

WEEK 8

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# 2012 EFL 2012

December 2, 2012



EAST			WEST			NORTH			SOUTH		
Virden	6	2 0	Death Valley	8	0 0	Durham	7	1 0	Scarborough	8	0 0
York	6	2 0	Chino	5	3 0	Cowtown	5	2 1	Garland	5	3 0
Commonwealth	5	3 0	Los Angeles	3	5 0	Markham	4	3 1	Gwinnett	4	4 0
Mohave	2	6 0	Iowa City	1	7 0	Pickering	2	6 0	South Carolina	4	4 0
Charleswood	0	8 0	Mission Viejo	1	7 0	Twin Cities	2	6 0	Sebastian	1	7 0

## GLAD TO BE HERE!



LESEAN MCCOY

Gwinnett running back *LeSean McCoy* (right) is glad to be in the end zone for the second time on the day, as the Gladiators rallied in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to defeat their cross-conference rivals in a re-match of the 2011 EFL Championship game. The outcome was different this time, with the Glads topping the LA Knights 17-16.

In other EFL action, it was another nail-biter at the Dawg Pound as the Violators looked to keep pace with York in the East... and speaking of York....

(More Inside)



*Who was slick in Week Eight?*

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



**Matt Schaub**  
QB  
Durham Thunder  
Lizards

23 of 37, 380 yards, 2 TDs, return from injury and takes control.



**Haloti Ngata**  
DT  
Chino  
Convicts

7 tackles, 1 sack, 1 Stuff, 1 Hur, 1 FF, forced fumble set up TD.



3-5-0

16



# GAME OF THE WEEK



4-4-0

17

## GWINNETT WINS RE-MATCH! GLADS ON WIN STREAK AFTER GRAPPLING ON GRIDIRON WITH CHAMPION FOES!

### KNIGHT OF THE GAME

Darren Sproles

83 yds rushing, 55 yds receiving

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Los Angeles	3	6	7	0	-	16
Gwinnett	0	0	3	14	-	17

### GLADIATOR OF THE GAME

LeSean McCoy

21 carries, 118 yards, 2 TDs

**GAME SUMMARY:** The Gwinnett Gladiators avenged their 2011 Championship Game loss by engineering two 4<sup>th</sup> quarter TD drives then holding on to their lead with a timely defensive stand to prevail over the LA Knights by the slimmest of margins, 17-16. The defences dominated early; the Knights' 'Blue Shield' shut down the Glads by holding them to just 3 first downs until the final seconds of the 1<sup>st</sup> half, while the Glads' 'D' bent a lot, but did not break in limiting the Knights to 3 field goals in 3 forays inside the red zone. The Knights took firm control on their opening possession of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. In a daring move, **Alex Smith** took the ball himself on a 5-yard sweep to convert a 4<sup>th</sup> and 1 from the Knights' 35 yard line. Smith ran for 13 more yards and completed his next 5 passes to put his team up 16-0 on an 8-yard TD pass to **Roddy White** into double-coverage. With the Coliseum crowd growing restless, and the Gladiators backed up at their 14 yard line, running back **LeSean McCoy** burst out of nowhere with back-to-back runs of 19 and 48 yards to reach the edge of the LA red zone. The Knights' defence tightened up, limiting the Gladiators to a **Josh Brown** field goal from 28 yards out, but Gwinnett was finally on the board and showing signs of life. LA was checked on their next possession when end **Robert Mathis** sacked Smith on 3<sup>rd</sup> down, but a 56-yard punt by **Steve Weatherford** backed the Glads to their 15. When Joe Staley was flagged for holding, it looked like another Gwinnett punt was coming, but **Ben Roethlisberger** found **Reggie Wayne** for a 20-yard completion on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 14 to keep the drive alive. A 27-yard pass to **Nate Burleson** propelled them into Knights' territory then 7 plays later McCoy defied a keying LA defence to break through for a 4-yard TD run. A 3-and-out by the Knights gave the ball back to Gwinnett and they capitalized with a pair of 3<sup>rd</sup> down conversions and a 21-yard end-around by Burleson set up a 2-yard TD dive by McCoy to give the Glads the go-ahead score. The Knights threatened after **Darren Sproles** broke a 27-yard run to the Glads' 42, but Smith was stuffed attempting to run on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4 then **Troy Polamalu** tipped a 4<sup>th</sup> down pass intended for **Steve Smith** to finish off the Knights and lift Gwinnett to their 4<sup>th</sup> straight win after 4 straight losses.

### QUOTE OF THE GAME

"Revenge was not on my mind, but getting a win certainly was. This was just a good defensive game by both teams – no turnovers and some clutch plays by the offence." – *Gwinnett coach, Dave Birdsall.*

"We're not losing by much but we're still losing. We blew a 16-point lead when our defence was playing well and that hurts. But hats off to Gwinnett – McCoy's run revived them. They kept coming at us and never gave up." – *LA coach, Jeff Dohrn.*



### FANS' THUMB UP

McCoy earning the tough yards

### FANS' THUMB DOWN

Knights' fans curse their luck



### FAN RATING



11-29-2012 Gwinnett Coliseum Temp: 69 Wind: 5-15 None MVP: LeSean McCoy

1 6:14 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 26 (16-83-7:07)	3-0
2 9:51 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 28 (13-70-6:13)	6-0
2 0:47 Los Angeles	FG Carpenter 26 (9-53-2:28)	9-0
3 9:11 Los Angeles	TD Smith 8 pass to White (Carpenter) (11-74-5:41)	16-0
3 7:10 Gwinnett	FG Brown 28 (7-76-1:52)	16-3
4 12:45 Gwinnett	TD McCoy 4 run (Brown,J) (11-85-5:21)	16-10
4 4:47 Gwinnett	TD McCoy 2 run (Brown,J) (13-69-5:31)	16-17

	LAK	GWG
First Downs	23	18
Rushes	25-170	23-138
Passes	42-25-254	30-20-202
Sacked	3-17	1-10
Fumble	1	0
Penalties	7-50	6-40
Turnovers	0	0
Blitzes	24	20
Time	33:28	26:32
Third Down	8-16	6-12
Fourth Down	1-2	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	4/1/3	3/2/1
Net Offense	407	330



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



<b>PATRIOTS</b>
0-8-0

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

**Cory Redding**  
11 Tackles, 3 Stuffs



<b>CORN KINGS</b>
5-2-1

7	21	7	10	0	<b>45</b>
OT					

**Joe Flacco**  
21 of 31, 278 yards, 5 TDs

The Corn Kings' defence held Charleswood to just 6 first downs and 113 yards of offence, and also scored a touchdown on a 24-yard interception return by **Brandon Flowers**, while the offence took care of the rest as the Cowtown rolled over the Patriots. **Joe Flacco** threw 5 TD passes, including 2 to **Santana Moss** and 1 to **Larry Fitzgerald** to earn Game MVP honours. The Pats' offence awoke for a single 47-yard drive in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter to earn their only points on a 3-yard pass from **Michael Vick** to **Brian Hartline**. The Cowtown back-ups added 10 points in the final frame to finish the rout.



<b>VIOLATORS</b>
6-2-0

6	3	0	16	0	<b>25</b>
OT					

**Matt Stafford**  
29 of 46, 336 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT



<b>NORTH STARS</b>
4-3-1

0	7	10	7	0	<b>24</b>
OT					

**Eli Manning**  
13 of 21, 198 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT

Viriden built up a 9-0 lead on 3 field goals, but the North Stars bounced back with a 4-yard TD run by **Jonathan Stewart** to trail 9-7 at half time. A 37-yard pass to **Jordy Nelson** on the first play of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half set up a 23-yard TD pass from **Eli Manning** to **DeAngelo Williams** to give Markham a 14-9 lead. After adding a field goal to make it 17-9, the Violators replied with a 6-yard TD pass to **LaDainian Tomlinson** to pull within one. The teams traded TDs, with Viriden failing to convert a 2-point attempt to trail by 2; but as time expired, **Lawrence Tynes** kicked the game-winner from 36 yards.



