

WEEK 3



ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

EFL 2023

We're Number 1!

October 22, 2023

#1 FOR #1!

EAST



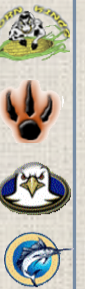
CENTRAL



WEST



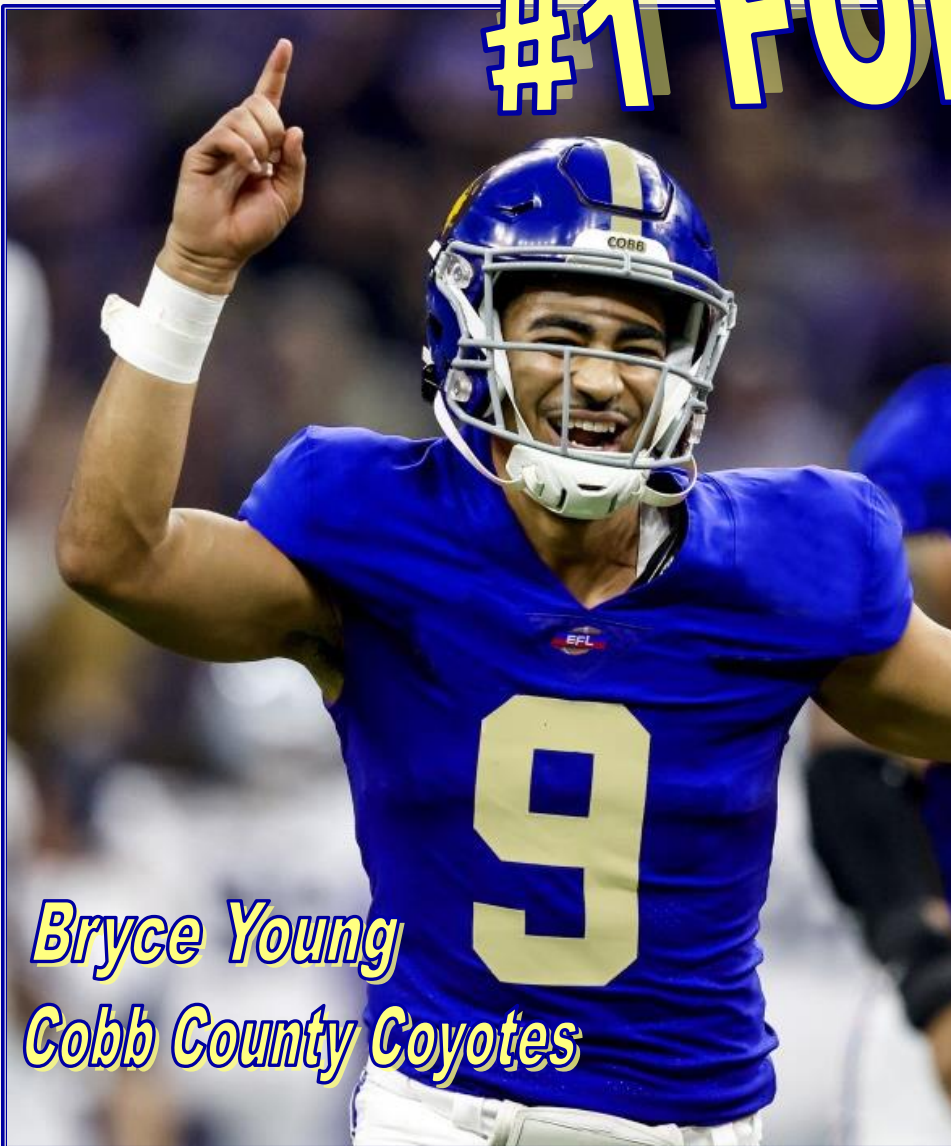
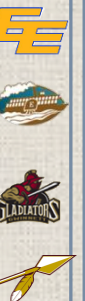
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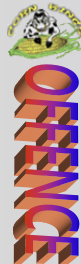
*Bryce Young
Cobb County Coyotes*

The No.1 pick in the draft, **Bryce Young** runs around the field to celebrate his first victory as a starting quarterback in the pros. The Coyotes upset the Wrecking Balls, 10-9 at Stone Pony Shore on the strength of an 11-yard TD pass from Young to **Brandin Cooks** and a **Jake Moody** field goal – all points coming in the second half of a tight defensive contest. Young struggled through much of this game, as he had in his previous two games this season but was able to connect twice on crossing patterns to Cooks while **Travis Etienne** ripped off two runs of 16 and 20 yards on the game's only touchdown drive. The Wrecking Balls continue to struggle on offence at home, where they scored just 12 points in two losses. (Story inside)



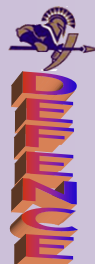
Who was slick in Week Three?

“Brylcreem” THE EFL’S FIRST SPONSOR



Jimmy Garoppolo
QB
Cowtown Corn Kings

19 of 27, 280 yds, 5 TDs, 143.5 QBR.
Money in the red zone & on 3rd down.



Tariq Woolen
CB
Pickering Spartans

3 T, 2 PD, 2 INT (45 yds – 1 TD).
Made Glads pay for throwing his way.


10
9

Trailing 9-0 late in the 3rd quarter, **Bryce Young** evaded a heavy pass rush and found **Brandin Cooks** for an 11-yard TD pass. That would be the only TD of the game for either side and it narrowed the gap to 2 points. On the Coyotes next series, Young drove his team to the New Jersey 3-yard line, from where **Jake Moody** nailed the chip shot 21-yard FG for Cobb County's first lead of the game with 11:42 left in the 4th. The Wrecking Balls turned the ball over on downs on their next two series and the Coyotes ran out the clock for the first win of the first overall pick Young's EFL Career.

10-22-2023 Stone Pony Shore Temp:1 Wind: None Line:CB by 2 MVP:Cooks HFA:ON

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Cobb County (1-2)	0	0	7	3	10
2023 New Jersey (1-2)	3	3	3	0	9

Passing

CB: Young 30/19 209 Yds TD 3 Int

NJ: Jones 28/17 127 Yds

Rushing

CB: Etienne 13/65, Strong Jr. 4/20, Young 1/9, Cook 4/7

NJ: Jones 11/56, Montgomery 10/42, Samuel 5/8

Receiving

CB: Cooks 8/90 TD, Strong Jr. 3/25, Pittman Jr. 3/47, Etienne 2/9, Musgrave 2/23

NJ: Allen 8/67, Samuel 3/23, McLaurin 2/19, Montgomery 1/4, Doubs 1/8, Hooper 1/6

Defense

CB: Kancey Sk 6-Tk, Oluokun 10-Tk, Jackson 8-Tk

NJ: Floyd Sk FF 9-Tk, Milano Int FF 4-Tk, Morrow Int 3-Tk

Injuries

CB: Adams 12, White 7, Jones 7, Woods 4

NJ: Armstead 5, Bakhtiari 4

Misc

CB: Etienne F-L, Moody 1/1 FG 21 Lg

NJ: Stevenson FR, Ryland 3/3 FG 39 Lg


7
31

Richie Grant picked off **Lamar Jackson** and returned it 23 yards for a TD to get Bruxelles off to a quick start early in the 1st. Buffalo was stuffed on 4th & 3 at the 50 on their next series, setting up a quick 20-yard TD strike to **Chris Godwin** to make it 14-0. Buffalo got on the scoreboard in the 2nd when Jackson capped a 13-play drive with a 5-yard TD pass to **Robert Woods**. That would be the entire Buffalo offence. **D'Onta Foreman** broke a 58-yard TD run to start the 2nd half and the Bomber defence would proceed to shut down the Buffalo offence the rest of the way for the blowout win.

10-22-2023 The Fortress Temp:77 Wind: Line:BRX by 21 MVP:Foreman HFA:ON

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Buffalo (1-2)	0	7	0	0	7
2023 Bruxelles (3-0)	14	3	7	7	31

Passing

BUF: Jackson 32/16 95 Yds TD Int

BRX: Fields 19/13 129 Yds TD Int

Rushing

BUF: Jackson 12/108, Dillon 17/55, Abdullah 3/1

BRX: Foreman 12/133 TD, Fields 5/47, Fournette 12/43 TD

Receiving

BUF: Gage 8/43, Abdullah 3/20, Woods 3/19 TD, Fant 2/13

BRX: Godwin 5/73 TD, Wilson 3/35, Fournette 2/3, Collins 1/6, Juszczuk 1/5

Defense

BUF: Evans 11-Tk, Sneed Int 4-Tk

BRX: Reed Sk 9-Tk, Wilson 10-Tk, Grant Int(TD) Tk

Injuries

BUF: Robinson 9

BRX:

Misc

BUF: Woods F-L

BRX: Campbell FR, Maher 1/1 FG 30 Lg



38



7

James Conner rushed for two TDs, **Matt Prater** kicked a FG, and **Patrick Mahomes** threw a 10-yard TD pass to **Gabriel Davis** in a 24-point 2nd quarter for the Violators that broke a 7-7 tie and made it 31-7. The tone was set for a blowout when the Pilots got aggressive at their own 8 with just 0:23 left in the half. **Carson Wentz** dropped back deep but was strip-sacked by **Joseph Ossai**. Virden recovered at the 2-yard to set up the last TD of the half. The Violators soft-pedaled in the 2nd half for one TD and the easy win. Seattle's score came on a 23-yard run by **Kenneth Walker III**.

