:53 Garland	FG Gould 21 (6-68-2:52)	17-24
3 1:09 Garland	TD Ryan 3 pass to Chambers (Gould) (5-35-2:35)	24-24
4 13:11 Garland	TD Ryan 12 pass to Welker (Gould) (6-62-2:05)	31-24
4 6:35 Mohave	FG Bironas 30 (12-67-6:29)	31-27
4 2:37 Mohave	TD Schaub 19 pass to Owens (Bironas) (6-78-2:24)	31-34
4 0:24 Mohave	TD Mendenhall 2 run (Bironas) (4-45-1:36)	31-41

	GDM	MOH
First Downs	16	23
Rushes	21-119	35-219
Passes	28-19-233	27-18-280
Sacked	4-19	2-15
Fumble	3	4
Penalties	5-40	8-57
Turnovers	1	1
Time	24:21	35:39
Third Down	4-11	2-14
Fourth Down	0-2	4-4
Red Att/Td/Fg	3/2/1	6/4/2
Net Offense	333	484



CHARLESWOOD

17



FLORIDA

34

DRAGONS 'RICE' TO 8-0 WITH SOLID WIN

GAME POINTS: A failed onside kick attempt by Charleswood to start the second half gave Florida the ball at the Pat's 46 yard line, shortening the field for a 5-play TD drive; keyed by a 28-yard pass to **Heath Miller** and finished off with a 6-yard scoring strike to **Jerricho Cotchery**. With a 20-10 Dragons lead, the Charleswood offence was forced to play catch up. The Pats rebounded initially, converting a 4th & 9 at midfield to keep the ball and eventually score on **Peyton Manning's** 5-yard TD pass to **Marques Colston**. However, **Ray Rice** regained the double-digit advantage with a 58-yard TD run on a pitch to the right. **Brandon Meriweather** slammed the door on the Pats comeback prospects with a 4th quarter interception that led to Florida's game-clinching TD.

KEY PERFORMANCES: **Aaron Rodgers** went 22 of 30 for 229 yards, 2 TDs and 1 INT; **Ray Rice** had 20 carries for 148 yards, 2 TDs and 6 receptions for 35 yards; **Peyton Manning** completed 19 of 33 for 219 yards, 1 TD and 1 INT.

11-24-2010 Dragonmount Temp: 89 Wind: Calm None MVP: **Ray Rice**

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2009 Charleswood (6-2)	7	3	7	0	17
2009 Florida (8-0)	3	10	14	7	34

1 6:52 Charleswood	TD Jones 11 run (Gostkowski) (8-72-3:40)	7-0
1 2:57 Florida	FG Longwell 49 (8-48-3:55)	7-3
2 13:36 Charleswood	FG Gostkowski 33 (11-55-4:08)	10-3
2 4:19 Florida	TD Rice 2 run (Longwell) (8-63-4:42)	10-10
2 0:02 Florida	FG Longwell 31 (13-63-2:34)	10-13
3 12:09 Florida	TD Rodgers 6 pass to Cotchery (Longwell) (5-46-2:45)	10-20
3 5:55 Charleswood	TD Manning 5 pass to Colston (Gostkowski) (12-69-6:02)	17-20
3 2:34 Florida	TD Rice 58 run (Longwell) (6-80-3:21)	17-27
4 10:13 Florida	TD Rodgers 7 pass to Jackson (Longwell) (7-7-0:56)	17-34

	CHP	FLD
First Downs	17	22
Rushes	27-83	27-161
Passes	33-19-219	30-22-229
Sacked	4-25	1-10
Fumble	0	1
Penalties	6-41	6-48
Turnovers	1	2
Time	32:22	27:38
Third Down	7-16	4-7
Fourth Down	1-3	0-1
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/2/1	5/3/1
Net Offense	277	380

KUTZTOWN 'D' PUTS BEAR HUG ON GLADS

GAME POINTS: Darren Sharper jumped in front of a check down pass by Eli Manning and carried it back 66 yards for a TD to give the Golden Bears an early 10-0 lead over Gwinnett. LeSean McCoy broke free for a 75-yard run but touched the sideline at the 4 yard line, forcing the Bears to settle for a field goal after 3 attempts to run the ball failed to get it into the end zone. The Gwinnett offence struggled terribly in every phase, especially in the first half. But with the game still within reach, trailing 13-0 in the 3rd quarter, the Glads' offence pushed into FG range, only to be stopped dead by safety, LaRon Landry, who snared a tipped ball and ran it back 78 yards for another "pick six" and a 20-0 Kutztown lead. Tony Romo put the game out of reach with an 11-yard TD pass to Brandon Pettigrew after Stefan Logan fumbled the ball on the ensuing kickoff return. Manning cracked the goose egg with a late 20-yard TD pass to Reggie Wayne.

KEY PERFORMANCES: Tony Romo completed 21 of 34 for 218 yards and 1 TD; LeSean McCoy gained 128 yards on 22 carries, Greg Jennings caught 10 passes for 113 yards, defensive end Brandon Graham made 6 tackles, caused 3 deflections dropping in coverage, and forced 1 fumble; Eli Manning went 12 of 27 for 112 yards, 1 TD and 2 INTs, Thomas Jones gained 37 yards on 15 carries, Reggie Wayne, 5 rec., 58 yds, 1 TD.