<b>UNDERTAKERS</b>
8-0-0

7	14	10	7	0	<b>38</b>
OT					

**Drew Brees**  
23 of 31, 243 yards, 4 TDs, 1 INT



<b>SPARTANS</b>
2-6-0

3	6	0	7	0	<b>16</b>
OT					

**Vincent Jackson**  
4 Receptions, 64 yards, 1 TD

**Drew Brees** tied the season TD pass record set by **Tom Brady** in 2008 with a 9-yard dump-off to **Marques Colston** in the end zone to give the Undertakers a 38-9 lead in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. The Spartans made a game of it for a quarter, trailing 7-6 after a **Josh Scobee** 38-yard FG in the 2nd. But after **Andre Johnson** made it 14-6 with a 4-yard TD catch, the game was never close again. A 54-yard pass to **Aaron Hernandez** with under 2 minutes left in the half led to a **Ryan Matthews** scoring run from 7 yards, then **George Wilson** picked off **Robert Griffin III** to set up another TD to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



<b>CUBS</b>
1-7-0

0	10	10	0	0	<b>20</b>
OT					

**Mike Wallace**  
7 Receptions, 125 yards, 1 TD



<b>BLUE EAGLES</b>
8-0-0

17	3	0	3	0	<b>23</b>
OT					

**Aaron Rodgers**  
24 of 28, 347 yards, 2 TDs

Scarborough scored on their first 3 possessions, including a 69-yard TD pass from **Aaron Rodgers** to little-used **DeVier Posey**, to jump out to a 17-0 lead. But receiver **Mike Wallace** sparked the Cubs' comeback with receptions of 24 and 37 yards to set up a 1-yard TD run by **Donald Brown** to get on the scoreboard. The Cubs' **Clyde Gates** opened the 2<sup>nd</sup> half with a 75-yard kickoff return to set up an 18-yard TD pass to Wallace then **Greg Zuerlein** booted a 48-yard FG to tie the game at 20. It took a 73-yard drive from their 2 to set up the 43-yard game-winning FG by Eagles' **Sebastian Janikowski**.



<b>SWORDFISH</b>
1-7-0

0	3	11	7	0	<b>21</b>
OT					

**Andy Dalton**  
24 of 41, 262 yards, 2 TDs



<b>CONVICTS</b>
5-3-0

3	14	0	7	0	<b>24</b>
OT					

**Cam Newton**  
19 of 25, 241 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT

**Andy Dalton** fumbled and lost the ball twice and **Cam Newton** jogged into the end zone on a naked bootleg to stake the Convicts to an early 17-0 lead. The Swordfish stayed afloat with back-to-back FG drives before Dalton connected with **Robert Meacham** for a 59-yard TD pass and successful 2-point conversion to pull within a FG, trailing 17-14. A 30-yard pass to WR **James Jones** got Chino rolling toward another score as **Greg Olsen** finished it off with a 13-yard TD catch. Sebastian was stopped on 4<sup>th</sup> down inside the Chino red zone to miss a scoring opportunity and fell 3 points short.



<b>REGULATORS</b>
4-4-0

7	7	14	10	0	<b>38</b>
OT					

**Tony Romo**  
24 of 29, 307 yards, 4 TDs



<b>MONARCHS</b>
1-7-0

3	7	0	0	0	<b>10</b>
OT					

**Ray Mauluga**  
17 Tackles, 2 PD, 2 Stuffs

**Major Wright** picked off **Ryan Tannehill** and returned it 37 yards to set up the first of 4 TD passes for **Tony Romo** – 31 yards to **AJ Green** – to give the Regs a 7-3 lead in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. The Monarchs regained the lead with a 60-yard drive ending in a 1-yard TD run by **DeMarco Murray**; but their advantage was brief as the Regs marched 82 yards and finished with an 8-yard scramble by Romo for the TD and a 14-10 lead at half time. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half belonged to South Carolina – 2 more interceptions of Tannehill and 3 TD passes by Romo to 3 different receivers fueled a run-away rout.



# QUICK COUNTS!!

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



## EXCALIBURS

6-2-0

0	7	0	6	0	13
				OT	

Victor Cruz  
8 Receptions, 105 yards



## T-LIZARDS

7-1-0

9	10	3	17	0	39
				OT	

Matt Schaub  
23 of 37, 380 yards, 2 TDs

Durham QB **Matt Schaub** tossed 2 TD passes in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, including a 57-yard deep slant to **Calvin Johnson**, and **Mason Crosby** added 2 FGs to stake Durham to a 19-7 lead at half time. A time-consuming drive to open the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter kept the ball away from York and added a FG to the Durham lead. In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, **Michael Bush** ploughed across the goal line from half a yard, then **Richard Sherman** intercepted **Tom Brady** on the first play of York's next possession, returning it 29 yards for a TD to make the score 36-7. Durham dominated in handing York their worst loss of the year.



## COLONIALS

5-3-0

3	6	0	0	0	9
				OT	

Josh Freeman  
12 of 23, 191 yards, 1 TD, 3 INTs



## MUSTANGS

5-3-0

7	7	21	3	0	38
				OT	

Matt Ryan  
20 of 26, 269 yards, 4 TDs

Garland safety **Earl Thomas** picked off **Josh Freeman** and returned it to the Commonwealth 28 where **Matt Ryan** connected with **Nate Washington** in the end zone on the first play for the opening TD. The Colonials answered with a FG then the teams traded punts before **Dustin Keller** increased the Garland lead on a 22-yard TD catch. **Doug Baldwin** caught 2 passes on the Colonials' next drive, the second for a TD, but the 2-point convert failed. The Mustangs galloped away with it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter with 2 more TD passes from Ryan and a 67-yard punt return TD by **Patrick Peterson**.



## HELLFIRE

2-6-0

0	10	0	7	0	17
				OT	

Andrew Luck  
23 of 38, 193 yards, 1 TD, 2 INTs



## TRIUMPH

2-6-0

0	14	7	7	0	28
				OT	

Jay Cutler  
20 of 29, 218 yards, 3 TDs

A scoreless 1<sup>st</sup> quarter gave way to a flurry of scoring in the 2<sup>nd</sup>. A blocked punt by **Brian Price** set up a Mohave FG that **Jay Cutler** of the Triumph answered with a 24-yard TD pass to **Kendall Wright**. Mohave got the lead back after **Roman Harper** ripped the ball from **Isaac Redman** and **Kendall Reyes** returned it 48 yards for a TD. The Triumph closed the 1<sup>st</sup> half with another TD pass from Cutler to Wright to take a 14-10 lead. **Tim Tebow** ended the Triumph's first 2<sup>nd</sup> half drive with an 11-yard TD pass to Redman then Cutler notched his 3<sup>rd</sup> TD pass late in the 4<sup>th</sup> to put the game away.