10-22-2023 Kingdome Temp:70 Wind:Calm Line:VW by 10 MVP:Mahomes HFA:ON(3)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Virden (3-0)	7	24	7	0	38
2023 Seattle (1-2)	0	7	0	0	7

Passing

VW: Mahomes 42/26 289 Yds 3 TDs Int
SEA: Wentz 16/10 71 Yds TD

Rushing

VW: Conner 8/54 2 TDs, Akers 8/34, Mitchell 6/32, Mahomes 6/22, Johnson 1/4
SEA: Walker III 12/69, Hunt 4/21, Sermon 3/8, St. Brown 1/6, Deguara 2/1

Receiving

VW: Hill 6/78 TD, Conner 6/30 TD, Hockenson 5/63, Chase 4/64, Akers 3/23, Davis 2/31 TD
SEA: Walker III 3/30 TD, Lamb 2/19, Moreau 2/14, Dell 1/2, Deguara 1/4, Miller 1/3

Defense

VW: Hargrave 2-Sks 2-Tk, Judon Sk FF 4-Tk, Ossai Sk FF 2-Tk
SEA: White 10-Tk

Injuries

VW: Clark 1, James 1
SEA: Sermon 13, Lattimore 9, Collins 1

Misc

VW: Peters 2 FR, Ossai FR, Prater 1/1 FG 36 Lg
SEA: Wentz F-L, St. Brown F-L, Renfrow F-L, 2/12 3d dwn



20



10

Eddie Jackson intercepted **Kenny Pickett** on the first drive on the 2nd half, setting up a short field and the second TD run of the day for **Christian McCaffrey** to make it 14-3 for Chino. This would be all the offence the Convicts would need as the Pats responded with a 12-yard TD pass to **Travis Kelce** but nothing more to stay win-less thru 3 weeks. Through one stretch of four straight possessions, the Pats turned the ball over on downs twice near mid-field and were intercepted twice, but only the second pick led to points as **Harrison Butker** missed two FGs for the second straight week.

10-22-2023 Patriot Place Temp:75 Wind:Calm Line:CHI by 8 MVP:McCaffrey HFA:ON(

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Chino (2-1)	7	0	10	3	20
2023 Charleswood (0-3)	3	0	0	7	10

Passing

CHI: Goff 32/23 223 Yds
CHP: Pickett 36/23 219 Yds TD 2 Int

Rushing

CHI: McCaffrey 20/51 2 TDs, Jones 8/30, Goff 1/8
CHP: Dobbins 6/22, Pacheco 9/21, Pickett 2/16, Singletary 3/8, Gibson 2/2

Receiving

CHI: Campbell 7/86, Flowers 6/64, McCaffrey 5/47, Mooney 2/11, Boyd 2/15, Jones 1/0
CHP: Kelce 8/77 TD, Smith-Schuster 6/45, Singletary 3/30, Gibson 3/7, Chark 3/60

Defense

CHI: Franklin Sk 9-Tk, Gardner-Johnson Int 8-Tk, Miller Sk 7-Tk, Terrell FF 6-Tk
CHP: Rodgers FF 9-Tk, Holland FF 8-Tk, Jones 8-Tk

Injuries

CHI: Ward 1
CHP: Ojabo 11, Darby 9

Misc

CHI: McCaffrey F-L, 2/4 FG 28 Lg
CHP: Rodgers FR, Lutz 1/2 FG 31 Lg



27



29

Zach Allen sacked **Russell Wilson** on 4th & 5 at the Cubs' 28 to set up a 36-yard FG by **Younghue Koo** and make it 29-17 for Peg City in the 4th. That score would turn out to be the difference-maker in a closely fought game that saw 3 turnovers for each side. The Cubs built off two Crusader turnovers to take a 14-0 lead in the 1st, but Peg City battled back in the 3rd to capitalize on back-to-back interceptions by **Derek Carr** then Wilson to take a 26-17 lead. The Cubs' decision to go for it with 10:44 still to play ended up costing cost them as they rallied for 10 points late in the 4th but ran out of time.

10-22-2023 True North Field Temp:72 Wind:Calm

Line:ICC by 4 MVP:Meyers

HFA:

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Iowa City (2-1)	14	0	3	10	27
2023 Peg City (3-0)	0	10	16	3	29

Passing

ICC: Carr 24/15 170 Yds TD 2 Int, Wilson 17/8 90 Yds TD Int

PCC: Tannehill 35/22 283 Yds TD Int

Rushing

ICC: Johnson 8/33, Wilson 3/24, Carr 3/19 TD, Carter 3/13

PCC: Kamara 12/54, Barkley 16/53 2 TDs, Tannehill 4/18, Hasty 6/17

Receiving

ICC: Johnson 9/63 2 TDs, Njoku 4/39, Kirk 4/36, Carter 3/44, Brown 2/70, Dissly 1/8

PCC: Meyers 7/142 TD, Kamara 5/45, Barkley 4/21, Aiyuk 3/31, Sutton 3/44

Defense

ICC: Benton Int Sk 4-Tk, Anderson Jr. Sk FF 4-Tk, Taylor 12-Tk, Jewell 9-Tk

PCC: Hutchinson 2-Sks 4-Tk, Jones Sk FF 4-Tk, Rapp Int 7-Tk, Okereke 11-Tk

Injuries

ICC: Noteboom 9, Smith 7, St-Juste 4

PCC:

Misc

ICC: Noteboom FR, Smith FR, Tucker 2/4 FG 48 Lg

PCC: McCloud F-L, Tannehill F-L, Koo 3/4 FG 36 Lg



35



10

Trevor Lawrence threw 3 TD passes to 3 different receivers to lead the Triumph to their first win of the season. **Tyler Higbee** led the way in receptions, with 8 catches for 100 yards, and a TD. **Jeff Wilson** was an efficient 11 carries for 74 yards and a TD to lead the ground attack. The Bats opened with a 55-yard FG by **Ka'imi Fairbairn** and added their only TD near the end of the 1st half on a 1-yard run by **Tyjae Spears**. They were stymied the rest of the way, gaining 2 just first downs in the 2nd half. Rookie **Israel Abanikanda** scored his first career TD on a 6-yard run to cap the scoring in the 4th.

10-22-2023 Veteran Field Temp:66 Wind:Calm None

Line:TCT by 4 MVP:Lawrence

HFA:ON(

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Twin Cities (1-2)	14	7	0	14	35
2023 Billtown (0-3)	3	7	0	0	10

Passing

TCT: Lawrence 35/21 198 Yds 3 TDs

BB: Herbert 34/15 109 Yds 2 Int

Rushing

TCT: Wilson 11/74 TD, Abanikanda 8/45 TD, Lawrence 4/30, Edwards-Helaire 7/26

BB: Spears 11/59 TD, Herbert 6/44, Breida 4/19, Harris 2/10

Receiving

TCT: Higbee 8/100 TD, Moore 4/40 TD, Bryant 3/20, Wilson 2/5, Lockett 2/12 TD

BB: Kincaid 4/24, Jeudy 4/44, Watkins 2/13, Hodgins 2/14, Spears 2/8, Hardman 1/6

Defense

TCT: Sweat 2-Sks 6-Tk, Alexander Int 4-Tk, Thornhill 9-Tk

BB: Bryant 8-Tk

Injuries

TCT: Moseley 9, Maddox 6, Bradbury 2

BB: Leonard 11, Fuller 10, Williams 5, Thuney 1

Misc

TCT: McManus 0/1 FG

BB: Fairbairn 1/1 FG 55 Lg



47



24

The Blue Eagles exploded for 31 points in the 2nd quarter and went on to outscore Durham in the 2nd half to run away with a stunning upset on the road. After falling behind 10-0 in the 1st it looked as if Scarborough was destined for another bad loss, but their fortunes suddenly turned with an **Adrian Amos** interception of **Josh Allen** that set up the first of 4 TD passes on the day for **Joe Burrow**. Allen was intercepted again, **Jayden Reed** returned a punt 35 yards, and 2 chunk play TDs to **Allen Robinson** fueled the outburst. **Dalvin Cook**'s 64-yard TD run late in the 3rd left no doubt.

10-22-2023 Jurassic Park Temp:93 Wind:Calm None Line:DTL by 14 MVP:Cook HFA:ON

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Scarborough (1-2)	0	31	13	3	47
2023 Durham (2-1)	10	0	14	0	24

Passing

SBE: Burrow 22/12 145 Yds 4 TDs Int

DTL: Allen 43/20 290 Yds 3 TDs 3 Int

Rushing

SBE: Cook 25/168 2 TDs, Perine 5/33, Edwards 6/29, Burrow 4/19, Haskins 4/13

DTL: Tucker 7/27, Mattison 4/25, Allen 7/5

Receiving

SBE: Robinson 6/101 2 TDs, Cobb 3/36 TD, Perine 2/8 TD, Cook 1/0

DTL: Valdes-Scantling 6/117 2 TDs, Tucker 5/61 TD, Palmer 4/37, Knox 2/15, Samuel 1/9

Defense

SBE: Speed Sk FF 7-Tk, Hufanga Int 4-Tk, Amos Int 3-Tk, Delpit Int 3-Tk

DTL: Burns 10-Tk, Hendrickson 9-Tk, Cisco Int 3-Tk

Injuries

SBE:

DTL: Ruckert 4, Andrews 2

Misc

SBE: Crosby 2/2 FG 44 Lg, Reed 3/53 PR 35 Lg

DTL: Santos 1/1 FG 21 Lg



41



20

Jimmy Garoppolo threw 5 TD passes, 3 of those to **Christian Watson**, and the Corn Kings were an efficient 7 of 12 on 3rd down conversions to roll over the Swordfish with ease. The situation turned dire for Sebastian in the 2nd quarter with a 3-TD barrage by Cowtown, ignited by a 56-yard catch-and-run by **Allen Lazard** and followed up by TD passes of 20 and 15 yards to Watson. The home team's problems continued in the 2nd half when **Kirk Cousins** opened with an interception, setting up a 10-yard TD pass to **Mike Evans**. Cousins ended up with 366 yards passing but just 1 TD.

10-22-2023 The Fish Tank Temp:76 Wind:Calm Line:COW by 18 MVP:Garoppolo HFA:ON

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Cowtown (3-0)	3	21	14	3	41
2023 Sebastian (0-3)	0	6	6	8	20

Passing

COW: Garoppolo 27/19 280 Yds 5 TDs

SS: Cousins 55/36 366 Yds TD 2 Int

Rushing

COW: Williams 16/41, Murray 6/30, Watson 1/18, Garoppolo 3/5

SS: Chubb 14/46, Cousins 3/17, Taylor 1/11 TD

Receiving

COW: Watson 7/96 3 TDs, Lazard 4/84 TD, Evans 4/63 TD, LaPorta 2/14, Murray 1/7

SS: Peoples-Jones 9/92, Marshall Jr. 6/95, Jones 6/69 TD, Schultz 5/30, Gallup 4/28

Defense

COW: Watt 2-Sks FF 3-Tk, Banks 10-Tk, Woods Int 5-Tk, Chinn 9-Tk

SS: Jenkins FF 6-Tk

Injuries

COW: Pierce 11

SS: Johnson 6, Barr 1

Misc

COW: Slye 2/2 40 Lg

SS: Carlson 2/2 FG 50 Lg



Jalen Hurts capped the opening drive of the 2nd half with a 10-yard TD pass to **Marquise Brown**, and **Miles Sanders** reached the pylon from 4 yards out after a **Michael Carter II** interception of **Tua Tagovailoa** to give Pickering breathing room in the final frame. The breakout came after the teams battled to a 17-17 draw after two periods, with Tua throwing TD passes of 42 and 35 yards to **Amari Cooper** and Pickering's **Tariq Woolen** snaring a pick-six for the 1st half highlights. Woolen would later seal the game with another interception in the 4th, his league-leading 5th of the year.