30

KUTZTOWN



7

GWINNETT

11-28-2010 Gwinnett Coliseum Temp: 76 Wind: 0-10 None MVP: Darren Sharper											
	1	2	3	4	Tot						
2009 Kutztown (4-4)	10	3	14	3	30						
2009 Gwinnett (3-5)	0	0	0	7	7						
1 3:41 Kutztown	FG Kaeding 30 (11-39-5:40)					3-0					
1 2:31 Kutztown	TD Sharper 66 interception return (Kaeding) (0-0-0:46)					10-0					
2 3:27 Kutztown	FG Kaeding 19 (6-78-3:40)					13-0					
3 5:58 Kutztown	TD Landry 78 interception return (Kaeding) (0-0-3:29)					20-0					
3 2:42 Kutztown	TD Romo 11 pass to Pettigrew (Kaeding) (6-27-3:05)					27-0					
4 10:25 Kutztown	FG Kaeding 48 (10-39-6:37)					30-0					
4 0:24 Gwinnett	TD Manning 20 pass to Wayne (Brown,J) (1-20-0:14)					30-7					
						KUT			GWG		
						First Downs	15	8			
						Rushes	37-157	19-48			
						Passes	34-21-218	28-12-112			
						Sacked	3-20	0-0			
						Fumble	1	2			
						Penalties	7-65	4-28			
						Turnovers	1	4			
						Time	41:00	19:00			
						Third Down	6-19	4-13			
						Fourth Down	2-5	0-1			
						Red Att/Td/Fg	4/1/2	1/1/0			
						Net Offense	355	160			

WEEK EIGHT LEADERS

Passing

Brees (VV)	31-24-343
Roethlisberger (RCH)	36-25-326
Rivers, P (DTL)	37-23-286
Schaub (MOH)	27-18-280
McNabb (CHI)	22-14-219

Rushing

Rice, R (FLD)	20-148
McCoy, L (KUT)	22-128
Jackson, S (CHI)	15-121
Harrison, J (MOH)	13-115
Gore (GDM)	12-114

Receiving

Welker (GDM)	10-136
Manningham (VV)	7-133
Driver (MOH)	6-124
Jennings, G (KUT)	10-113
Moss, R (CHI)	6-110

LEADER BOARD

STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Charleswood	6	2	0	0.75	274	34.3	164	20.5	13.8	4 0 0	2 1 0	4 1 0
Mohave	5	3	0	0.625	187	23.4	205	25.6	-2.3	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 1 0
Kutztown	4	4	0	0.5	184	23	190	23.8	-0.8	3 1 0	1 2 0	2 3 0
Virden	3	5	0	0.375	193	24.1	233	29.1	-5	1 2 0	0 3 0	1 4 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Chino	6	2	0	0.75	231	28.9	113	14.1	14.8	4 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0
York	3	5	0	0.375	160	20	209	26.1	-6.1	2 2 0	2 1 0	2 3 0
Iowa City	2	6	0	0.25	166	20.8	231	28.9	-8.1	0 4 0	1 2 0	1 4 0
Los Angeles	2	6	0	0.25	189	23.6	216	27	-3.4	1 3 0	0 3 0	1 4 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Pickering	7	1	0	0.875	251	31.4	119	14.9	16.5	2 1 0	3 0 0	4 1 0
Durham	5	3	0	0.625	191	23.9	151	18.9	5	4 0 0	1 2 0	2 3 0
Markham	4	4	0	0.5	142	17.8	195	24.4	-6.6	3 1 0	1 2 0	2 3 0
Cowtown	2	6	0	0.25	127	15.9	228	28.5	-12.6	2 3 0	1 2 0	2 3 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Florida	8	0	0	1	246	30.8	105	13.1	17.6	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0
Gwinnett	3	5	0	0.375	185	23.1	250	31.3	-8.1	3 1 0	1 2 0	2 3 0
Ringgold	3	5	0	0.375	163	20.4	190	23.8	-3.4	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 3 0
Garland	1	7	0	0.125	181	22.6	271	33.9	-11.3	1 3 0	0 3 0	1 4 0

PASSING

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Favre	PIC	225	144	64	1914	5	2.2	53	16	7.1	105.3
2	Brees	VV	226	148	65.5	1867	6	2.7	41	14	6.2	100.7
3	Rodgers	FLD	194	128	66	1537	4	2.1	59	10	5.2	98.7
4	Schaub	MOH	270	179	66.3	2117	7	2.6	56	14	5.2	96.5
5	McNabb	CHI	244	148	60.7	1890	5	2	64	14	5.7	95.5
6	Manning, E	GWG	234	141	60.3	1801	6	2.6	78	15	6.4	95
7	Manning, P	CHP	253	172	68	1953	10	4	38	15	5.9	94.2
8	Kolb	GDM	106	68	64.2	753	3	2.8	39	6	5.7	92.2
9	Romo	KUT	233	154	66.1	1884	6	2.6	60	8	3.4	91.6
10	Warner	LAK	233	143	61.4	1601	7	3	74	14	6	89.4
11	Brady	YOR	280	182	65	1821	11	3.9	45	15	5.4	84.8
12	Rivers, P	DTL	243	138	56.8	1739	9	3.7	86	15	6.2	84.4
13	Campbell, J	MAR	218	142	65.1	1528	7	3.2	64	7	3.2	82.9
14	Roethlisberger	RCH	219	139	63.5	1536	9	4.1	48	9	4.1	80.8
15	Ryan, M	GDM	188	121	64.4	1346	10	5.3	68	7	3.7	75.8