# BODY COUNT



## WEEK EIGHT INJURY REPORT



<b>CHARLESWOOD</b>	Barrett Ruud, LB – OUT; Sidney Rice, WR – OUT (2 games); Adrian Peterson, RB- OUT (2 games); Jon Beason, ILB – OUT (Season); Marcus Trufant – OUT (Season)
<b>CHINO</b>	Quincy Black, OLB – PROBABLE; James Harrison, OLB – DOUBTFUL; Aqib Talib, CB – OUT
<b>COMMONWEALTH</b>	Andre Smith, T – OUT (2 games)
<b>COWTOWN</b>	None
<b>DEATH VALLEY</b>	Mario Manningham, WR – DOUBTFUL; Alshon Jeffery, WR – OUT (2 games); Jimmy Smith, CB – OUT (3 games); Gerald McCoy, DT – OUT (6 games)
<b>DURHAM</b>	Dominique Rodergs-Cromartie, CB – OUT (2 games); Corey Wootton, DE – OUT (3 games)
<b>GARLAND</b>	Will Smith, DE – OUT; Peyton Hillis, RB – DOUTBFUL; Deji Karim, RB – PROBABLE; Quinn Johnson, FB – OUT (7 games)
<b>GWINNETT</b>	Jaiquawn Jarrett, S – DOUBTFUL; Ahmad Bradshaw, RB – OUT (3 games); Demaryius Thomas, WR – OUT (3 games)
<b>IOWA CITY</b>	Brandon Harris, CB – OUT (2 games); Mario Williams, OLB – OUT (8 games)
<b>LOS ANGELES</b>	Sion Fua, DT – OUT (2 games); Michael Bennett, DE – OUT (3 games); Nick Miller, WR – OUT (5 games); Sam Young, T – OUT (Season)
<b>MARKHAM</b>	Andre Branch, DE – OUT; Roscoe Parrish, WR – OUT (7 games)
<b>MISSION VIEJO</b>	Michael Brockers, DE – OUT (3 games); Jonathan Vilma, LB – OUT (4 games); Koa Misi, OLB – OUT (5 games)
<b>MOHAVE</b>	Benjamin Watson, TE – PROBABLE; Aaron Williams, CB – OUT (4 games); Ben Graham, P – (7 games); Chris Massey, LS – OUT (11 games)
<b>PICKERING</b>	Kerry Rhodes, S – QUESTIONABLE; Darren McFadden, RB – OUT (4 games); T.J. Ward, S – OUT (5 games); Miles Austin, WR – OUT (5 games)
<b>SCARBOROUGH</b>	LaMarr Woodley, OLB – OUT (2 games); Justin Tuck, DL – OUT (2 games); Kris Dileman, G – OUT (7 games)
<b>SEBASTIAN</b>	Leonard Hankerson, WR – OUT (8 games), Kenny Britt, WR – OUT (Season)
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>	Justin Durant, LB – QUESTIONABLE; Shareece Wright, S – OUT (4 games); Bradley Fletcher, CB – OUT (5 games); Brandon Spikes, ILB – OUT (7 games); Patrick Chung, S – OUT (8 games); Brandon Graham, DE – OUT (Season)
<b>TWIN CITIES</b>	Matt Roth, DE – PROBABLE; Jerry Hughes, DE – OUT (2 games); Ray Lewis, ILB – OUT (3 games); Antoine Winfield, CB – OUT (8 games)
<b>VIRDEN</b>	Dez Bryant, WR – QUESTIONABLE; Brandon Meriweather, S – OUT (2 games); La Ron Landry, S – OUT (4 games); Julio Jones, WR – OUT (4 games); Prince Amukamara, CB – OUT (6 games); Shawne Merriman, DE-LB OUT (9 games); Eric Berry, S – OUT (Season); Jeff Ota, T – OUT (Season)
<b>YORK</b>	Anquan Boldin, WR – DOUBTFUL; Danieal Manning, CB – PROBABLE; Donald Washington, S – DOUBTFUL; Rashean Mathis, CB – OUT (3 games); Donald Jones, WR – OUT (3 games)



# STATS



## WEEK EIGHT

### STANDINGS

East	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Viriden	6	2	0	0.75	261	32.6	203	25.4	7.3	3 1 0	4 0 0	5 1 0
York	6	2	0	0.75	232	29	134	16.8	12.3	3 1 0	3 1 0	5 1 0
Commonwealth	5	3	0	0.625	184	23	188	23.5	-0.5	3 1 0	2 2 0	4 2 0
Mohave	2	6	0	0.25	155	19.4	267	33.4	-14	1 2 0	1 3 0	2 4 0
Charleswood	0	8	0	0	113	14.1	277	34.6	-20.5	0 4 0	0 4 0	0 6 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Death Valley	8	0	0	1	317	39.6	181	22.6	17	3 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
Chino	5	3	0	0.625	186	23.3	154	19.3	4	2 2 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Los Angeles	3	5	0	0.375	220	27.5	169	21.1	6.4	1 3 0	3 1 0	3 3 0
Iowa City	1	7	0	0.125	150	18.8	193	24.1	-5.4	1 3 0	0 4 0	1 5 0
Mission Viejo	1	7	0	0.125	84	10.5	267	33.4	-22.9	1 3 0	1 3 0	1 5 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	7	1	0	0.875	237	29.6	143	17.9	11.8	4 0 0	3 1 0	5 1 0
Cowtown	5	2	1	0.688	225	28.1	135	16.9	11.3	3 1 0	2 1 1	3 2 1
Markham	4	3	1	0.563	177	22.1	156	19.5	2.6	2 1 1	2 1 1	4 1 1
Pickering	2	6	0	0.25	156	19.5	205	25.6	-6.1	2 3 0	2 2 0	2 4 0
Twin Cities	2	6	0	0.25	150	18.8	189	23.6	-4.9	2 2 0	0 4 0	1 5 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Scarborough	8	0	0	1	230	28.8	112	14	14.8	4 0 0	4 0 0	6 0 0
Garland	5	3	0	0.625	210	26.3	132	16.5	9.8	3 1 0	2 2 0	3 3 0
Gwinnett	4	4	0	0.5	179	22.4	180	22.5	-0.1	2 3 0	1 3 0	2 4 0
South Carolina	4	4	0	0.5	140	17.5	179	22.4	-4.9	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 4 0
Sebastian	1	7	0	0.125	92	11.5	234	29.3	-17.8	0 4 0	1 3 0	1 5 0

### PASSING

			Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate
1	Brees	DVU	296	216	73.0	2841	4	1.4	54	36	12.2	136.8
2	Stafford	VV	270	191	70.7	2537	6	2.2	64	22	8.1	118.1
3	Brady	YOR	229	152	66.4	2144	7	3.1	75	15	6.6	105.5
4	Newton,C	CHI	206	138	67.0	1611	3	1.5	75	12	5.8	103.8
5	Rodgers,A	SBE	258	179	69.4	2146	4	1.6	73	12	4.7	103.6
6	Cutler	TCT	205	135	65.9	1463	2	1.0	36	12	5.9	102.1
7	Smith,A	LAK	284	190	66.9	2059	4	1.4	51	16	5.6	101.0
8	Ryan,M	GDM	322	212	65.8	2487	6	1.9	81	16	5.0	97.9
9	Luck	MOH	201	136	67.7	1534	6	3.0	52	12	6.0	97.7
10	Rivers,P	DTL	218	138	63.3	1947	10	4.6	53	16	7.3	97.4
11	Flacco	COW	276	160	58.0	1995	7	2.5	76	21	7.6	95.3
12	Wilson,R	ICC	179	111	62.0	1460	5	2.8	66	7	3.9	89.1
13	Romo	SC	244	165	67.6	1804	11	4.5	65	13	5.3	88.2
14	Roethlisbe	GWG	264	168	63.6	1712	11	4.2	80	14	5.3	82.4
15	Manning,E	MAR	214	126	58.9	1760	9	4.2	57	8	3.7	80.4
16	Vick	CHP	119	73	61.3	792	5	4.2	71	5	4.2	77.4
17	Weeden	CHP	108	62	57.4	716	3	2.8	50	2	1.9	72.1
18	Freeman,J	COM	234	143	61.1	1673	14	6.0	61	9	3.8	70.7
19	McCoy,C	MVM	120	70	58.3	614	3	2.5	44	3	2.5	69.9
20	Dalton	SS	237	147	62.0	1367	9	3.8	59	4	1.7	67.6