10-22-2023 DeepWoods Off Col. Temp:86 Wind:5-15 None Line:PIC by 4 MVP:Woolen HF

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 Pickering (3-0)	10	7	14	3	34
2023 Georgia (2-1)	0	17	3	0	20

Passing

PIC: Hurts 23/15 201 Yds 2 TDs
 GEO: Tagovailoa 36/13 213 Yds 2 TDs 3 Int

Rushing

PIC: Sanders 25/130 TD, Hurts 6/26, Swift 2/13, White 3/4
 GEO: Jacobs 22/101, Stevenson 4/25, Tagovailoa 3/10

Receiving

PIC: Smith 5/84 TD, Freiermuth 4/56, Brown 4/47 TD, Ricard 1/4, James Jr. 1/10
 GEO: Cooper 4/100 2 TDs, Stevenson 3/23, Johnson 3/34, Smith-Njigba 2/53, Jacobs 1/3

Defense

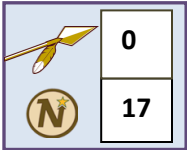
PIC: Woolen 2-Int(TD) 3-Tk, Gay FF 9-Tk
 GEO:

Injuries

PIC:
 GEO: Davis 4, Edmunds 2, Ward 2

Misc

PIC: Zuerlein 2/2 FG 42 Lg
 GEO: Bass 2/2 FG 39 Lg



George Kittle turned a 10-yard fly into a 49-yard play to set up a 5-yard TD run by **Cordarrell Patterson** and give the Stars a 10-0 lead at the half. It was the only big play of day on offence, as both defences were strong. Kittle would catch a TD late in the 3rd to finish the scoring. The North Stars were more successful in the red zone, scoring 2 TDs and a FG in 4 trips, while the Braves were turned away on their 3 red zone chances, with **Karl Joseph** missing two FG tries and **Matt Ryan** getting intercepted at the Budapest 4. **Cameron Jordan** got a sack to snuff out a 4th & 3 try at the 32.

10-22-2023 Ferenc-Liszt Int'l Temp:71 Wind:5-15 None Line:LPB by 2 MVP:Rodgers HF

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 LaPlata (1-2)	0	0	0	0	0
2023 Budapest (2-1)	3	7	7	0	17

Passing

LPB: Ryan 28/22 203 Yds Int
 BUD: Rodgers 30/21 212 Yds TD

Rushing

LPB: Mixon 15/58, Ryan 4/24, Gibbs 2/3
 BUD: Patterson 9/33 TD, Mostert 5/25, Achane 6/22, Reynolds 4/14, Rodgers 1/7

Receiving

LPB: Adams 10/116, Goedert 4/48, Gibbs 3/4, Mixon 3/21, Thielen 2/14
 BUD: Kittle 6/94 TD, Patterson 5/25, Mostert 4/11, Jefferson 3/35, Raymond 2/26

Defense

LPB: Kendricks 12-Tk
 BUD: Sutton FF 9-Tk, Jordan Sk 3-Tk

Injuries

LPB: Cominsky 2
 BUD: Williams 1

Misc

LPB: Adams F-L, Joseph 0/2 FG
 BUD: Bethel FR, Folk 1/1 FG 24 Lg



27



24

York kicker **Robbie Gould** drilled home a 44-yard FG with 1:28 left in **overtime** to lift the Excaliburs over the Cadillac and decide a see-saw contest. Erieau scored the first 17 points of the game on a TD run by **Nyheim Hines**, a FG by **Jason Myers** and a 10-yard TD pass from **Kyler Murray** to **Mark Andrews**. York responded with 17 points of their own, highlighted by **Tom Brady's** 66-yard TD pass to **Treyton Burks**. The Caddies regained the lead in the 3rd on Andrews' second TD grab of the game, only to see it matched by Brady's 4th down TD pass to **Amon-Ra St. Brown** with 1:51 left in the 4th.

10-22-2023 Kelly-Burke Field Temp:64 Wind:20-30 None Line:YOR by 22 MVP:Brady HF

	1	2	3	4	5	Tot
2023 York (2-1)	0	10	7	7	3	27
2023 Erieau (0-3)	10	7	7	0	0	24

Passing

YOR: Brady 52/34 448 Yds 3 TDs 2 Int
 ERI: Murray 45/31 228 Yds 2 TDs Int

Rushing

YOR: Henry 18/58
 ERI: Harris 10/43, Pierce 9/36, Murray 3/24, Hines 3/11 TD

Receiving

YOR: St. Brown 9/105 TD, Burks 7/146 TD, Williams 7/100 TD, Kmet 5/48, Davis 4/44
 ERI: Waddle 7/95, Andrews 7/51 2 TDs, Pierce 6/20, Higgins 5/36, Henry 2/15

Defense

YOR: Gary 2-Sks 4-Tk, Holcomb 9-Tk, Guy Sk 4-Tk, Byard Int 4-Tk, Buckner Sk 3-Tk
 ERI: Houston Int 2-Sks 2-FF 6-Tk, Blackmon Int 6-Tk, Jones Sk 5-Tk, Forbes Jr. 8-Tk

Injuries

YOR: Mathis 12, Zuniga 11, Holcomb 8, Ojulari 7, Addison 3
 ERI: Robinson 13, Bosa 9

Misc

YOR: Gould 2/3 FG 44 Lg
 ERI: Myers 1/1 FG 37 Lg



17



34

Linebacker **Isaiah Simmons** intercepted **Jacoby Brissett** twice in the 1st half and **Austin Ekeler** scored TDs on a 20-yard screen and a 1-yard dive to key a 27-point Hawks eruption in the 1st half. Brooklin led 27-0 before the Irish finally got on the board with a 4-yard scramble by Brissett at the 0:50 mark of the 2nd. Ekeler would score his 3rd TD of the game late in the 3rd quarter on a 10-yard run that put Brooklin up 34-10 and in total control going into the 4th. **Geno Smith** threw for 270 yards in his best performance of the year to date. **Drake London** had 8 catches for 132 yards and a long of 47.

10-22-2023 Hawkeye Park Temp:66 Wind:0-5 None Line:EE by 6 MVP:Ekeler HFA:ON(2)

	1	2	3	4	Tot
2023 East Elmhurst (1-2)	0	7	3	7	17
2023 Brooklin (1-2)	10	17	7	0	34

Passing

EE: Brissett 34/23 206 Yds 2 Int
 BRH: Smith 29/20 270 Yds TD

Rushing

EE: Brown 11/49, Knight 11/12 TD, Charbonnet 4/7, Brissett 2/3 TD, Watt 2/3
 BRH: Ekeler 10/49 2 TDs, Davis 6/42, Robinson 3/14 TD, Smith 2/13

Receiving

EE: Metcalf 8/91, Jones 5/29, Granson 3/24, Johnston 3/26, Charbonnet 2/7
 BRH: London 8/132, Engram 4/55, Ekeler 3/34 TD, Hollins 3/40, Conklin 1/6, Jefferson 1/7

Defense

EE: Bland FF 8-Tk
 BRH: Simmons 2-Int 9-Tk, Hubbard Sk 4-Tk, Tranquill 8-Tk

Injuries

EE:
 BRH: Paye 3, Al-Shaair 2

Misc

EE: Piniero 1/2 FG 29 Lg
 BRH: Bullock 2/2 FG 29 Lg



WEEK THREE

STANDINGS & STATS

2023 EFL - Week 3 Standings

East	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Bruxelles	3	0	0	1.000	W3	87	29.0	27	9.0	20.0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0
Buffalo	1	2	0	.333	L2	38	12.7	78	26.0	-13.3	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 2 0
Cobb County	1	2	0	.333	W1	40	13.3	67	22.3	-9.0	0 1 0	1 1 0	1 2 0
New Jersey	1	2	0	.333	L1	43	14.3	51	17.0	-2.7	0 2 0	0 2 0	1 2 0
Central	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Virden	3	0	0	1.000	W3	110	36.7	34	11.3	25.3	2 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0
Peg City	3	0	0	1.000	W3	82	27.3	67	22.3	5.0	1 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0
Twin Cities	1	2	0	.333	W1	83	27.7	76	25.3	2.3	0 1 0	0 1 0	1 2 0
Charleswood	0	3	0	.000	L3	47	15.7	82	27.3	-11.7	0 2 0	0 1 0	0 3 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Iowa City	2	1	0	.667	L1	71	23.7	70	23.3	0.3	1 0 0	2 0 0	2 1 0
Chino	2	1	0	.667	W1	78	26.0	44	14.7	11.3	1 0 0	1 1 0	2 1 0
Seattle	1	2	0	.333	L1	30	10.0	79	26.3	-16.3	1 1 0	1 1 0	1 2 0
Billtown	0	3	0	.000	L3	34	11.3	68	22.7	-11.3	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 3 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Cowtown	3	0	0	1.000	W3	84	28.0	43	14.3	13.7	1 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0
Durham	2	1	0	.667	L1	89	29.7	81	27.0	2.7	1 1 0	1 1 0	2 1 0
Scarborough	1	2	0	.333	W1	73	24.3	77	25.7	-1.3	0 2 0	1 1 0	1 2 0
Sebastian	0	3	0	.000	L3	37	12.3	107	35.7	-23.3	0 1 0	0 2 0	0 3 0
Coastal	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Pickering	3	0	0	1.000	W3	108	36.0	51	17.0	19.0	2 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0
York	2	1	0	.667	W1	94	31.3	71	23.7	7.7	0 1 0	1 0 0	2 1 0
Budapest	2	1	0	.667	W2	63	21.0	56	18.7	2.3	1 0 0	0 1 0	2 1 0
Brooklin	1	2	0	.333	W1	61	20.3	72	24.0	-3.7	1 1 0	0 1 0	1 2 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Stk	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Georgia	2	1	0	.667	L1	85	28.3	70	23.3	5.0	1 1 0	2 0 0	2 1 0
LaPlata	1	2	0	.333	L2	44	14.7	54	18.0	-3.3	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 2 0
East Elmhurst	1	2	0	.333	L1	51	17.0	84	28.0	-11.0	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 2 0
Erieau	0	3	0	.000	L3	66	22.0	89	29.7	-7.7	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 3 0