RUSHING

			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Johnson, C	PIC	174	991	5.7	40	13	8	Mendenhall	MOH	116	542	4.7	49	4
2	Williams, R	VV	169	794	4.7	68	5	9	Thomas, P	YOR	118	524	4.4	36	3
3	Jones, T	GWG	163	764	4.7	45	5	10	Jackson, S	CHI	110	471	4.3	38	2
4	Peterson, A	CHP	174	733	4.2	48	11	11	Brown, R	ICC	103	436	4.2	50	6
5	Jones-Drew	RCH	126	630	5	94	3	12	Best	MAR	120	403	3.4	15	3
6	Rice, R	FLD	117	585	5	58	5	13	Bush, R	ICC	58	403	6.9	80	4
7	McCoy, L	KUT	129	544	4.2	75	4	14	Charles	LAK	86	399	4.6	17	3
8	Mendenhall	MOH	116	542	4.7	49	4	15	Barber	COW	80	355	4.4	27	1

Yards/Game			Rushing Gains			10+	Rushing First		Downs		
1	Johnson, C	PIC	123.9	1	Johnson,C	PIC	31	1	Johnson, C	PIC	62
2	Williams, R	VV	99.3	2	Jones,T	GWG	20	2	Peterson, A	CHP	45
3	Jones, T	GWG	95.5	3	Williams,R	VV	19	3	Jones, T	GWG	44
4	Peterson, A	CHP	91.6	4	Peterson,A	CHP	17	4	Williams, R	VV	37
5	Jones-Drew	RCH	78.8	5	Jackson,S	CHI	15	5	Rice, R	FLD	31

RECEIVING

			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Smith, S	LAK	51	581	11.4	55	7	8	Witten	CHP	45	471	10.5	38	7
2	White, R	LAK	50	551	11	42	2	9	Rice, S	CHP	44	547	12.4	28	2
3	Moss, R	CHI	49	695	14.2	51	7	10	Colston	CHP	42	503	12	32	2
4	Jennings, G	KUT	48	757	15.8	60	1	11	Johnson, A	RCH	41	588	14.3	48	4
5	Welker	GDM	47	677	14.4	68	3	12	Ochocinco	MAR	40	432	10.8	39	2
6	Holmes	RCH	47	571	12.1	28	2	13	Ward, H	CHI	40	525	13.1	64	6
7	Wayne	GWG	46	772	16.8	78	9	14	Fitzgerald	ICC	40	406	10.2	28	7
8	Witten	CHP	45	471	10.5	38	7	15	Crabtree	YOR	39	553	14.2	37	6

RAC Yards			Yards/Game			1 st Downs					
1	Jennings, G	KUT	382	1	Welker	GDM	135	1	Holmes	RCH	37
2	Welker	GDM	297	2	Wayne	GWG	96.5	2	Wayne	GWG	34
3	Moss, R	CHI	292	3	Jennings, G	KUT	94.6	3	Smith, S	LAK	34
4	Rice, R	FLD	282	4	Moss, R	CHI	86.9	4	Jennings, G	KUT	33
5	Wayne	GWG	271	5	Hester, D	VV	79.4	5	Moss, R	CHI	32



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – It is Thanksgiving but I feel that nobody is thanking anybody for anything. The markets are slumping because the economy is stagnant because banks aren't lending because the markets are slumping because the economy is stagnant because banks aren't lending because the markets are slumping because the economy.....you get the idea. It all feeds on itself. There's only so much turkey to go around the table and Wall Street is like that big fat cousin who you never see all year except at Thanksgiving, who heaves more than his share of mashed potatoes on his plate, drains the gravy boat, and grabs the last drumstick while asking, (as he stuffs it in his mouth), if anyone wants it. Of course, *we* pay for Wall Street's troubles. It gives our beloved Capitalism a bad name when the banks and the inside traders manipulate the markets and steal from the hard-working Middle Class. Tell me how that's different from the 'Politburo' grabbing all the good scotch whiskey while Ivan in the tractor factory drinks cheap potato vodka till his eyes bleed.

ADMISSIONS OF WEAKNESS

Is any team in this league cut out to beat the Florida Dragons? There aren't many true challengers left who have yet to be knocked to the floor by the Champs this year. By my count, Florida is 3-0 in "challenge games" – matches where there is a reasonable prospect that they could be knocked from their perch on top of Dragon Mountain. (I had them at 4-0 until I removed the embarrassing Ringgold from my list of true challengers) In each game there was a common quality oozing like a virulent slime from the Dragon's opponents – a fatal inferiority complex.