## RUSHING

		Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD			Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD		
1	Jones-Drew	COW	171	774	4.5	23	4	11	McGahee	DVU	94	476	5.1	66	1
2	Rice,R	SBE	151	746	4.9	70	3	12	Mathews,R	DVU	93	465	5.0	36	1
3	Turner,M	YOR	149	721	4.8	43	7	13	Tate,B	VV	90	465	5.2	27	1
4	Jackson,F	COM	150	706	4.7	35	5	14	Stewart,J	MAR	87	438	5.0	18	3
5	Brown,D	ICC	117	693	5.9	72	6	15	Tolbert	MOH	103	436	4.2	18	3
6	Martin,D	TCT	134	639	4.8	55	1	16	Newton,C	CHI	73	406	5.6	25	7
7	McCoy,L	GWG	131	581	4.4	48	7	17	Jackson,S	CHI	92	403	4.4	52	1
8	Sproles	LAK	72	563	7.8	34	1	18	Thomas,P	SS	87	398	4.6	31	3
9	Williams,D	MAR	87	561	6.4	73	7	19	Bush,R	DTL	95	387	4.1	22	3
10	Johnson,C	PIC	127	516	4.1	36	2	20	Wells,B	VV	81	337	4.2	15	2

## RECEIVING

		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD			No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD		
1	Graham,J	MOH	57	626	11.0	52	3	11	Nicks,H	MOH	40	703	17.6	51	7
2	Fitzgerald	COW	53	738	13.9	43	8	12	Cruz	YOR	40	832	20.8	75	8
3	Johnson,C	DTL	53	934	17.6	57	8	13	Johnson,A	DVU	38	626	16.5	53	11
4	White,R	LAK	52	615	11.8	48	4	14	Davis,F	VV	38	416	10.9	31	2
5	Bowe	DTL	47	620	13.2	53	7	15	Witten	CHP	37	384	10.4	50	2
6	Jones,J	VV	45	766	17.0	35	7	16	Jones,J	CHI	36	620	17.2	75	5
7	Gronkows,R	DVU	44	729	16.6	54	5	17	Gonzalez	LAK	36	334	9.3	36	3
8	Wallace,M	ICC	43	872	20.3	66	7	18	Thomas,P	SS	36	219	6.1	13	0
9	Smith,S	LAK	43	615	14.3	51	6	19	Bryant,D	VV	35	575	16.4	64	6
10	Welker	MAR	41	540	13.2	43	1	20	Jackson,D	SBE	34	481	14.1	73	3

## KICKING

		FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts	
1	Janikowski	SBE	23	18	78.3	7	3	52	78
2	Tynes	VV	17	15	88.2	5	0	49	75
3	Carpenter	LAK	19	17	89.5	5	4	57	74
4	Crosby	DTL	19	16	84.2	4	2	52	73
5	Gano	DVU	14	10	71.4	3	3	55	69
6	Gould	GDM	17	14	82.4	5	0	48	66
7	Gostkowski	COM	17	15	88.2	5	0	48	64
8	Akers	MAR	19	15	78.9	7	0	49	63
9	Bailey,D	CHI	16	13	81.3	6	1	51	60
10	Zuerlein	ICC	19	15	78.9	8	2	51	60
11	Kasay	COW	11	10	90.9	2	1	52	55
12	Scobee	PIC	14	13	92.9	6	2	58	54
13	Walsh	YOR	12	8	66.7	2	0	44	52
14	Bironas	TCT	8	8	100.0	3	1	53	42
15	Vinatieri	SS	12	12	100.0	2	0	43	42
16	Brown,J	GWG	8	6	75.0	3	1	52	41
17	Longwell	SC	9	7	77.8	2	0	46	38
18	Cundiff	MOH	6	5	83.3	2	0	48	35
19	Rackers	MVM	13	9	69.2	7	3	59	34
20	Folk	CHP	6	5	83.3	1	0	47	29

## INTERCEPTIONS

							No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD					
1	Webster	COW	4	97	24.3	41	1	11	Barnett	VV	2	55	27.5	35	1	
2	Barron	CHP	3	112	37.3	45	2	12	Chancellor	DTL	2	0	0.0	0	0	
3	Sherman	DTL	3	52	17.3	29	1	13	Newman	VV	2	37	18.5	27	1	
4	Brown,T	MAR	3	0	0.0	0	0	14	Williams,T	VV	2	69	34.5	66	0	
5	Griffin,M	SBE	3	21	7.0	9	0	15	Tillman	MAR	2	0	0.0	0	0	
6	Cushing	GDM	3	10	3.3	9	0	16	Reed,E	MAR	2	0	0.0	0	0	
7	Weddle	GDM	3	34	11.3	19	0	17	Witherspoo	PIC	2	66	33.0	52	1	
8	Polamalu	GWG	3	33	11.0	33	1	18	Taylor,I	TCT	2	45	22.5	31	0	
9	Kerrigan	COW	2	0	0.0	0	0	19	Smith,D	CHI	2	22	11.0	22	0	
10	Flowers	COW	2	51	25.5	27	1	20	Mayo	DVU	2	22	11.0	12	0	

## SACKS

1	Peppers	CHI	10	8	Atkins	YOR	6	15	Campbell,C	SBE	5
2	Allen,J	DTL	8	9	Abraham	MAR	5	16	Avril	GDM	5
3	Babin	YOR	8	10	Sheard	PIC	5	17	Cole,T	MAR	5
4	Pierre-Pau	ICC	8	11	Anderson,M	COW	5	18	Seymour	SC	5
5	Suggs	SBE	8	12	Johnson,M	YOR	5	19	McDonald	PIC	4
6	Barnes,A	GWG	7	13	Tuck	SBE	5	20	Taylor,P	CHP	4
7	Ware,D	VV	6	14	Kelly,T	DTL	5	21	Smith,A	VV	4

## TACKLES

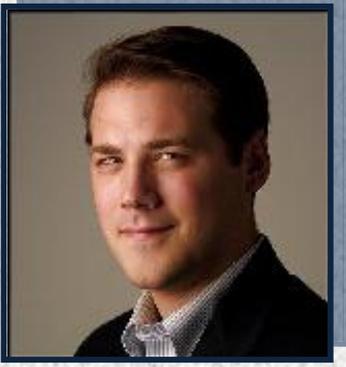
1	Laurinaiti	GWG	87	8	Barnett	VV	65	15	Lofton	DTL	57
2	McClain,R	MOH	78	9	Smith,D	CHI	64	16	Martin,S	MVM	55
3	Johnson,D	COW	70	10	Washington	PIC	62	17	Burnett,K	TCT	55
4	Hawthorne	COM	70	11	Chaney	SS	61	18	Burnett,M	PIC	54
5	Cushing	GDM	69	12	Jackson,D	LAK	60	19	Kuechly	SC	54
6	Mayo	DVU	68	13	Briggs	GWG	60	20	Henders,EJ	SC	53
7	Pierre-Pau	ICC	68	14	Conner	SS	59	21	Hall,D	GDM	53

## KICK RETURNS

							No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD					
1	Sherels	SS	27	806	29.9	76	0	11	Karim	GDM	10	233	23.3	35	0	
2	Sproles	LAK	26	769	29.6	82	0	12	Hester,D	DTL	17	392	23.1	52	0	
3	McKnight	MAR	31	878	28.3	82	0	13	Cribbs	CHI	21	483	23.0	36	0	
4	Stroughter	CHP	46	1287	28.0	104	1	14	Cobb	DVU	25	572	22.9	35	0	
5	Scott,D	SBE	23	637	27.7	100	1	15	Tate,B	MVM	38	857	22.6	52	0	
6	Ginn Jr.	TCT	26	692	26.6	40	0	16	Weems	COW	20	449	22.5	35	0	
7	Harvin	PIC	18	458	25.4	40	0	17	Banks	MOH	39	864	22.2	47	0	
8	Gates,C	ICC	31	776	25.0	75	0	18	Mariani	YOR	24	528	22.0	49	0	
9	Logan	GWG	30	735	24.5	42	0	19	Lefeged	VV	18	345	19.2	29	0	
10	Washington	COM	32	765	23.9	36	0	20	Boykin	PIC	14	257	18.4	32	0	