Rushing		G	Att	Yds	Avg	Gain	10	25	50	FD	Lg	Td	Att/G	Yds/G	
1	Henry	YOR	3	77	377	4.9	74.0	6	0	0	18	79	4	25.7	125.7
2	Sanders	PIC	3	71	344	4.8	84.5	12	0	0	19	18	4	23.7	114.7
3	Cook	SBE	3	58	294	5.1	81.0	7	0	0	15	64	3	19.3	98.0
4	Jacobs	GEO	3	66	286	4.3	86.4	8	0	0	14	23	1	22.0	95.3
5	Wilson	TCT	3	34	244	7.2	79.4	8	0	0	11	52	2	11.3	81.3
6	McCaffrey	CHI	3	57	232	4.1	75.4	3	0	0	15	46	3	19.0	77.3
7	Jackson	BUF	3	34	225	6.6	76.5	9	0	0	10	28	0	11.3	75.0
8	Foreman	BRX	3	44	220	5.0	75.0	6	0	0	9	58	1	14.7	73.3
9	Walker III	SEA	3	44	204	4.6	79.5	8	0	0	9	25	1	14.7	68.0
10	Kamara	PCC	3	34	199	5.9	85.3	7	0	0	9	27	1	11.3	66.3
11	Williams	COW	3	53	192	3.6	75.5	5	0	0	11	34	1	17.7	64.0
12	Conner	VV	3	36	188	5.2	86.1	4	0	0	11	23	4	12.0	62.7
13	Robinson	BRH	3	32	188	5.9	90.6	3	0	0	11	53	1	10.7	62.7
14	Etienne	CB	3	35	182	5.2	68.6	7	0	0	8	45	0	11.7	60.7
15	Jones	NJ	3	33	181	5.5	81.8	7	0	0	14	21	1	11.0	60.3
16	Dillon	BUF	3	42	151	3.6	78.6	4	0	0	10	16	1	14.0	50.3
17	Murray	COW	3	28	147	5.3	89.3	5	0	0	7	21	0	9.3	49.0
18	Mahomes	VV	3	15	147	9.8	93.3	8	0	0	7	20	0	5.0	49.0
19	Chubb	SS	3	43	144	3.3	81.4	3	0	0	8	15	1	14.3	48.0
20	Mixon	LPB	3	44	144	3.3	77.3	2	0	0	9	14	2	14.7	48.0
21	Johnson	ICC	3	30	135	4.5	93.3	5	0	0	9	15	1	10.0	45.0
22	Pickett	CHP	3	15	134	8.9	93.3	5	0	0	10	21	1	5.0	44.7
23	Montgomery	NJ	3	35	129	3.7	91.4	3	0	0	5	11	0	11.7	43.0
24	Mostert	BUD	3	23	126	5.5	82.6	3	0	0	7	16	1	7.7	42.0
25	Fields	BRX	3	23	123	5.3	73.9	6	0	0	9	26	1	7.7	41.0
26	Barkley	PCC	3	44	123	2.8	84.1	1	0	0	5	13	2	14.7	41.0
27	Hurts	PIC	3	24	120	5.0	79.2	6	0	0	12	28	2	8.0	40.0
28	Allen	DTL	3	22	120	5.5	68.2	5	0	0	5	21	0	7.3	40.0
29	Patterson	BUD	2	16	118	7.4	87.5	2	0	0	6	39	2	8.0	59.0
30	Pierce	ERI	3	29	118	4.1	79.3	4	0	0	7	15	1	9.7	39.3
31	Spears	BB	3	21	113	5.4	90.5	4	0	0	9	16	1	7.0	37.7
32	Harris	ERI	3	26	111	4.3	84.6	3	0	0	7	14	1	8.7	37.0
33	Ekeler	BRH	3	23	105	4.6	95.7	3	0	0	7	12	3	7.7	35.0
34	Murray	ERI	3	16	104	6.5	93.8	3	0	0	10	28	0	5.3	34.7
35	White	PIC	3	19	91	4.8	68.4	2	0	0	4	29	1	6.3	30.3
36	Jones	CHI	3	21	91	4.3	61.9	5	0	0	7	12	1	7.0	30.3
37	Fournette	BRX	2	24	91	3.8	87.5	2	0	0	5	10	1	12.0	45.5
38	Samuel	NJ	3	14	90	6.4	92.9	1	0	0	3	57	0	4.7	30.0
39	Allgeier	DTL	2	30	86	2.9	70.0	1	0	0	3	14	1	15.0	43.0
40	Dobbins	CHP	3	24	85	3.5	83.3	2	0	0	5	13	0	8.0	28.3
41	Brissett	EE	3	18	83	4.6	83.3	3	0	0	6	13	1	6.0	27.7
42	Pacheco	CHP	3	34	82	2.4	70.6	0	0	0	3	9	0	11.3	27.3
43	Huntley	EE	2	23	82	3.6	87.0	2	0	0	8	15	1	11.5	41.0
44	Stevenson	GEO	3	22	81	3.7	68.2	1	0	0	4	16	0	7.3	27.0
45	Knight	EE	3	27	77	2.9	66.7	2	0	0	6	15	1	9.0	25.7

Receiving		G	No	Dp	Att	Rac	Yds	Avg	25	50	FD	Lg	Td	Rec/G	Yds/G
1 Adams	LPB	3	24	0	34	76	419	17.5	4	0	15	62	1	8.0	139.7
2 Metcalf	EE	3	24	1	31	30	268	11.2	1	0	15	26	1	8.0	89.3
3 Jeudy	BB	3	21	2	29	35	194	9.2	0	0	13	17	0	7.0	64.7
4 Hill	VV	3	19	2	33	94	372	19.6	5	0	14	60	3	6.3	124.0
5 Kelce	CHP	3	19	2	27	51	203	10.7	0	0	14	18	1	6.3	67.7
6 London	BRH	3	18	2	28	54	285	15.8	3	0	15	47	0	6.0	95.0
7 Peoples-Jones	SS	3	18	0	31	18	227	12.6	1	0	13	31	0	6.0	75.7
8 Waddle	ERI	3	18	2	31	37	250	13.9	1	0	12	28	0	6.0	83.3
9 Andrews	ERI	3	18	2	24	36	148	8.2	0	0	8	24	2	6.0	49.3
10 Allen	NJ	3	18	0	26	14	110	6.1	0	0	10	14	2	6.0	36.7
11 Higbee	TCT	3	18	4	27	43	197	10.9	1	0	12	26	2	6.0	65.7
12 Jefferson	BUD	3	17	1	28	34	210	12.4	1	0	10	30	1	5.7	70.0
13 Hodgins	BB	3	17	2	27	18	169	9.9	1	0	5	29	0	5.7	56.3
14 Godwin	BRX	3	16	0	19	69	233	14.6	3	0	11	29	2	5.3	77.7
15 Jones	SS	3	16	0	27	61	167	10.4	2	0	8	34	1	5.3	55.7
16 Campbell	CHI	3	16	0	20	25	178	11.1	1	0	13	29	0	5.3	59.3
17 Gage	BUF	3	16	1	33	19	114	7.1	0	0	10	17	2	5.3	38.0
18 Cooks	CB	3	16	1	28	61	228	14.3	2	0	11	48	1	5.3	76.0
19 Burks	YOR	3	16	1	23	163	283	17.7	2	0	8	66	1	5.3	94.3
20 Moore	TCT	3	16	3	29	28	184	11.5	1	0	13	28	2	5.3	61.3
21 Kmet	YOR	3	16	0	26	18	145	9.1	0	0	8	20	0	5.3	48.3
22 St. Brown	YOR	3	15	0	24	28	153	10.2	0	0	8	21	1	5.0	51.0
23 Lazard	COW	3	15	0	21	89	231	15.4	1	0	11	56	2	5.0	77.0
24 Valdes-Scantlin	DTL	3	15	2	18	63	258	17.2	3	0	12	33	3	5.0	86.0
25 Robinson	SBE	3	15	0	18	22	159	10.6	2	0	8	29	2	5.0	53.0
26 Ekeler	BRH	3	15	0	20	117	73	4.9	0	0	3	20	2	5.0	24.3
27 Pittman Jr.	CB	3	14	0	24	28	185	13.2	0	0	9	24	0	4.7	61.7
28 Thielen	LPB	3	14	0	20	13	100	7.1	0	0	5	10	1	4.7	33.3
29 Williams	YOR	3	14	0	28	39	185	13.2	1	0	11	31	2	4.7	61.7
30 Kamara	PCC	3	14	1	19	137	118	8.4	0	0	5	24	1	4.7	39.3
31 Chase	VV	3	14	1	22	27	193	13.8	1	0	13	25	1	4.7	64.3
32 Samuel	NJ	3	14	0	15	59	130	9.3	1	0	9	40	0	4.7	43.3
33 Kirk	ICC	3	14	1	22	34	155	11.1	1	0	8	31	1	4.7	51.7
34 Goedert	LPB	3	14	1	21	89	192	13.7	2	0	11	37	0	4.7	64.0
35 Flowers	CHI	3	13	1	20	26	140	10.8	0	0	9	21	1	4.3	46.7
36 Boyd	CHI	3	13	1	18	12	153	11.8	0	0	8	17	1	4.3	51.0
37 Schultz	SS	3	13	1	25	5	83	6.4	0	0	1	9	0	4.3	27.7
38 Kincaid	BB	3	13	0	17	6	70	5.4	0	0	3	8	0	4.3	23.3
39 McCaffrey	CHI	3	13	1	23	109	92	7.1	1	0	6	26	2	4.3	30.7
40 Johnson	GEO	3	13	2	26	36	176	13.5	0	0	11	24	3	4.3	58.7
41 Lamb	SEA	3	12	0	17	14	162	13.5	1	0	9	29	0	4.0	54.0
42 Johnson	ICC	3	12	0	16	59	83	6.9	1	0	3	25	2	4.0	27.7
43 Evans	COW	3	12	4	24	40	164	13.7	1	0	8	27	2	4.0	54.7
44 Cooper	GEO	3	12	1	21	23	228	19.0	2	0	12	42	3	4.0	76.0
45 Kittle	BUD	3	12	0	15	59	146	12.2	1	0	4	49	1	4.0	48.7



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad

NEW YORK – Week Three is in the books. We are already approximately 22/125th of the way through the 17-game schedule. Geez, the season does fly by, doesn't it?