The well-documented "safe" hand-off to **Chris Johnson**, that achieved a lesser objective for Pickering but put the game back in Florida's hands, was the first big play in a series of telling moves by strong opponents who may *not* feel so strong when facing Florida. The self-anaesthetizing 'run first, get first downs later' offensive game plan of the Thunder Lizards, a proven losing strategy, was used again this year and got the same result as it did last year – another loss for the brown and white against the aqua and orange. This past Thursday night it was the 'surprise onside kick' gambit that helped sink Charleswood in a hostile environment at Dragonmount.

Before anyone from Charleswood jumps down my throat with stats about the success rate of onside kicks in unconventional situations, I ask them to answer this simple question: if the Pats were facing Garland, would they have started the second half with an onside kick? Nothing says "I don't think I can beat you in a fair fight," or "I think my job's in jeopardy," like a surprise onside kick. If it works, it *might* work – you *might* score points. If it doesn't, it may backfire in more ways than you think by sending a subliminal admission of weakness to your opponent.

At the professional level, football is more psychological than it is physical. Everybody is huge and fast in the big leagues. A very few highly gifted athletes can overcome adversity through sheer physical effort at that level – they are the stars of the game. Everyone else is looking for the mental edge to get ahead. Detecting signs of mental weakness in an opponent gives one a psychological boost that is worth more than a year's dose of anabolic steroids. After Charleswood's failed onside kick the Dragons rode their boost of confidence and great field position to a quick touchdown to start the second half, giving them a 20-10 lead. The Pats had to play catch-up from that point onward – a recipe for disaster against a team like Florida. The Dragons sat back in pass defences the entire second half; and there is only so much even **Peyton Manning** can do against that kind of opposition.

Thus, Charleswood fell to Florida this week with anti-climactic ease, meaning that only two potential regular season challengers – Chino and Los Angeles – remain to be beaten for Florida to claim the Perfect Season prize. The Convicts have always had the Dragons number because they hate any and all comers equally – losing when they lose because they screw up; winning when they win because they play the same aggressive style every time; Dragons be damned! Los Angeles is struggling but looking for revenge for their loss to Florida in the 2009 Championship Game. The Knights aren't playing well but, at 2-6, they may see a win over Florida as a consolation prize in a season fraught with broken dreams, locker room tension, and really bad fashion designs.



Drew Brees is a great quarterback on a bad team. Where would Ringgold be today if he and Big Ben switched places?

REVENGE!

Revenge is sweet, but can you get tired of it? Ask **Donovan McNabb**, professional football's most accomplished journeyman quarterback. McNabb has played the role of "franchise quarterback" for no less than 3 teams in 4 seasons. If you count separate stints with the Convicts in 2007 and 2010, McNabb has changed teams every year since the NFL collapsed. What that means, in addition to a hefty tab in real estate fees, is that McNabb has faced his "former" team more often than any other quarterback in the league. In those "revenge games," McNabb is 3-3: beating Chino in 2008 as a member of the Spartans; splitting the season series in 2009 against the Spartans as a member of the North Stars; losing to Chino that same year; dropping a 20-7 decision to Pickering as the Convicts new saviour in Week Seven this year; and this Thanksgiving weekend throwing 4 touchdown passes in a 38-3 beat-down of Markham.

"Everyone always asks me about the revenge thing and I don't know what they're talking about. I look at it as another game. Revenge is like, when somebody does you wrong, you know. The Stars treated me well when I was there." McNabb said in response to a question from Lanny McDonald. "Plus, just look at that team. I mean, what's the point of, like, going for revenge against *that* team? They have enough problems, man. That is one *bad* team on offence since I left, so why rub it in?"

The state of Markham quarterbacking is ever-changing. **Jason Campbell** has found new life in the 'City of Hot Dogs' but the future clearly lies with **Mark Sanchez** and young **Josh Johnson**. Coach **Darrin Jones** took prudent measures to protect those assets as the Convicts routed his team from the field on Sunday. The answer to a "where are they now?" question made an appearance on national TV when **Billy Volek**, to the surprise of everyone, came into the game for Markham and threw a not-so-surprising interception to **Mike Brown** in the 4th quarter with the game hopelessly out of reach. Volek was thought to have been cut after training camp, then he was rumoured to be on the Markham practice squad. He was last reported to be driving a forklift at a Home Depot distribution centre in Atlanta; but it turns out he was none of those things. Volek is the "BREAK GLASS IN CASE OF FIRE" quarterback for Markham, only to be called upon in situations where the game is so irrevocably lost and dangerous that the value of 'live' playing time for the emergency quarterback is outweighed by the risk of injury, in a lost cause, to said emergency quarterback. Although up by 32 points in the 4th quarter, Chino's defence was in no mood to give up any points to the shell-shocked North Stars and individual members of the "Lockdown Crew" were still gunning for stats. That's when the Markham coach smartly sent an assistant to the locker room where Volek was sitting in a glass booth reading 'American Wood-Working.' He smashed the glass, triggering an alarm in the official's booth signalling *that Josh Johnson* was no longer eligible to play and that the "fireman" was coming into the game.