## PUNT RETURNS

							No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD					
1	Jones,J	CHP	20	1	334	16.7	75	2	11	Weems	COW	28	7	286	10.2	17	0
2	Mariani	YOR	14	5	212	15.1	69	1	12	Logan	GWG	14	9	140	10.0	27	0
3	Sproles	LAK	19	7	277	14.6	84	2	13	Tate,B	MVM	13	3	119	9.2	18	0
4	Arenas	SC	12	4	170	14.2	31	0	14	Edwards,A	ICC	21	3	183	8.7	41	0
5	Ginn Jr.	TCT	18	3	235	13.1	25	0	15	Cribbs	CHI	21	3	181	8.6	13	0
6	Bess	DTL	10	11	125	12.5	23	0	16	Sherels	SS	10	3	81	8.1	13	0
7	Cobb	DVU	13	7	161	12.4	62	1	17	Jackson,D	SBE	16	12	127	7.9	23	0
8	Peterson,P	GDM	19	4	233	12.3	67	1	18	Adams,J	PIC	14	5	103	7.4	15	0
9	Washington	COM	16	2	189	11.8	19	0	19	Parrish	MAR	1	1	29	29.0	29	0
10	Banks	MOH	11	2	129	11.7	23	0	20	Decker	DTL	2	0	37	18.5	21	0



# AROUND THE



*With Spats McChad*

NEW YORK – The next time I consider making a trip to a place where somebody wants to lock me up and cut my head off, I won't announce my intention in a nationally syndicated column read by (or read to) the demented somebody in question. I do wish to thank my many supporters on the West Coast for giving me the heads up. You know who you are and I won't mention you by name – for your own protection. It turns out that a small group of **Chris Ferraro** loyalists (or low lifes) had planned to abduct me upon my arrival at the airport in Mission Viejo and take me to horrible place where, apparently, I would have been tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death by a court of One. That One would have been you know who – the barking mad Pretender to the Portuguese Throne, King Chris. His group of loyalists is called the '*League of the Red Pimple*' a small coterie of fanatics dedicated to over-throwing the current Portuguese Government and installing Nut Job as monarch. The group takes its name from the distinctive feature on the face of its leader – a large red boil on the end of his nose. This is certainly part of a disguise, as no person would allow himself to go on for so long with a giant boil on his nose and not seek medical attention. It also effectively distracts the eye, making it difficult to notice other features and characteristics. Nobody knows the true identity of the **Red Pimple** but I am determined to find out. My life may depend on it. Until I do, I will have to refrain from including details of my personal life in my columns, such as where I am drinking and living these days, until the **Red Pimple** is unmasked and brought to justice.

## ***THE LITTLE GENERAL***

The league learned suddenly last week that its model expansion franchise, the Commonwealth Colonials, was in some kind of undisclosed financial difficulty and required a bailout from the world's richest man, **Richard Rich**. The financial details are hard to come by, due to the private nature of the various transactions involved, but word of financial stress came as a shock given that wealthy English businessman **Richard Bransen** bankrolls the Colonials' operation and, last I heard, was not exactly hurting for cash.

The league hastily approved a bizarre deal and broke its own rules – apparently in desperation to preserve the integrity of its second foray into expansion – that essentially allowed Rich to “rent” the Colonials for a week with an option for two. As part of the deal, all of the Colonials' staff and players would remain with the team, but be at the disposal of Rich's son, Ryan – the richest boy in the world and occasional guest offensive coordinator with the Cowtown Corn Kings. Of course, Rich owns 45% of the Cowtown franchise and, under league ownership regulations, cannot have a stake, or “interest” in another EFL team. However, this inconvenient rule, like so many other inconvenient ones, was set aside by the EFL Directors under the cover of a favourable legal opinion on the meaning of the word “interest” – which apparently does not mean what everyone thinks it means, but actually means something slightly different. And in that difference there is room for the interpretation that the funds transferred to another team for the “benefit of the community” or for “promotional purposes” resulting in the party transferring the funds receiving consideration of a “non-monetary” kind (apart from incidentals listed in Appendix D of the agreement) would actually *not* be “interest” as intended by the Owner's By-Law. I don't pretend to understand the intricacies of how lawyers torture the English language – after all, I'm just a writer – but I think I understand that in the *Legalese* used by people in the law profession, words have mutable meanings to suit any occasion and that when you pay for a lawyer, you are paying to have the dictionary over-ruled.

The upshot of all this was that the Commonwealth Colonials received hasty designation as an ‘EFL Heritage Site’ and Richard/Ryan Rich was permitted to take over the team for a week, or two, while **Will Blandford** retreated to his lake view cottage in the Appalachian Mountains to spend a week, he says, “without electronic distractions, such as computers and I-devices, that rule our lives and steal our freedom – the very freedom our fore-fathers fought first to preserve in the Colonial Wars and then again in so many conflicts since.”

The reason for all of this apparently traces back to Cowtown's thumping of Iowa City in Week Seven. As you may recall, **Ryan Rich** was given control over the Corn Kings' offence for that game as part of the original sale agreement **Farmer Brown** made with Ryan's father, Richard. It was a night game and, with the Corn Kings leading 24-0 early in the third quarter, Ryan was forced to relinquish control because it was “bed time on a school night.” According to my sources, little Ryan threw a tantrum all the way through the tunnel and into parking lot that even the richest man in the world could not afford to ignore.

“This wouldn't happen if I had my own team!” he reportedly screeched. “I want my own team without people telling me



Commonwealth's 'Little General' **Ryan Rich** stands on the sideline in heritage costume watching with consternation as **Evan Dietrich-Smith** is called for holding, wiping out a first down on the game's first series. Things would get a lot worse later on as Ryan and the Colonials were dumped by Garland. 38-9.

what to do all the time! I don't want to go to bed!"

On and on it went until the father caved in and offered to buy him his own team.

"Really? You promise?" Ryan said through tears.

Rich promised but soon discovered there were no teams for sale. The next best option was to somehow force a deal with Bransen – the one owner whose fortune lay exposed in the public stock market. Exactly what was done with the market I have no information about, but whatever it was made a very wealthy man rent out his toy team to another wealthy man for the relatively paltry sum of \$50,000,000, according to a source close to the deal.

So Ryan took to the practice field early in the week to meet the bewildered Colonials players and teach them about a new offensive formation he called "The Klee." Looking very much like a standard 'Pro' set, "The Klee" can apparently change its look at

any time by adding and subtracting players and setting them up in different positions on or behind the line. When asked to explain how this differed from what most teams already do, Ryan got frustrated and barked that the offense had better "stop asking dumb questions and start learning the Klee or you're going to look bad on Sunday!"

Dubbed 'The Little General' by the Commonwealth coaching staff for his propensity to give orders instead of making requests, Ryan took the field on Sunday in Garland, Texas, wearing his 'Heritage Coach' outfit, which looked very much like a General's uniform from pre-revolutionary colonial times. He displayed the unbridled excitement and enthusiasm of a typical 10-year old in those unguarded moments between humorous attempts to appear stern and "coachly" on the sidelines. This unsuspecting innocence would soon disappear and be replaced by a series of fits that became progressively worse as the situation on the field deteriorated for Commonwealth.