The three-game mark is an early milestone on the trip to the Gale Sayers Game. It's like the first fuel and rest stop on a long trip – only the people who forgot to fill up, or go to the bathroom, or didn't pack snacks for the kids, or brought their pet and had it puke in the car in the first mile stop at this rest stop. In other words, travellers who weren't prepared. In EFL terms, these would be the 0-3 teams. Those who packed the night before, filled up the tank, went to the bathroom twice just to make sure, packed an entire cooler with juice and snacks, and gave their pet Gravol probably don't even see or acknowledge the first fuel and rest stop. They just blow by it happily while their kids in the back seat sing the "wheels on the bus" song. In EFL terms, these would be the 3-0 teams.

For everyone else, the three-game mark brings either a measure of optimism (2-1) or pessimism (1-2). Unless your team was a rare exception and played to a tie, a win and a loss in the first three weeks, there is no middle, neutral wait-and-see option to park your over-active football emotions. At Week Three your team is one of a darker or lighter shade of "winner" or "loser." Period.

BROOPICK1821 CLUB

It is a popular trope, especially on *Sirius XM EFL Network*, to quote every year at this time the miniscule percentage of teams that have gone to the playoffs after starting 0-3. This is presented to listeners as if the fact of the 0-3 start poses a kind of inherent barrier to making the playoffs, as opposed to the reality that an 0-3 start is often a sign of a bad team that never had much hope of making the playoffs to begin with. Since 2016, the year of the last expansion and the addition of a wildcard duel for the 4th seed, 26 teams have started 0-3. Only two of those, Brooklin (2018) and Pickering (2021), made the playoffs. Both ended up finishing 10-6 and losing in the wildcard game. That is a rate of 7.6%. But in those two rare cases, the teams involved were decent teams that got off to bad starts and eventually found their game. The other 24 in the 0-3 group turned out to be a sorry lot, with the sole exception of Charleswood (2018), a squad that partially recovered to finish 9-7, but out of the wildcard game.

Let's look at this year's 0-3 teams and see if any of them look capable of stringing together enough wins to join the BrooPick1821 Club:

Charleswood Patriots – This is a young team with a lot of talent and not much experience. *Travis Kelce* and *Laken Tomlinson* are the only players on the roster who have reached the age of 30. The Pats have shown a measure of in-game resilience so far, but a disappointing three-game showing by sophomore *Kenny Pickett* is keeping them from realizing their limited potential. Charleswood was never going to win the Central and, frankly, the team looks like a longshot to finish with a better than 500 record. *Probability of joining BrooPick1821: < 2.5%.*

Billtown Bats – Last year's West Division champs were in the pre-season discussion to repeat this year. This was due to the division being weak, optimism that *Justin Herbert* would make the offence right and that stars *Demario Davis* and *Pat Surtain II* would take charge of the defence and somehow make it good enough to shut down the middle-of-the-road teams. None of this has happened so far, although the defence has played respectably. The offence is tragic and there are legitimate concerns that Herbert will be ruined by his experience trying to run a **Stephen Michael** version of **Steve Spurrier's** "Fun 'N Gun" offence. Still, in a weak division where their main competition will also lose their share, there is hope. *Probability of joining BrooPick1821: ~7.6%.*

Sebastian Swordfish – The Fish did not do anything to change their losing formula during the off-season. They continue to try and outpace their neglected defence with what is now being referred to on Florida's East Coast as the "Lemon" Offence – a defective punt-averse system featuring two of the best workhorse-running backs in football acting primarily as decoys for a pass-happy gang of sea raiders captained by *Kirk Cousins*. **Russ Lemmon's** "Lemon" system only works against bad to average teams and only when it gets lucky. More often it creates losses. A team this random always has a hope in Hell, however – especially in a frail division. *Probability of joining BrooPick1821: <1.5%*

Erieau Cadillac – This is the first of many historical 0-3 versions of the Cadillac that does not belong in this group. Of all the win-less teams, the Caddies are the only one still largely intact from their division win last year. So, what is the problem this year? *Kyler Murray* is taking much of the deserved blame for the offence sliding into the ditch, but the problems extend to a defence that has severely underperformed as a unit, especially the secondary. Erieau has some of the best cornerback talent in the league yet is ranked 23rd in passing yards surrendered per game and are dead last in touchdown percentage. They have the talent to rebound, but the problem is that stiff competition across the conference will make it a steep climb. *Probability of joining BrooPick1821: ~7.6%.*

The annual 0-3 discussion point in the mainstream media does not have a corollary for teams that start 3-0. Not that those teams aren't talked about – they are at the center of sports talk conversation. But starting 3-0 is not a “thing” like starting 0-3 is.

It's a subtle point I am making so I will spell it out for the ADD crowd:

The clean slate at the beginning of the season creates the illusion of hope for all 24 teams. It is true, even for most feeble looking of teams, that at the start of the season their fans harbour, deep in their hearts, a faint and secret hope that a Hollywood Happy Ending will be bestowed upon them by the Football Gods (yes, they exist!) It is at the symbolic three-week mark when the human brain starts to recognize patterns and project accordingly. 0-3 means, for fans, the life-support phase right before the Death of Hope at 0-4 – for *no team* has come back from 0-4 to make the playoffs. For the four teams I have profiled above, this is the final week of Hope.

#1 FOR #1

The pressure on the No.1 overall pick of the EFL Draft is arguably the most pressure a pro athlete can face. When that pick is a quarterback, his performance is under microscopic scrutiny from everyone. Everyone.

The decision to draft **Bryce Young** is under particular scrutiny in Cobb County. The team is in the second phase of a rebuild, but intense pressure from the Gridiron Secret Society to compete now forced coach and GM, **Eron Osman** to acquire just enough complementary pieces to make it feasible for a top tier No.1 pick to succeed in his first season.

Through two weeks, the Coyotes' franchise quarterback had not looked remotely like a top tier quarterback. After leading a masterful 93-yard drive and finishing it with a nifty side-step and checkdown to **Luke Musgrave** for an 8-yard touchdown pass to take a 10-0 lead early in their Week One blowout loss to Buffalo, it had been all downhill for the rookie since. The memory of that moment of adrenaline-induced exhilaration at the start of the season had been all but buried under bone-headed errors and the losses that followed. Now, the Coyotes were heading to New Jersey to face a good Wrecking Balls defence coming off a throttling of the Triumph.

While the kid had not been written off yet heading into Week Three, expectations were no longer high. Instead, there was nervous anxiety and a whiff of burgeoning anger in the air – anger born of fading hope and frustration directed primarily at the GM, who could have had any rookie in the class and chose this undersized and untested protégé of a privileged Alabama program. It didn't matter that the football world had collectively lauded Osman at the time for making the “smart” choice, it was now already clear that anything negative that had been said about Young before the draft was in fact true and should have been known. It was also turning into accepted wisdom that any of the other top quarterbacks in the draft – **C.J. Stroud, Anthony Richardson, Will Levis** – would have been better than Young. That none of these highly prized rookies had played a down yet was beside the point.

Winning has a way of making everything look and taste better. It doesn't matter much *how* victory is achieved. All that matters in the end is victory. Although the no.1 pick in the draft did not look any better at Stone Pony Shore in Week Three, in fact a little worse than he had looked in his team's first two losses, the fact that he won 10-9 and threw the game's only touchdown pass in the process, put a different spin on his performance. Young proved he could win in this league – he was magically transformed into a “winner.”

'#1 for #1!' was blazoned on the first page of the sports section of *North America Today*. ESPN Sports Central led with the highlight of Young dodging then sprinting away from Wrecking Ball lineman **Dorance Armstrong** and throwing a dart on the fly, the spiral threading a narrow gap between two linebackers to find the hands of **Brandin Cooks** streaking across the middle for the game's only touchdown. *“He Found a Way”* was the common awestruck mantra chanted across the mainstream media landscape – as if it had been scripted by a central editorial board.

Young's three interceptions were hardly mentioned, nor was the strip sack by **Leonard Floyd** that would have placed the Coyotes' fragile one-point lead in jeopardy late in the game had Young not recovered his own fumble on a fortunate bounce back. When one or more of those foibles did get mentioned, it was to frame his lone touchdown pass as a stoic, bordering on heroic, rebound. *“He Overcame Adversity”* was the universal finding, showing in the process that he is a *“True Leader.”* The final assessment: *“This is What You Want from Your Franchise Quarterback.”*

Sorry, Mainstream Minions of the Corporate Narrative...that's not what I want from my franchise quarterback! I am one of those columnists who pays attention to *how* games are won, or lost, and I tend to look at the beaten team as always having a role in their own demise. I also look at more than the play of the quarterback. All the same, it was hard not to focus on Wrecking Ball quarterback **Daniel Jones** as he stood, frozen in the pocket, clueless as to who he should throw to and taking 5 sacks and an additional 6 hits. The Jersey offensive line is not great, I know, but can they be expected to keep the pocket clean for 5 seconds while Jones deciphers the route trees of mostly short to medium throws? And where was the running game that last week that so thoroughly controlled the pace against the Triumph? The Coyotes saw **Deebo Samuel** coming a mile away and Jones stubbornly refused to use his legs as much as he could have. Had the Wrecking Balls been remotely competent on offence, Young's three interceptions would have been the postgame talking point, because the Coyotes would have certainly lost.