BIG BEN BLOWN AWAY BY STIFF BREES

Is **Ben Roethlisberger** naturally dim-witted or has he just taken too many shots to the head recently? Although his play has not been stellar lately, Big Ben remains the #1 option at quarterback for Coach **Tim Molinaro**. He went down with an apparent concussion last week against Mohave but was rushed back into action this Sunday without much practice time during the week. The result was another loss for the Crimson Hawks as Big Ben posted deceptively good numbers but did the little things wrong at crucial moments. Take, for instance, a critical 4th down and inches at the Virden 4-yard with the Hawks trailing 17-3. Roethlisberger called a sneak in the huddle and set up behind center. At some point during his complicated and elaborate hard count, he either forgot the play he had called or "audibled" a new one inside his head. In any case, the result was that he turned around to hand the ball off instead of falling forward, found nobody there to take it, and was tackled for a 2-yard loss, to the fury of his coach.

On the other side, **Drew Brees** spun gold out of straw for the Violators. With **Mario Manningham** as his principal target, due to injuries to **Devin Hester** and **Dez Bryant**, Brees passed for 343 yards and 3 touchdowns to lead his team to a 27-15 thumping of the far more talented Ringgold squad. One has to wonder, if they switched places, where the Crimson Hawks would be in the standings today. If only my geek nephew, Byron, still had his super-computer to probe the alternate universes!

THANKSGIVING TURKEY

On Thanksgiving afternoon, Kutztown walloped Gwinnett, 30-7 in a real turkey of a game at the Coliseum. In a bid to keep their banged up defence off the field, the Bears made unconventional 4th down gambles their offensive strategy, trying five times and succeeding twice. As it turned out, their defence did not need the help. The Golden Bears put a bear hug on **Eli Manning** and the Gladiators' offence, returning two interceptions for touchdowns and surrendering only 160 total yards. As bad as it was, it could

have been worse for Gwinnett. A curious decision by the Bears to go for it on 4th down & 17 in their own end with 34 seconds left and a 30-0 lead would set up Gwinnett's only TD and the loss of a well-earned shutout. With Kutztown playing deep 'Prevent' with only 20 yards of green separating the line of scrimmage from the goal line, the entire Kutztown secondary stood in the end zone and watched **Reggie Wayne** catch a ball underneath and waltz in for the score. It had no outcome on the final result, but I'm sure it left a lot of people, like me, scratching their heads in bewilderment. Usually, with the whiff of a shutout in their nostrils, the defence hunkers down and plays hard to preserve it. The only thing I can think of that makes "sense," is that cagey-like-a-fox **Pete Katsafanas** wants opponents to think he's crazy; like the enforcer in hockey who looks just deranged enough to make you worry for your health and safety. How can you game-plan against a guy who has no plan? It's part of what makes Kutztown a wildcard virtually every week.

MOHAVE UNDER MANIAC MARTZ

With **Bobby Elder** suspended by the EFL for his Week Seven tirade against the officiating, offensive coordinator, **Mike Martz** took over and looked a little too excited that he was running the show. Operating under instructions from Elder to "crush all opposition without mercy," Martz may have inadvertently earned the enmity of gentleman coach, **Doug Shirley** with his aggressive play-calling and excitable manner in the waning minutes of Mohave's 41-31 victory over the Mustangs. With 1:23 remaining and holding on to a 3-point lead, Martz passed the ball and called outside runs to cover 45 yards for the final touchdown, officially putting the game out of reach. As **Rashard Mendenhall** crossed the goal line, Martz was seen to jump and pump his fist in the air at the Mohave bench. He then turned to a couple of players and ordered them to soak him with 'Gatorade,' then looked visibly annoyed when they did not lift him onto their shoulders. He refused to shake hands at midfield and gloated shamelessly in the post-game scrum about his offensive game plan that gained almost 500 total yards. It was a rebirth, of sorts, for the Hellfire offence but it came at the expense of the dysfunctional Garland defence; which makes the achievement suspect. If the Mustangs could just *stop* somebody, they might do some damage.

ROUNDING UP THE REST FROM WEEK EIGHT

Thanksgiving weekend was a competitive improvement over Week Seven and a marked upgrade from the pair of Thanksgiving Day snoozers in Gwinnett and Florida.

Reporters are beginning to write their eulogies for the LA Knights after yet another loss, this time 38-30 to Durham. The only thing holding back a full funeral at this stage is the knowledge that there is no tough competition for the fourth playoff spot in the PAC. Although the Division appears out of reach, a wildcard berth is still a viable hope. The Lizards are in a similar position, but they are heading in a better direction, with 3 straight wins. **Philip Rivers** is the only quarterback in the Top 15 with less than a 60% completion rate (56.8%), but he still managed to get the job done when it mattered against the "Blue Shield" on Sunday with a trio of TD passes and a 5-yard scramble for another.