Despite numerous cautions from his advisors and plenty of game film that showed the Mustangs were a pass-first team, the Little General took one look at Garland's twin running backs **Arian Foster** and **Matt Forte** and decided they were too dangerous to ignore. Out went the game plan and in came "random checks" on the Mustangs' running backs. It is perhaps, not surprising then, that Garland's first three touchdowns came on passing plays where Colonials' defenders, keying on the one of the two running backs, bit hard on the play action fake. As fortunes took a sharp turn for the worse in the third quarter, the wailing and stomping about the unfairness of it all reached a fever pitch on the Commonwealth sideline as **Patrick Peterson** spiked the ball in celebration after a 67-yard punt return for a TD that made the score 35-9.

It was a hard lesson in the real football world for the Little General, who had never had to carry full responsibility for a team before. But by the mid-way point of the fourth quarter he had become philosophical about the experience in a manner far beyond his years, while not for one second giving up efforts to score a touchdown. Not wishing to waste his starters in a losing cause, he brought in back-ups to try to score one last time and gave **Nick Foles** his first professional game experience. No doubt the Little General will be back and no one should take him lightly.

#### **ENCORE**

The 2011 Championship re-match between the LA Knights and the Gwinnett Gladiators did not disappoint viewers hoping for a dramatic encore. Despite uninspiring matching 3-4 records for both teams heading in, there was a championship atmosphere at Gwinnett Coliseum and a fervent need on the Gladiators' sideline to over-write memories of **Jamaal Charles** carving his way to the game-winning touchdown. A win might earn at least partial redemption for that lost opportunity. But on the LA sideline, the thinking was more pragmatic:

“This is a game we have to win for this year, not last year,” replied **Jeff Dohrn** to a question from a Gwinnett reporter about a victory “validating” last year’s result in the final.

Although both of these teams are struggling this year and earning their fair share of criticism in the process, there was nothing to criticize and much to admire about the way they played in Week Eight. The Glads earned a sliver of payback for their famous defeat at the hands of the Knights by overcoming a 16-point deficit in the second half and grinding out a 17-16 win on the legs of **LeSean McCoy**. But, perhaps more importantly, they also bolstered their playoff chances *this* year and demonstrated poise under pressure against a ‘Blue Shield’ that is finally starting to look like a “shield.”

For LA, it was another close loss; but losing by one point is no solace for this team. LA sees itself as the rightful owners of the West Division. A 3-5 record is not only humiliating, but possibly fatal to their playoff hopes, not to mention their chances at winning the division with unbeaten Death Valley seemingly running away with that prize. Missed opportunities in the red zone against Gwinnett in the first half could come back to haunt them later.

### **WOE IS ME**

The Violators bounced back after losing to Scarborough last week on a last-second field goal with a last-second field goal of their own to score a huge 25-24 win over Markham at the Dawg Pound. The North Stars looked like they had the game in hand after scoring 17 consecutive points to erase a 9-0 Virden lead. But QB, **Matt Stafford** came alive in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, out-dueling **Eli Manning** 2-1 in TD passes in the final period, but missing a critical 2-point conversion to set up a dramatic do-or-die game-winning kick by **Lawrence Tynes** as time expired. It was another stunning blow for newly competitive Markham, and Coach **Darrin Jones** did not take it very well.

When asked if he was worried about how this loss affects his team’s playoff aspirations, Jones replied: “Of course I’m worried. Wouldn’t you be worried if you were in my shoes? The whole town of Markham is counting on me and on this team. Some have been saving and starving for years to watch this team in a playoff game. They live in Markham for God’s sake, what else do they have to look forward to? But I’m going to put this on the record – should Markham *not* make the playoffs, *I will be stepping down as Head Coach.*”

Well, allow me to summarize Jones’ press conference more succinctly as: “*woe is me and my poor little powerhouse.*” Imagine having all those good players and losing to *other* teams with good players! Jones is being introduced to a whole new experience – *meaningful games*. With the entire win-starved outback of Markham watching and drooling while waiting for their winner to come, Jones is having a massive bout of stage fright. The stubborn and pugnacious leader who for years gritted out wins, or near-wins, against difficult odds has, suddenly, become a wimpy “hang-dawg” in the face of adversity. Jones had better get his self-pitying head out of his tight-as-a-vice ass or the North Stars will follow their leader back to Loserville.

### **AROUND THE EFL**

To make room for Professor McChad’s mid-Term Report Card, this will be a quick round-up of the rest of the games in Week Eight of the EFL:

In Twin Cities, **Jay Cutler** took his turn having his way with a loose Mohave secondary that has been spreading itself wide for any quarterback who comes along, passing the Triumph to a 28-17 victory. Cutler did not throw long (218 yards), but length doesn’t matter when you’re accurate (20 of 29) and know how to score (3 TDs). Rookie of the year candidate, running back **Doug Martin**, rushed for exactly 100 yards on 19 carries to account for exactly half of the Triumph’s 200 rushing yards. Mohave coach **Bobby Elder** was so agitated that he had a cigarette after the game – and he doesn’t even smoke.

The Undertakers remain undefeated half-way through the season after taking out the Spartans 38-16 at Thermopylae Stadium. **Drew Brees** added 4 more touchdown passes to his league-leading total, tying the season record of 36 set by **Aaron Rodgers** of the Florida Dragons in 2008. The offence continues to set the pace for this team, but the defence had a solid game as well, holding Pickering to 220 yards of offence and picking off **Robert Griffin III** four times. If the defence continues to improve, there might be no team capable of stopping Death Valley...and I’m not exaggerating...really.

**Chris Dickinson** started celebrating early, coming on to the field to shake hands with **Bill Belichick** and the Scarborough players after his team jumped out to a 17-0 lead in the first quarter against Iowa City. Happy as a clam, he left the stadium for a “hot date,” according to sources, and did not find out until he was at the undisclosed Toronto club that his team was protecting a 3-point lead with the Cubs driving into Blue Eagles’ territory. Dickinson can be forgiven for expecting his team to bury the lowly Cubs once they had a 17-point lead; what can’t be forgiven is the play of his team in letting the Cubs back in it. **Deron Redding** hates getting “dissed” which would have triggered an A-grade motivational speech at half time; but Scarborough complacency was the ultimate culprit and the first sign of weakness for this unbeaten titan.

A similar situation developed across the continent in Chino, CA., where the Convicts jumped out to a 17-0 lead and watched as talent-challenged Sebastian scraped their way back into it. The comeback was not as dramatic, nor as effective as the Cubs’ effort, but **Robert Meacham**’s 59-yard TD catch to pull within 3 points caused a small riot at the Big House nonetheless. Any excuse for mischief at the only stadium that doubles as an exercise yard for maximum security inmates. After quickly quelling the disturbance, security forces relaxed after **Cam Newton** put the game away with 13-yard touchdown pass to **Greg Olsen**.

**FLIGHT CLUB** – Teams that ran away from their opponents on the scoreboard join the weekly Flight Club. Cowtown flew farther than any other with a 45-7 clobbering of the Patsies. The defenceless Pats are painful to watch but there are still unfortunately 8 games to go.

South Carolina regulated Mission Viejo, limiting them to 10 points while hanging 38 on them in return. **Chris Ferraro** removed himself as trainer and hired septuagenarian **Don Wildman**.

Finally, in Durham, the return of **Matt Schaub** to the starting line-up was a spectacular one as Durham hammered York 39-13 at Jurassic Park. It was a shockingly dominant performance against the team that was ranked second in offence and first overall in defence heading into the game, and it showed what the Dinos are capable of when they hang on to the ball, avoid the sack, and complete passes to open receivers. **Jay Hammond** was stunned into silence, refusing to appear before the Media afterwards and earning a fine from the league for his truancy. For **George Kaldis**, some of his hair actually turned black from grey in front of the cameras and he smiled in public for the first time since a 2007 victory over the Corn Kings.