When two teams combine for 19 points in a game, and its not played in a torrential downpour, it is hard to find any offensive heroes. Yet, if we single out who deserves equal credit for putting Young in position to throw his national highlight reel touchdown pass, we should be talking first about **Travis Etienne**, who peeled off runs of 20 and 16 yards on the drive; then about Cooks, who sold the same pattern twice on the same drive to get wide open enough for a panicky rookie to see him and pull the trigger on completions of 15 yards and the 11-yard score. Cooks performed the same route-running magic on the following game-winning field goal drive, creating a window for Young to move the ball through the air and play a role in setting up **Jake Moody** for the 21-yard chippy.

These two drives came on back-to-back possessions in the 3rd and 4th quarters and constituted the entire meaningful offensive



Durham Thunder Lizards' coach, **George Kaldis**, turns to speak to wide receiver **Cooper Kupp**, but is rebuffed by the All-Pro wide receiver. The Durham coach elected to sit a healthy Kupp in a Week Three loss to the Blue Eagles, citing "preservation" as the reason. Kupp, never a healthy scratch in his career, is reportedly angry, while the Durham coach cannot satisfactorily rationalize his decision.

output of Young and the Coyotes on this day, one that fortuitously for the Coyotes saw the Wrecking Balls look every bit as bad on the offensive side of the ball as they had in Week One.

I am still trying to figure out **Daniel Jones**. Over three weeks he has been unproductive twice in front of the home crowd, while playing lights out in a hostile road environment in Twin Cities. Perhaps the people who see him daily, his coach and team owner, **Jeff Cohen**, already sense something fragile in his psyche at home. Cohen took the unprecedented step of having his team wear their white jerseys at home this week, perhaps playing on the "lucky jersey" angle or trying to simulate the road environment. Who knows? All the talk is revolving around **Bryce Young** in the postgame space this week and glaring faults in the New Jersey game do not assist the desired narrative of a highly touted rookie coming of age so early in the season.

I don't know why the narrative builders are desperate for Young to be a success. Maybe it's because of all that hype they poured on him before the draft. They would look stupid if he turned out a total bust. Perhaps it's just a story they always planned to run with, and they saw this as their first, and maybe only chance to run it. I think they jumped the gun. I say this not because I think Young will be a bust, but because I see a long, hard developmental road for him this year in a tough conference. I am glad he got his first win – it will ease some of the oppressive burden of expectations that comes with being a quarterback selected number one overall. But if he continues to throw interceptions at a pace of more than two per game, there will not be many more of these happy endings.

OF TOAST AND TEA

While it was a happy ending to a poorly written story in New Jersey, there was a surprise and unbelievable ending north of the border...

At Jurassic Park in Durham, the defending Gale Sayers champions lost in infuriating and humiliating fashion to one of the league's laughingstock franchises. The Blue Eagles detonated for 31 points in the second quarter on their way to a stunning 47-24 victory. The sellout crowd in Durham was at first baffled, then enraged at the result. They unleashed an outpouring of boos and catcalls at the sound of the gun as the players slipped off the field into the tunnel ahead of Coach **George Kaldis**, who tramped hurriedly behind, his clipboard grasped tightly in his hand. The chorus of derision reached a crescendo as he approached the exit and carried on for several minutes after he disappeared from view.

Three weeks into the defence of their league crown, the honeymoon was already over in Durham. It was a rare display of rage from the normally even-keeled Durham fans. In fact, nobody could remember this much fan displeasure before. The coach was the principal focus of the fans' ire, although **Josh Allen** took his share as well, for throwing 3 interceptions for the second game in a row. In defence of the Lizards' MVP, however, he did not deliberately throw those interceptions. He was trying to make plays without his top wide receiver **Cooper Kupp**. Coach Kaldis on the other hand, committed his great sin consciously and deliberately, for reasons that nobody can understand.

What was that sin? For the second straight week, Kaldis elected to rest many of his top players for fear of injury – not because

they *were* injured, but because they *might* get injured. If there is any logic to this, it is of the kind one finds in the pre-season, when coaches elect to balance getting into game shape with ensuring a healthy starting lineup for the start of the season. In the regular season, this logic no longer applies, but in the case of the Durham coach, it lingers and seems to apply to teams he considers inferior. Scarborough, a chronic basket case, was no more than a pre-season scrimmage in the mind of Coach Kaldis; but unlike York the week before, Coach **Kyle Shanahan** and his close advisor, owner **Chris Dickinson**, made Kaldis pay the price for his conceit.

It was hideous to watch. **Joe Burrow** threw 4 touchdown passes against a secondary missing **Kenny Moore** and **Justin Simmons**. Burrow had plenty of time to throw because **Brian Burns**, **Chase Young** and **DJ Reader** were on the sideline – dressed but idle. The Blue Eagles’ offensive line – probably the best single unit on the team – beat up what was left of the Durham line, injuring **Chandler Jones** in the process (who might have wondered bitterly as he was carted off the field why he hadn’t been considered important enough to rest) and paving the way for 266 rushing yards, 168 of those by **Dalvin Cook**. The Blue Eagle defence, one **Nick Bosa** and **Talanoa Hufanga** away from being the worst in the league, held back-up running backs **Sean Tucker** and **Alexander Mattison** to 52 yards, while rookie sensation **Tyler Allgeier** sat on the bench, pouting. And it was obvious that the other big reason Allen was off his game was the forced absence of starting tackles, **Terron Armstead** and **Jack Conklin**, which left rookie **Cody Mauch** watching the blindside while **Tyre Phillips** stumbled and lurched trying to hold back **Dante Fowler Jr** on the right side. It was, by far, the most life we have seen from the Blue Eagles in at least two years and the most confused and disconcerted we have seen the Lizards since their exit in their playoff exit in 2021. The delight the Blue Eagles took in hammering their punch-drunk opponent was shocking, but understandable.

After the game, a stunned and unfocused **George Kaldis** mumbled at the podium about this being “the worst loss in Durham history” and stammered some nonsense about somebody named “Koch,” but, when faced with the pointed question about why he had once again benched so many starters, he reiterated his remarks of Week Two: “I wanted to save their games.” This did not go over well with the media, or the fans. One Whitby blogger suggested it might be time to send Kaldis on a sabbatical – not a firing – but a retreat so that he can find his marbles.

According to insiders in Durham, the legendary Durham coach – the only one in franchise history – has changed since celebrating his first championship win. Once animated, quick to anger, often tense, but possessing a sharp wit and provocative sense of humour, Kaldis is gradually becoming a bit of a recluse, spending hours in his office with the door shut, and limiting his interaction with players and his assistants. In one of his few “public” moments, he has started to take breakfast at the team facility in Jurassic Park. He comes at the same time each morning, sits in the far corner of the cafeteria, in the same chair, at the same table, facing the wall.

A team source who did not want to be identified describes some of his recently bizarre behaviour: “*He’s got this weird ritual now,*” explains the source. “*He comes in at 6:32 every morning – 6:32 exactly, as it appears on the clock on the far wall. He takes a tray from the stack, slides it on the rack all the way to the end past all the food choices until he reaches the bread. He takes two pieces of white bread – always white – and puts them one at a time in one of those rotating toaster ovens. He won’t let the server touch the bread or help him toast it. He puts the bread through three cycles until it’s almost black, then he puts it on a plate – doesn’t put anything on it. He pours hot water into a cup, grabs a tea bag and walks to his table, where he sits down, pulls out his laptop, and begins his toast and tea ritual. First, he cuts each piece of toast into eight smaller pieces – cutting diagonally then across. He stacks these on top of each other by shape but turns the pointy ends out. Then he opens his tea bag and stabs the cup of water with it. That’s the only word I can think of. He doesn’t dip it, he kind of stabs it, jabs it, three sometimes four times. Three or four, no more, no less. I don’t know why sometimes it’s three and sometimes its four. Then he dips the first piece of toast in the tea, using the same stabbing motion, and eats slowly while he concentrates on his laptop. A couple of guys have tried to get close to see what he’s doing, but he senses them coming and gets mad. We don’t know what he’s looking at on the laptop, but guys say they hear this artificial crowd noise, and one guy heard a tinny sounding organ playing the national anthem once. Nobody wants to ask him about it because he gets angry about that.*”

I reprint the transcript in detail, hoping that one of my readers with psychiatric credentials will read it carefully and send me a diagnosis. This is mostly for my interest but if you can prove your credentials to me, I am more than happy to print your findings off the record. I really need to know if the Durham coach is some kind of mad genius, or simply going mad.

AROUND THE EFL

I found this an interesting week – not very exciting, nor generally well played, but interesting. The Excaliburs’ overtime win over the Cadillac was very tense for both sides, for different reasons. The Crusaders’ win was surprisingly close and mildly controversial at the end. The two games I was most interested in: Georgia versus Pickering and Budapest versus LaPlata, were not close but were instructive all the same. Most of the rest of the action was of the filler type. Here is what I think of them all...

At Kelly-Burke Field, the Excaliburs weathered the swirling winds off the Erieau spit to prevail in overtime, 27-24 over the Cadillac. This struggle was ‘game of the week’ material except that it involved Erieau and York, two teams fading from the EFL fans’ map of *Teams that Matter*. It has been a precipitous fall back into obscurity for Erieau, a team that just last year won their division. For York, disillusionment and irrelevancy has built up gradually, over the course of last year’s “lost season” and continuing skepticism that this year’s edition is any better in a division that has become much stronger – last week’s failure to stick it to the Thunder Lizards’ backups only reinforced this doubt. So, this was a game neither team could afford to lose, for different reasons. They both gave it their best effort, but in the end, **Tom Brady**’s 448 pass yards and 3 touchdowns carried the day over **Kyler Murray**’s modest 228 yards and 2 touchdowns. Brady showed resilience against a strong Erieau pass rush that sacked him 6 times and pressured him into 2 interceptions. That Caddie defence was a boon to the Erieau offence, setting up short fields that Murray’s short arm was able to conquer. While the Erieau offence scored a season-high 24 points, it struggled to sustain drives. In the end, the Excaliburs’ capacity to move the chains put

kicker **Robbie Gould** in position with a tail wind at his back to boot a 44-yard game-winner with 1:28 left in overtime.