The Spartans continued their rampage across the league, humbling **Tom Brady** and the upstart Excaliburs at Camelot, 30-10. Four turnovers by York turned the difficult task of beating the Pickering powerhouse into an impossible one. At 7-1, everything appears to be going swimmingly well for the Greeks – at least that is what that boot-licking Spartan lackey, **Aristedes Kalogiannis** would have you believe. However, because I've been in this business longer and have better sources, I have it on good authority that there is trouble brewing in the Pickering locker room over "quality red zone time." **Brett Favre**, accustomed to being 'The Man' in Driftwood, is not happy with all the attention that **Chris Johnson** is getting from the coaching staff and the media. Johnson's lucky cleats went missing before game time at Camelot and were found in a freezer encased in ice in a giant zip-lock bag. Favre, a known prankster from his days with the Packers, was seen busting a gut with laughter when Johnson returned to the locker room with his frozen shoes, only to find that his locker had been welded shut with a soldering iron. Staff managed to pry open Johnson's locker only to find a giant dead raccoon inside dressed up in Johnson's game jersey and shoulder pads. Lying on the floor in hysterics, Favre was apparently heard hooting, "How in the world did Chris get locked inside his locker?" A minute later he was heard crying and begging for his life as Johnson stood over him with a .40 calibre Glock pointed at his forehead. The coaching staff managed to break the standoff by calling an impromptu meeting to discuss red zone formations to be used against York, causing both protagonists to drop what they were doing and run to the classroom. Stay focused on this column, dear reader, to get more juicy tidbits on the unfolding Pickering 'Prima Dona' drama.

The Corn Kings made a man out of Iowa City quarterback, **Sam Bradford**. The struggling Cubs rookie QB stuck it to the loose and easy Corn Kings secondary, completing 74% of his passes for 199 yards and 1 TD in a 27-20 road win at Tillman Field. **Joe Flacco** was pulled after getting off to another slow start. After initial success bringing Cowtown back from behind, with the score tied at 20-20 in the fourth quarter, **Matt Moore** caught the "Flacco Flu;" throwing an interception to **Jairus Byrd** that the Cubs corner returned 49 yards to set up the game-winning TD to **Larry Fitzgerald**. The Corn Kings are starting to look like the worst team in the league, which comes as a bit of a surprise to Yours Truly. I expected **Joe Flacco** to be farther ahead in his development than he is at this stage of the season.



Professor McNabb's
Professor McChad's

EFL Mid-Term Report

It is that time of the year again. A time for teams and the people who watch them to reflect on where they are. Have they progressed? Have they fallen behind? Are they on target to achieve their goals? Will remedial work be required? How can they improve? Blah, blah, blah...it's just like being back in school and I hated school (except for the Frat part). Anyway, school is a lot more fun when you can play teacher for a day. I don my professor's hat as I undertake the solemn task of evaluating the EFL teams at the half-way point of the season.

CHARLESWOOD [A] – Although they are coming off a loss to Florida, the Pats have been solid throughout the year and are doing a bit of everything well. They are not as explosive offensively as other top tier teams, but the Manning-to-Witten and Rice combo is working and Adrian Peterson has been steady in spite of all the attention. Nevertheless, they would not be where they are if not for a league-leading 27 turnovers they have forced. The defence is playing “Chino Ball” and if they keep that going, they will grade out near the top of the league.

CHINO [A] – The Convicts are mauling opponents with suffocating defence and a revived passing attack. Donovan McNabb has been the spark Chino needed to put points on the board while on ‘D,’ James Harrison and Julius Peppers are tormenting opposing quarterbacks and forcing turnovers. Take-aways remain a big part of the Chino game-plan, but this year they are minding their fundamentals as well. A win against a big name team is all they need.

COWTOWN [D+] – This mark would be worse but I am allowing half a grade for injuries, which have been unrelenting. The effects of them have been more severe because of lack of depth at key positions, such as tight end and running back, but for that the manager is to blame, not the players. The Kings are broken or hurting at almost every position. It's hard to find a bright spot on the team and there is no reason to be optimistic soon. Last in offence and plummeting in the defence, they may be the worst team in the league at the moment.

DURHAM [B+] – A bad start may have negative implications for the Division title but if their current rebound continues they could do damage in the playoffs regardless of where they finish. The Lizards are still underperforming, however. Their defence is compensating for an inconsistent but improving Philip Rivers. The ‘D-Nos’ have done a good job overall but they would be great if they had any kind of pass rush. The Lizards have a league low 3 sacks – a mild outrage with Jared Allen and Elvis Dumervil on the roster.

FLORIDA [A+] – What other mark could I give the Dragons for half a perfect season? In a league where anything can happen to lesser teams from week-to-week, the Dragons remain strong, consistent and just flat out good. Ranked 2nd in both offence and defence, their record is no fluke and their opponents know this, giving them the all important psychological edge every week.

GARLAND [D] – Watching Wes Welker catch 100+ balls while his team trolls the bottom of the standings will be one of the saddest sights we will see this season. There is something bizarrely off about the Mustangs so far this year. The defence should not be this terrible and there is no good reason for Matt Ryan sucking. It's as if all the good luck from last season rebounded negatively this year.