## Professor McChad's Mid-Term Report Card

December 2012

In the Hallowed Halls of High Learning in the Living Football University called the EFL only the strictest standards apply. As a Senior Fellow of said EFL University it falls on me to maintain those standards by applying rigour to my grades. No team is spared the most exacting analysis and criticism based on my profound and every-increasing knowledge of this wonderful sport. For the sake of the sport, I spare no one. But if you meet or exceed the standard, you will be recognized and, in rare cases, praised. Here is my rating scale:

**A: Excellent    B: Good    C: Fair    D: Poor    F: Fail**

A plus (+) indicates slightly above the grade; a minus (-) slightly less.

**Charleswood (F):** The only good thing that can be said about the Pats' season is that it is half over. My first ever failing grade takes into account a disastrous off-season that set the stage for the current horror show on the football field. It also takes into account an on-field performance that falls well below already low expectations. The few star players left standing have fallen on their faces, leaving Jacoby Jones and rookie safety Mark Barron the "cover boys" on the team's programs. Injuries, soft play, and stale game plans have made the first half of this season one Jason Findlay wants to forget; unfortunately, if the second half is anything like the first, the whole will be unforgettably bad.

**Chino (B):** The "Cam-Do" squad is sitting pretty at 5-3, good for second place in the West – the spot most expected the Knights to occupy. Individual effort has compensated for some overall team weaknesses, especially on offence. Cam Newton is the leading rusher, the leading passer, and has been involved in 19 of the team's 20 touchdowns. On the defensive side, pass-rusher Julius Peppers is having an All Pro season with a league-leading 10 sacks and 5 forced fumbles. A couple of bad losses to LA and Commonwealth stained an otherwise promising first half of the season. The Convicts are walking a tightrope over a gorge for a playoff berth and will fall to their deaths if Newton fails to deliver down the stretch or the defence suddenly stops stripping the ball at a league-leading pace.

**Commonwealth (B+):** When they have lost, they've lost big; but the Colonials have demonstrated the ability to consistently win over teams in their own weight class and a little above. Chopping down Chino at the Big House ranks as a significant upset and it caused detractors to pause and consider for a brief moment what a Commonwealth playoff appearance would look like; but it was a *very* brief moment. With little to boast about in terms of personnel, the defence has played exceedingly well and the offence has had its stellar moments. It has been as good as it can get for the expansion colonizers and they deserve a good grade at mid-term before the coming fall.

**Cowtown (B+):** The Corn Kings were mauled by Scarborough but otherwise have made the case that last year was no fluke. With stiffer competition in their Division they remain in the thick of the hunt due to a good defence and an offence that punts too much but manages to find the end zone under pressure. Off-season acquisitions have delivered; Larry Fitzgerald has replaced Santana Moss as Joe Flacco's main scoring target, Justin Smith is dominating the line, and the corner tandem of Brandon Flowers and Corey Webster have made fans forget about those other two guys they had last year. With their receiving corps fully healthy heading into the second half, look for a strong finish down the stretch.

**Death Valley (A+):** A perfect 8-0 for the Undertakers was not on anybody's projection sheet before the season started; but this team has been full value for their unblemished record. The story of their success has been an out-of-control offence, led by Drew Brees, that appears certain to break a number of individual and team records this season. As if that is not enough, the slow but steady rehabilitation of the historically bad Death Valley defence is another portent of doom for opponents

going forward; despite surrendering too many yards, they lead all defences in takeaways and lately have been clamping down on the passing game. They are the prohibitive favourites to win the West and the most likely candidates to meet York or Virden in the PAC Final.

**Durham (A)**: Now the odds-on favourite to win the North Division, Durham did not expect to come out of a six-game Matt Schaub absence with a 5-1 record. The fact that they did is a testament to the strength of their personnel and the game-day coaching of Coach Kaldis. At 7-1, with a healthy Schaub, there is no reason to expect a fall off in production from the offence and the combination of pass rush and secondary on defence will continue to make passing the ball on Durham a challenge. A little more potency from the running game and fewer turnovers would have boosted my grade by a half.

**Garland (B)**: The Mustangs had to fight through a rash of injuries to their running backs that arguably cost them at least one game in the standings. For a team that likes to use two starters in the back field, the loss of their first, second, third and (yes) fourth string running backs at around the same time was a severe handicap during the important divisional and conference rounds. With that in mind, grading the Mustangs is a challenge because we have not seen them at full capacity against a top tier team. Losing to their main competitors within the division during the first half would have been more comforting if the defence had shown more aggressiveness. They have the personnel to turn back the top teams, they need to develop the attitude.

**Gwinnett (C)**: It has been a cold and hot run, in that order, for last year's CAC Champions. A loss at home to Sebastian was the low point of an 0-4 start that featured a clinic by Ben Roethlisberger on how to turn the ball over and keep your job. 15 giveaways by the offence is perhaps all that is needed to explain the poor start, because since then they have turned it over just twice while evening their record with a 4-game winning streak. Getting LeSean McCoy more involved in the running game during that time has also helped the cause on offence. The defence has been steady, if unspectacular, with Troy Polamalu keeping a careening secondary from sinking too far and the front seven stabilizing the line of scrimmage. The Glads have the weapons to return to the playoffs, but will need Big Ben to wield them well.

**Iowa City (D+)**: The Cubs are mirroring their patterns of previous years with a couple of surprise performances against big-name teams interspersed with bewilderingly flat efforts against poor or middle-of-the-road teams. The difference this season is that their surprise performances are not earning them wins. This is due to an off-season youth movement that makes it nearly impossible for Redding's squad to truly compete with good teams on a good day, while the intemperate minds of their young players make them susceptible to total breakdowns that can be fatal against any team, including one as bad as Mission Viejo. Although it would be easy, it would be wrong to lay the blame at Russell Wilson's doorstep. In addition to key injuries on defence, the main problem has been a defensive backfield with no depth and little talent. That won't get that fixed this year, so expect more misery if you're a Cubs fan.

**Los Angeles (C)**: A 3-5 record for the defending Champions brings a mark of 'D' to mind, but the Knights have not played as badly as their record suggests. Their positive point differential is better than many teams ahead of them and their losses have all been close against good or top tier teams. The offence has performed well under the direction of QB Alex Smith and deserves better help from the defence than it has received so far. The Knights' woes on defence - the traditional strength of their team - are partly explained by off-season cap troubles that prevented them from signing any help for the starters in the secondary. While the 'Blue Shield' continues to stop the run, they are surrendering a league-high 322 yards passing per game. As long as the Knights joust with opponents while missing half their armour, they will remain vulnerable to close losses and will likely fall out of the hunt one year after reigning at the top.

**Markham (C+)**: In any other year, a 4-3-1 record for Markham at the half-way point would attract high praise; but with expectations so high and no lack of quality personnel, the North Stars have not quite reached the level they had hoped for yet. Darrin Jones is learning to manage a new group on offence and is finding out why Virden was quick to package off Eli Manning for draft picks and developing talent. The QB has been at the center of the team's turnover woes with 9 interceptions and a league-high 9 fumbles. Take half of those away (pun intended) and it is likely the North Stars are at least tied with Durham for the top spot in the North Division. Markham needs to improve if they are going to reach the post-season for the first time in its history.

**Mission Viejo (D-)**: No failing grade here for the Monarchs due entirely to a shocking Week Five upset over Iowa City. Otherwise, this team is as bad as it gets; the only difference between them and Charleswood is that the Monarchs are supposed to be totally horrendous, making their single win a near-miraculous achievement. Whether Colt McCoy or Ryan Tannehill is at QB, they cannot move the ball, and with Lardarius Web the lone wolf in the secondary, they cannot stop opponents from moving the ball. It all equals frustration and misery for the team's fans and their lunatic owner. If they win another game it will be a successful season for this Royal court of misfits.