At True North Field in Winnipeg, the Crusaders overcame a pair of first quarter turnovers and rode a 16-point wave in the third quarter to survive the Cubs, 29-27. By every common metric, including the unscientific “eyeball test,” this was Peg City’s game to lose...and lose it they almost did. The Cubs, as they did against Chino last week, took full advantage of the openings provided by two Peg City turnovers and a blocked punt, all in their own territory, which set up the Cubs for two short touchdown drives and a three-and-out field goal with 1:50 left in the 4th quarter. It was this last field goal that had **Archibald Thacker** of the *Des Moines Register* second-guessing coach **Deron Redding**. The field goal, coming on 4th & 8 at the Peg City 30, narrowed the Cubs’ deficit to 2 points, but a stop, or a successful recovery of an onside kick, would then be required to earn a chance to try and save the game with another field goal. The kick was a conservative decision – not necessarily the wrong one just because “analytics” would say to go for the first down there. The Peg City defence was looking for redemption after giving up a touchdown minutes earlier was playing tough. It would have been a difficult conversion. But Thacker is all over Redding for putting the game in the hands of his young and incapable defence, to which he has a point. Monday morning is the best time to be a quarterback. With this win, Peg City keeps pace with the Violators at the top of the Central. They face Cowtown next week in an inter-conference match-up between two perfect teams.

At DeepWoods Off Coliseum in Richmond Hill, GA, the up-and-coming Gladiators could not keep up with the heavy metal Spartans through a full 60 minutes, cramping up in the second half to fall by the conclusive score of 34-20. This was one of the games I was interested in. The Glads are no doubt vastly improved over last year. They have and will continue to pose a challenge. But the Spartans are a year ahead of them on their road to a championship and occupy the ‘elite’ tier of EFL teams in 2023. In measuring up to the Spartan standard, **Tua Tagovailoa** and the Glads fell short – trading blows and fighting to a draw in the first half but losing their grip in the second half. Tua threw two interceptions to kill Georgia drives in the second half, failing to redeem himself for throwing a dreadful pick-six to rising star **Tariq Woolen** in the first quarter. Woolen already has a good season’s worth of interceptions with 5. The pace won’t continue, as teams gradually refuse to throw in his direction, but for now he is putting himself and the Spartans’ defence on the map. Tua was reduced to a 70’s wreck in the stats department in this game, completing 13 of 36 for 213 yards, 2 TD passes and 3 INTs. It’s back to the film room for **Dave Birdsall**.

At Ferenc-Liszt International Airport Stadium in Budapest, the North Stars clamped down on the Braves’ offence and generated just enough offence of their own to win by the comfortable margin of 17-0. This game brought back memories of the Markham version of the North Stars – when it had no quarterback, but a lot of grit, heart and street-fighting smarts, finding ways to win. The Braves reminded me of the 2008 Colorado Thundersnow version of this franchise – no offence. **Matt Ryan**, a member of that original 2-14 team, was not that bad this week, but he was not good either. And the new coach’s decision to go for it on 4th & 3 at the Budapest 32 while trailing 3-0 early in the game betrayed a lack of awareness of the capabilities of a fresh North Stars’ defence. **Cameron Jordan** summarily sacked Ryan for a 5-yard loss, giving Budapest the ball and the psychological edge for the remainder of the game. I was interested in this game, because I see the Braves as a viable contender and the North Stars as a very good, but no longer a great power. The Braves have the defence to get the job done, and an offence that can be game-managed to victory. The Stars are dealing with the little mental traumas of a once dominant power having to work for wins again – sometimes they try to be the “great” North Stars again and get into trouble. Well, my questions were answered here: the Braves shot themselves in the foot with missed kicks and 4th down follies, and the Stars took advantage. Knowing *how* to win is as important as having the talent to do so, and **Darrin Jones** and his team know how to win!

The “filler” games were not without their moments, but ultimately nothing of great importance can be attached to the remaining six games of the Week Three schedule. Here are my rapid takes (I know you ADD retreads like rapid takes) on the rest of the action:

The Swordfish are a mess. The Corn Kings slapped them down at the Fish Tank by a score of 41-20. **Jimmy Garoppolo** threw 5 touchdown passes; that fact alone should raise a red flag about the state of the Swordfish. The Fish long ago jumped the shark but continue to do so, doubling down on 4th and dumb and demoralizing their players to the point where they can hardly compete.

The Hawks got a win. They beat up on the Irish 34-17 – no great achievement, but something they needed to do after dropping the first two games of the season. **Geno Smith** looked competent (Hawks fans breathing a sigh of relief), the defence generated two takeaways, and **Drake London** looked like a first-round pick. The Irish may have peaked last week against Erieau.

Continuing the theme of teams needing a win, the Triumph beat down the Bats 35-10 to avoid falling into a terminally ill 0-3 start to the season. The Triumph were good, but the Bats were worse. Trevor Lawrence threw 3 TD passes, while Billtown attempted to establish a ground game, which was a good gesture, but one that still failed to make an impact against a good Triumph ‘D’ because the Bats’ receivers are...well...crap! It’s still early, but a **Justin Herbert** nervous breakdown could be around the corner.

The Convicts skulked past the Patriots 20-10 at Patriot Place in Charleswood. This was not a slam-dunk. Had it not been for **Kenny Pickett** playing like the worst “franchise” quarterback in Charleswood history since **Blake Bortles**, the Convicts might well have lost this “gimme” game. The Best of the West faced the Sick team of the Central and the West barely won. That is the state of the west.

The main challenge facing Virden this year will be to maintain their focus against teams like the Pilots. This week, they exploded out of the gate and quickly built up a 31-7 lead by halftime. Then they faced the challenge of having to play 30 more minutes against a dysfunctional wreck, knowing they had already won but also knowing that contact was inevitable and could result in injuries. The Pilots played fiercely, but like a chihuahua latching onto the leg of an elephant they could not alter the course to abject defeat.

Finally, Bruxelles slammed the Derailers, 31-7 to raise their record to 3-0 and send a message to ridiculous franchises everywhere that gimmicky offences have their limits against good defences. I could write a thesis on the stupidity of the Buffalo game plan, but you are all too bored already to read it, so just look at the game film if you are interested.

BUG THE BOOKIE!

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RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 3:

17-16-3

Jimmy's WEEK FOUR PICKS

NEW JERSEY @ LAPLATA (line – WRECKING BALLS by 1)

INJURIES: New Jersey – Arik Armstead (OUT), David Bakhtiari (OUT); LaPlata – John Cominsky (OUT).

The Braves' offence ranks second in the league in yards-per-play and fifth in pass yards per game, but this has not translated into enough points overall or, as in last week's shutout loss to Budapest, any points. The trade for Joe Mixon was supposed to solve their rushing woes, but he is laboring at an ineffective 3.3 yards-per-carry, while rookie Jahmyr Gibbs just isn't getting enough touches. This puts too much pressure on ageing Matt Ryan. The line favoring New Jersey reflects a sudden dip in confidence in the Braves' ability to score. I find that strangely selective, as the Jekyll & Hyde Wrecking Balls offence has been more Hyde than Jekyll so far and did not find the end zone last week versus the Coyotes. Losing David Bakhtiari won't help Daniel Jones be all he can be, which doesn't appear to be much anyway. These two teams need to be better, but only one will correct course this week. **PICK: LAPLATA**

BRUXELLES @ GEORGIA (line – Pick' Em)

INJURIES: Bruxelles – None; Georgia – Nate Davis (OUT), Tremaine Edmunds (OUT), Denzel Ward (OUT).

The Bombers demolished Buffalo last week, which pushed them in front of Virden to no.1 in the AP Power Rankings. Do not expect them to stay there. While their defence is currently the top-rated in terms of efficiency and the offence is averaging 29 points per game, the quality of their competition to date has been dubious. This week they face a legitimate contender in the Glads, a team very capable of scoring against good defences, and possessing the quintessential bend-not-break defence. The Bruxelles game plan on the attack has been unsustainably lop-sided in favour of the run, not only because they run well, but to keep Justin Fields out of trouble.

This is a luxury that will fade away as the season progresses and games get tougher – like this one. **PICK: GEORGIA**

ERIEAU @ BUFFALO (line – CADILLAC by 2)

INJURIES: Erieau – Joey Bosa (OUT), Aaron Robinson (OUT); Buffalo – Bradley Chubb (DOUBTFUL), Wan'Dale Robinson (OUT).

The most positive spin on Erieau's disheartening start is that they are the best of the league's win-less teams – certainly better than their record suggests – and therefore a dangerous team to take lightly. The Derailers, with a Week One blowout of Cobb County on their resume, have looked like last year's late-season, "burnt out" version of the Derailers ever since, losing their last two games by a combined score of 68-7. They need a bounce-back game here at home to begin to salvage the season, although many opinion leaders in Buffalo are saying it is already over for this year. The Caddies are in a worse position, as they are still placed in the category of divisional contender, despite their troubles, but will see expectations and morale fall off a cliff if they were to suffer their fourth loss to a basket case like Buffalo. Erieau has more to lose and will play with an uncommon desperation this week. **PICK: ERIEAU**

EAST ELMHURST @ COBB COUNTY (line – COYOTES by 7)

INJURIES: East Elmhurst – None; Cobb County – Jamal Adams (IR), Brandon Jones (OUT), Tre'Davious White (OUT), J.T. Woods (OUT).

It is hard to gauge where the Coyotes are headed as a team when their quarterback play is so sub-standard. The learning curve for rookie Bryce Young is turning out to be steeper than predicted, and this is dragging down a roster that some felt was strong enough to compete for the East Division this year. The Coyote defence stole a game last week, keeping New Jersey out of the end zone despite four turnovers by the offence. Young did make one key play that turned out to be the difference when he threw a dart to Brandin Cooks for the game's only touchdown. Fans and commentators are banking on that play and the win marking a turning point in the

development of their franchise quarterback, thus the generous betting line. It is easy to see where the Irish are heading – the basement. But they have shown enough tenacity that perhaps their players don't know that yet. Expect a tight game. **PICK: EAST ELMHURST**

COWTOWN @ PEG CITY (line – CORN KINGS by 1)

INJURIES: **Cowtown** – Tanoh Kpassagnon (OUT), Michael Pierce (OUT); **Peg City** – Myles Jack (DOUBTFUL).