GWINNETT [C-] – Beat downs of three bad defences account for the Glads only victories. They are getting their butts kicked by everyone else and have the dubious distinction of being the last team to give up 40 points to Ringgold. They have an inexplicably bad defence that is creating problems for their potentially high-powered offence. Eli Manning to Reggie Wayne is the most prolific scoring combo in the league, but when good teams come gunning for them the Glads fall silent.

IOWA CITY [C-] – The Cubs are a case study in the importance of the quarterback position. They are a good team with a rookie quarterback. If they had a passing game they might be dangerous, since they have shown flashes of strength at times. Their defence has forced 14 turnovers and they are still 2-6, which should tell you about their offence. If Bradford can develop, look out for the Cubs next year.

KUTZTOWN [B+] – This mark is as much for effort as it is for accomplishment. At 4-4, the Golden Bears have been embarrassed at times this year and have done the embarrassing at others. Tony Romo is the soul of the offence and Darren Sharper is All-World as the leader of the defence. Although beset by injuries, the Bears have battled through them and at the moment are on the inside track for a wildcard spot.

LOS ANGELES [C-] – The surprise of the year so far is the Knights' 2-6 record. Nobody saw that coming and even as it is happening it *feels* unbelievable. The talent is there, but the execution has been flawed and people are starting to question their desire to win. Even the defence, which looked impregnable at the start of the season, is showing cracks in its armour. Maybe LA is just not the place for football.

MARKHAM [B-] – Another effort mark. Objectively, the Stars have not been a good team, but they have pulled off a couple of major upsets – against Durham and LA – and have out-performed expectations since dumping Kurt Warner and Jason Taylor. Near the bottom of almost every offensive category except passer rating, and struggling to stop everybody, it is a marvel they are still a playoff contender.

MOHAVE [B] – After a sizzling 4-0 start the Hellfire have cooled down to a camp fire. Matt Schaub is the leader of this team and it is no coincidence that he had his worst games during Mohave's 3 losses. Ranked 6th in both offence and defence, the Hellfire have played to expectations and need to keep doing what they're doing if they are going to keep the fire going.

PICKERING [A+] – It has taken a full 8 weeks for it to sink in, but everybody now believes the Pickering Spartans are an elite team. The most dramatic turnaround in football is plain for all to see. Second in turnovers forced, first in offence and 2nd in defence, the bonus marks go to the manager for making important deals up to the end of the trade deadline to improve his team. The only blemish on their record, a loss to Florida, can hardly be called a blemish since it went to overtime. Go to the Head of the Class Pickering.

RINGGOLD [C-] – At 3-5 the Crimson Hawks are not the worst team in the league but they are definitely the most under-achieving. Like a gifted student who drinks and smokes his way off the Honour Roll they are viewed with a combination of curiosity and scorn. If I knew how to fix them I'd stop writing this column immediately, apply for a position with the organization and be set for life.

VIRDEN [B] – In a league with some bad defences the Violators have, by far, the worst. Another case study, this one in the value of defensive lines, proves that a bad defensive line can create the worst pass defence in the league. Despite this, they own a 3-5 record and remain in the hunt, albeit a long shot, for a playoff spot. This is thanks to the best quarterback nobody but Spats McChad talks about – Drew Brees. With his sidekick, Ricky Williams, Brees commands the fourth best offence in the EFL throwing to the likes of Mario Manningham and Devin Hester. Amazing!

YORK [B-] – The party looks ready to end in York but, at 3-5, it was a good half year run for the team that won only 2 games in its previous two seasons. The turnaround is due to more than Tom Brady. New management has brought new life to the organization and even in their losses this franchise no longer carries itself like a loser. There is plenty of undeveloped talent on the roster and a plan to get more. The foundation is being built for a good future.

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GWINNETT @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 10)

The Gladiators continue to depress, not impress. Their inability to move the ball last week against a Kutztown defence that was missing four starters, in front of a national TV audience no less, has some fans calling for Dave Birdsall's head. There was even a mad suggestion from one blogger that the Gwinnett coach and Eli Manning should be included in a future half time show involving wild lions imported from southern Chad. There is no reason to expect the Gladiators will rise above their stumbling play, on the road against an improving Durham squad, unless the weather turns wet and unpredictable – always a possibility in the exotic micro-climate of Jurassic Park. The Lizards lost Dwayne Bowe last week and remain without Michael Turner. This loss is mitigated by the fact that the Gladiators have the 15th ranked run defence in the league. Who is ranked dead last, you ask? Durham. Notwithstanding all of the Glad's problems, the 10-point line is a little too large for my liking...and my wallet. **Pick: GWINNETT**

FLORIDA @ COWTOWN (line – DRAGONS BY 12)