While both teams came into the season with designs on competing for a playoff spot, few expected them to be undefeated after three weeks. But here they are, both with perfect records and rising expectations. Currently, Cowtown is ranked ahead of the Crusaders in the power rankings due to aggregate point differential, but the eyeball test tells a different story. Peg City has one of the stronger defences in football due to having three game-wreckers on their defensive front and an excellent cornerback tandem to give them time to get home. The Corn Kings offensive line is competent, but not to the level required to consistently buy time for their quarterback or open holes for their running backs against such a good defence in a hostile road environment. The Peg City offence is still sludgy, but improved over last year, with Saquon Barkley healthy and Ryan Tannehill at the helm. Don't expect this game to be all that close. **PICK: PEG CITY**

SEBASTIAN @ TWIN CITIES (line – TRIUMPH by 14)

INJURIES: **Sebastian** – Anthony Barr (OUT), Austin Johnson (OUT); **Twin Cities** – Garrett Bradbury (OUT), Avonte Maddox (OUT), Emmanuel Moseley (OUT).

The Swordfish have been decisively outplayed through three win-less weeks and currently rank last in the AP Power Rankings. They showed some life against the Spartans in Week Two but shot themselves in the foot after two good quarters and collapsed completely. The issue of the coach's decision-making is no longer front-and-center, as the play on the field has been dreadful enough to overshadow it. Kirk Cousins has been terrible, the running game has been irrelevant, the defence has yet to get a sack and the secondary is still smoking after being torched by Jimmy Garoppolo last week. The Triumph are coming off their first win and hope to string together a few more to avoid losing more ground to Peg City. This is a team they should beat handily, and I expect they will. **PICK: TWIN CITIES**

DURHAM @ VIRDEN (line – VIOLATORS by 10)

INJURIES: **Durham** – Devon Witherspoon (QUESTIONABLE), David Andrews (OUT), Chandler Jones (OUT), Jeremy Ruckert (OUT); **Virden** – Frank Clark (OUT), Derwin James (OUT).

At first this double-digit line in favour of Virden shocks the eyes. But if the Thunder Lizards choose to keep their best players on the sidelines for no apparent reason as they have been doing, it may not be big enough. The Blue Eagles stunned the undermanned Lizards last week with a 47-point explosion that shook the football world. It was a wake-up call for the defending champs. Assuming they go with their best here, it will not be any easier as the Violators are the class of the league, with the top-ranked offence and a defence tied for no.1 with the Bombers. The loss of Derwin James, however, is significant, as Virden's star safety is one of the few players in the league capable of defending against both the arm and the mobility of Josh Allen. On the other side, Patrick Mahomes can expect to face more pressure than he has so far this year while going up against an excellent secondary. Expect a close game. **PICK: DURHAM**

SCARBOROUGH @ CHARLESWOOD (line – BLUE EAGLES by 4)

INJURIES: **Scarborough** – Nick Bosa (QUESTIONABLE); **Charleswood** – Jordan Davis (PROBABLE), Ronald Darby (OUT), David Ojabo (OUT).

Scarborough blitzkrieging Durham last week was an extreme example of the type of game that gets handicappers into trouble. Such a shocking result can cause overreaction when adjusting subsequent lines. Let's try not to fall into the trap. The Blue Eagles benefitted from a unique set of circumstances and Joe Burrow's 4 TD passes were accompanied by only 145 passing yards. The defence gave up 24 points to the Lizards' back-ups. Dalvin Cook turned into a downhill runner late in the game against a demoralized, tired defence. The fundamental problems of the roster remain, so caution is in order. Fortunately for their chances of building momentum after their big win, they face the weak link in the Central Division. The Pats appear to be who we thought they were and Kenny Pickett worse than we thought. At least they have Travis Kelce and that may be enough to bring this game down to a field goal. **PICK: CHARLESWOOD**

BROOKLIN @ CHINO (line – CONVICTS by 8)

INJURIES: **Brooklin** – Azeez Al-Shaair (OUT), Kwity Paye (OUT); **Chino** – Jimmie Ward (OUT).

These teams are both coming off important wins. For the Hawks, the victory was decisive; Geno Smith was efficient, Austin Ekeler was money in the red zone, and the defence put a clamp on the Irish. The Convicts were less convincing in beating Charleswood, but playing down to competition is a signature Convicts' trait. It's tough to win games in this league and they won, which is the point. I will be open and admit that I don't have a good feel or a good thought about how these teams will match up. The line looks a touch inflated to my eyes, but I cannot precisely explain why. I guess I just have little confidence that the Chino defence will be able to contain the Hawks

offence if Smith is on his game. Conversely, I am not sure if Smith has really found his EFL game yet, or just benefitted from playing a bad team. The Jared Goff Era is so far characterized by many yards and not so many points. A clue perhaps? **PICK: BROOKLIN**

SEATTLE @ BUDAPEST (line – NORTH STARS by 4)

INJURIES: Seattle – Maliek Collins (OUT), Marshon Lattimore (OUT), Trey Sermon (OUT); Budapest – Cameron Jordan (DOUBTFUL), Sam Williams (OUT).

A line like this makes me go hmm. What have the Pilots shown us that would make anybody stuck in a desert with nothing to do but watch football and adjust odds think Seattle stood a chance of staying within one score of Budapest for one quarter, let alone a game? In games not against equally awful Billtown, the Pilots have been outscored 69-13. They have one of the worst quarterbacks in the league. They have probably the worst defensive line in the league. They are on the road in Central Europe. They are beaten down emotionally from being losers as long as they have existed. And they are playing Aaron Rodgers! What am I missing? **PICK: BUDAPEST**

IOWA CITY @ PICKERING (line – SPARTANS by 10)

INJURIES: Iowa City – Joe Noteboom (OUT), Tyron Smith (OUT), Benjamin St-Juste (OUT), Zach Tom (OUT); Pickering – Trent Williams (DOUBTFUL).

I am interested in this game. I shouldn't be. On paper, this is a virtual no contest. The Spartans are solidly built. They lead the league in takeaways with 10. Tariq Woolen is on pace for 28 interceptions and 11 pick-sixes. They score an average of 36 points per game. Their coach never surrenders. They are at home...I could go on. The Cubs are still rebuilding and are doing so with two old quarterbacks taking turns behind center. They don't really have a functioning secondary. Nobody knows who their running backs are. Yes, they have good receivers and a better than average offensive line, but the quarterback issue is real and can negate all that. Yet, they have won two division games and pushed Peg City to the wall. There's a spark in them that could combust opponents at any time. **PICK: IOWA CITY**

YORK @ BILLTOWN (line – EXCALIBURS by 13)

INJURIES: York – Phidarian Mathis (IR), Mario Addison (OUT), Cole Holcomb (OUT), Aziz Ojulari (OUT), Jabari Zuniga (OUT); Billtown – Jordan Fuller (OUT), Shaquille Leonard (OUT), Ethan Pocic (OUT), Joe Thuney (OUT), Marcus Williams (OUT).

The Bats have trouble scoring, causing expectations in Pennsylvania to plummet like a stone. Somebody once thought that Damien Harris would prove to be the answer at running back, but with just 7 carries in 3 games, he is proving irrelevant along with the entire Bats' run game. Or maybe it is relevant, in the sense that the lack of run production is affecting the passing attack and the ability of a sketchy group of wide receivers to get open downfield. The Excaliburs are probably happy with their record, although they missed an opportunity at an upset against Durham that would have made them perfect. Tom Brady leads the league in passing yards per game, despite decreasing efficiency, and Derrick Henry is the King of running backs. But they are on the road versus a desperate team. **PICK: BILLTOWN**

EFL FOCUS

A weekly tour of Media from around the EFL. This week we focus on.....

BILLTOWN



GOODBYE BATS! MAY YOU HAVE BETTER LUCK OUT EAST!

By Steve Cyprinidae

The Bats are moving to Williamsport, PA, far away from their original Las Vegas home. This is my final interview with owner, coach, Stephen Michael, on the prospects of the team I will miss:

2022 Record: 9-8, Division Champion – Lost in Conference Championship Game to Virden.

The Skinny (we say that in Vegas) – Billtown is returning to Pennsylvania for their second EFL season under new ownership. They are eager to build upon the legacy they established last year when they sent shockwaves through the league en route to the conference

championship game. However, this season marks a rebuilding period for the team, as they bid farewell to several veteran leaders who played pivotal roles in their previous campaign, including Cook, Heyward, and Judon. Despite these changes, **Record Prediction: 7-10**

The Offense- During the offseason, Billtown made strategic moves to bolster their team, primarily focusing on quarterback and team captain Justin Herbert. They fortified Herbert's arsenal by acquiring promising talents Dalton Kincaid and Tucker Kraft in the 2023 draft. The return of playmaker Michael Thomas will lead the receiving corps, and they anticipate increased productivity from Isaiah Hodgins. In the backfield, the Bats will showcase the talents of both a rookie, Tyjae Spears, and the seasoned veterans Matt Breida and Damien Harris, creating an exciting mix of experience and fresh talent to power their offense.

The Defense - Billtown made some tough decisions by letting go of defensive stalwarts Cam Heyward and Matt Judon to pave the way for a revitalized front seven. The linebacking corps will now be helmed by Demario Davis and Shaq Leonard, who bring talent and leadership. Patrick Surtain II will take the reins and provide stability in the secondary, joined by new additions Myles Bryant and Dee Alford. While the Bats may face challenges and give up more points this season due to the injection of youthful talent on defense, the team's management is brimming with enthusiasm about the bright prospects and the potential for this revamped unit to make waves in the future.

Special Teams – Billtown's special teams unit boasts reliability and experience, thanks to the presence of Ka'imi Fairbairn as their kicker and the seasoned veteran legend Bryan Anger handling punting duties. They bring a solid foundation for the team's special teams performance.

The Outlook – The Bats are optimistic, and their fans eagerly anticipate seeing fresh talent representing their proud city. With an evolving offense showing promising scoring potential in 2023, the team's success hinges on the ability of their defense to keep opponents off the scoreboard effectively. It's a season marked by anticipation, where the balance between offense and defense will determine Billtown's fortunes on the field.



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