The league is considering passing a special blackout rule just for this game. Nobody should have to watch this impending execution, but you know a few sickos will tune in if the game is available on television. The only thing in the Corn Kings favour is the home field advantage which, after seeing how little it picked them up against Iowa City last week, may be no advantage at all. On top of not being very good to begin with, some of the best starters on this mediocre roster are still out with injuries, including tackle Jordan Gross and corner Rashean Mathis – a presence they desperately need. The offence has learned how much Zach Miller means to them since he has been missing for the better part of 3 games. It's hard to imagine first downs happening for Cowtown in this game, except by accident – so forget points unless the defence chips in. The Dragons are missing Dwight Freeney and Russell Okung is 'probable,' but they will weather the loss without much notice. Game will contain coarse language, extreme violence, graphic content, Rated NC-17. **Pick: FLORIDA**

RINGGOLD @ MARKHAM (line – NORTH STARS by 2)

If somebody had told me before the season started that I would be seriously considering placing a bet on Markham to beat Ringgold in Week 9 I would have laughed in the person's face. But Ringgold is a sick team, and by "sick" I don't mean "cool" and exciting. No Hawk is currently out with an injury but they are the unhealthiest team mentally right now. They have the talent to blow Markham away, but they will shoot themselves instead. The North Stars find ways to win with Jason Campbell at the helm and they have a knack for playing well at home, win or lose. I will probably kick myself when Ringgold finally wakes up and kicks some ass at the Dawg Pound, but they are too high of a risk to trust. **Pick: MARKHAM**

GARLAND @ PICKERING (line – SPARTANS by 16)

This is another game in the same category as the Florida-Cowtown mis-match, except worse. The Mustangs are in the Spartans' house and their defence, ranked #15, is even worse than the rotten Corn Cobs one that

got singed by the lukewarm hand of Sam Bradford last week. The Mustangs do have some weapons to fight back with – Wes Welker, the league’s hottest receiver, averaging 11 catches a game over the past 4 weeks; and Frank Gore, who rushed for 114 yards last week. But they may not see the field much once Chris Johnson gets in gear. Speaking of the league’s top rusher, some expect him to set an EFL record for rushing yards in this game. If he does, don’t get too excited – Anthony Dixon rushed for 172 yards against this pack of nags. Brett Favre will have to get his licks in early because the Spartans will have a lot of clock to run out. **Pick:**

PICKERING

CHINO @ VIRDEN (line – CONVICTS by 6)

Is Week Nine “Blowout Week” in the EFL? Here is another potential massacre in the making. The Convicts are still in a gnarly mood after dropping two straight before recovering last week against Markham. Their defence wants blood, as usual, and they will go after Drew Brees hard because they know he is the only player who stands between them and a shutout. Brees is missing Devin Hester and Dez Bryant as targets, but at least he won’t have to worry about Cortland Finnegan, who is out. If this game stays close, it will because of Brees and nobody else. The Violators *defence* (can I use that word to describe them?) is fully healthy, and that will cause problems for Virden. Expect Donovan McNabb to take the fourth quarter off. **Pick: CHINO**

YORK @ MOHAVE (line – HELLFIRE by 6)

This is the game where the one-dimensional York attack catches up with them. The one area where the Hellfire defence is vulnerable is an area the Excaliburs will have trouble exploiting – Pierre Thomas is out and the line is not cut out to carry a sub-par Darren McFadden. Tom Brady will have to go airborne and Mohave will be waiting for him. Owen Daniels is out, but Matt Schaub has other targets and a pair of complimentary running backs to fall back on. It will be a long, hot day for the Yorkies. **PICK: MOHAVE**

LOS ANGELES @ KUTZTOWN (line – GOLDEN BEARS by 5)

Who comes up with these lines, anyway? Oh yeah, guys like me. I’m glad I didn’t have to mark this one. Both of these teams are unpredictable in entirely different ways. Nobody knows whether the Jekyll or the Hyde version of the Bears will show up on any given Sunday – it is impossible to tell in advance. Even injuries don’t seem to matter, as evidenced last week by the near shutout of Gwinnett pitched by their battered defence. The Knights have so much talent that it defies understanding that they are 2-6 and in danger of losing a playoff berth to this very same Golden Bears squad. At some point the talent has to kick in and I say it finally does this week. With their playoff hopes on the line, the Knights will rally. **Pick: LOS ANGELES**

IOWA CITY @ CHARLESWOOD (line – PATRIOTS by 12)

With the taste of ash still in their mouths from getting burned in the Everglades, the Patriots are glad to be home in friendly Patriot Place with a rookie quarterback to feast upon. Sam Bradford looked like a franchise commodity at times last week against Cowtown, but the Charleswood defence is in a different league, especially with Ed Reed on the field. The cunning veteran is listed a ‘probable’ for this game and if he suits up, it will bring an abrupt wake-up call for the young Cubs signal-caller. Peyton Manning is coming off his worst outing of the year after Week One and he will be tempted to make a statement early. He should be careful; the Iowa defence has an array of play-makers with the ability to score. If Peyton is planning a party for the offence he must be sure to invite Adrian Peterson to distract Jairus Byrd from his ball-hawking ways. In the final analysis the Pats have too many weapons to lose this game, but the Cubs have the tools to beat the spread.

Pick: IOWA CITY