**Mohave (D+)**: After a dreadful start the Hellfire are starting to bring a little heat on their opponents; but it is not enough to rescue their grade. The abysmal defence against the pass is making the decision to franchise Champ Bailey look more pig-headed by the week. Name a defensive category other than sacks and Mohave is stuck near the bottom of it. The offence has

some bite, but not enough to take a healthy chunk out of the liability of the defence. The good news is that Andrew Luck is progressing in difficult circumstances and that promises well for the future.

**Pickering (C-):** Lipstick, in the form of an encouraging review emphasizing the challenges of their competition and the price of learning on the job for a rookie QB, won't make this pig any prettier. The bottom line of 2-6 is far below what everyone expected from this team. Pause to consider that it is the same record as Twin Cities and your jaw can't help but drop - just don't let Gus Konstantakos see it or he'll punch you there. As far as 2-6 teams go, however, this one is at the top. Three very tough losses on the road against three playoff calibre teams seem to have popped the Spartans' balloon of hope and since then the margins of losses have grown. Robert Griffin is struggling and with him the passing attack, which is the league's worst - yes, worse than the Monarchs. Griffin will improve, but not in time to save the season.

**Scarborough (A):** Perfection is perfection, but when a team reaches the pinnacle it is style that makes the difference between high acclaim and simple acclaim. The Blue Eagles have finally found their way under the direction of Chris Dickinson and the style is a defensive one. The most difficult defence inside its own red zone does not bend much either and has surrendered the fewest points in the league. Credit two of the game's great stars, Terrell Suggs and Darrelle Revis with creating havoc in opponents' game plans, inducing penalties, and generally making everyone around them better. The offence under Aaron Rodgers has been effective but muted. The defence has not let a game get away from them so the offence has never been put to the shootout test. Until we know what they can do under pressure, an A+ is just beyond reach.

**Sebastian (C-):** The Swordfish record alone deserves a 'D' but an appreciation of the challenges posed by the absence of a single impact player anywhere on their active roster (Kenny Britt is out for the season) creates another 'Mission Viejo Effect,' with their single victory on the road versus Gwinnett standing out as another sign of Armageddon, or Divine Intervention, depending on your viewpoint. The quarterback coin flip appears to have landed (surprise, surprise) on Coach Lemmon's favourite, Andy Dalton. With that question answered, and Chandler Jones a future PFA, there remains just 20 others to answer for next year. In the mean time, the best has happened already for Sebastian in 2012 and it will be a long second half.

**South Carolina (C+):** A rich man's Mohave, the Regulators strike fear in the weak but simply furrow the brows of the strong - temporarily. There are some big names on this team but none of them have impressed as much as they should; and that is because they are surrounded by journeymen and Tony Romo. It is probably time to acknowledge that Romo is a paper tiger who doesn't have the nerve to get the job done against the better competition, but who has the raw talent to scalp any mediocre defence. At 4-4, South Carolina is a little above projections because of a surprise win over Gwinnett while the Glads were suffering their post-final depression. For that win they get a + next to a well-deserved 'C.'

**Twin Cities (C):** In expansion team circles, the Triumph's 2-6 record must be humiliating. They see themselves as the best of the new kids on the block, but the Colonials' 5-3 record is impossible to dismiss, especially when one of those wins came against the Triumph. So, as the second best expansion team, the Triumph have impressed by not laying down for the good teams while pulling off two convincing wins over Sebastian and Mohave. Jay Cutler has looked better than he ever did with the Convicts while rookie running back Doug Martin is a viable candidate for Rookie of the Year. The defence, led by Ray Lewis, is respectable even if it is unlikely to turn the game around on its own. If they were to switch places with Commonwealth, could their record be reversed?

**Viriden (A-):** The offence has carried this team farther than even Coach Barrate expected. Matt Stafford is in a position to break the old single-season TD pass record this year, but nobody will notice because Drew Brees will set a new record long before Stafford reaches the current one. The defence is beginning to show signs of use, but that was just a matter of time since it takes a lot of energy to play over your head. As long as they continue to generate turnovers, though, they will keep the team in the games. Viriden has a lot more going for them than people thought but they also have a lot of what people thought holding them back. In view of their challenges, they deserve an A-grade for taking hanging in with York over half a season.

**York (B+):** Getting shellacked by Durham in Week 8 knocked this grade down. Like reading a perfectly laid out and articulated term paper and discovering at the end the student has drawn the wrong conclusions, I am forced to re-think my favorable impressions of this year's edition of the Swords, which have been piling up since their Week 1 whitewash of Mohave. For the greater part of 8 games they have looked like the class of the league defensively, and their offence has been both balanced and deadly. But everything they did well for most of 7 games they failed to in one very important game against a team they may yet see again on a much bigger stage - if all goes well. The fear lurking in the back of York fans' minds is that their big stars might be big chokers as well. As good as they appear to be, they will have to prove they can beat the Big Boys to be one of them.

#### MID-SEASON MVPS

OFFENCE  
Drew Brees (QB) - Death Valley

DEFENCE  
Julius Peppers (DE) - Chino

# BUG THE BOOKIE!

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

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**RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 8:**

**53-25-2**

### JIMMY'S WEEK NINE PICKS

#### **CHARLESWOOD @ MARKHAM (line – NORTH STARS by 13)**

Here is another miserable Charleswood stat to ponder: they own a minus 13 takeaway to turnover ratio, the worst in the league by 5. This kind of number is usually enough on its own to explain a losing record, but in the case of Charleswood, where losses are expected anyway, it helps to explain why they are getting clobbered by an average differential of 20 to 21 points a game. Why mention this number to the public and expose the Pats to more ridicule? Because it assists the bettor in grasping why a 13-point spread in favour of a powerhouse like the North Stars, at home, is a bargain begging to be snatched up. The Markham franchise is angry after dropping two games in a row and will be eager to lay a beat down on a team at the bottom of the league's pecking order.

**PICK: MARKHAM**

#### **VIRDEN @ COWTOWN (line – CORN KINGS by 4)**

The Corn Kings are completely healthy for the first time since the Week One while the Violators are down 7 bodies. One of those, Julio Jones, has played a big role in helping Matt Stafford lead all mortal quarterbacks in passing (Drew Brees being a Demi-God) with 45 catches, 7 for TDs. Virden is deep at receiver, but Jones is the principal play-maker and he will be missed against the current overall top-rated defence in the league. But Virden has not really played a bad game this year, even in defeat, and their coach is adept at getting bang for the buck from a sketchy defence. When Cowtown has the ball, they may want to slow down DeMarcus Ware by turning the ball over earlier to Maurice Jones-Drew, who has played mostly a mop-up role this season and is ready to carry a game on his shoulders. I don't know who will win, but I do think 4 points is a tad generous. **PICK: VIRDEN**

#### **YORK @ TWIN CITIES (line – EXCALIBURS by 4)**

The Excaliburs are naturally eager to replace a bad memory of their Week Eight debacle at Jurassic Park with a nice, warm and fuzzy one involving stomping all over the faces of the expansion Triumph. But consistent, workman-like outings by Twin Cities thus far in the season suggest that this will look and feel like a real game – at least for a while. I can't see how York could lose, especially since they will be surly and motivated, but I can see how a win might take some real effort, and if they step on the field expecting to find the Triumph lying on the turf they could be ambushed and embarrassed. The main hope for the home team lies in the ability of Jay Cutler to stay upright in the face of a strong Sword pass rush; the other is prayer. **PICK: YORK**

#### **PICKERING @ MOHAVE (line – SPARTANS by 1)**

At six games and counting, the Spartans losing streak is replacing the European Union bailout of Greece as the main topic of conversation in Greek cafes in the Greater Toronto Area, and causing a greater stir. The proud Greeks who run, operate and support North America's only Hellenic American rules football team are angry; as they often are even when things are going well. Imagine what it must be like to listen to them now! How does this affect the game this Sunday, you ask? It means there is the weight of an ex-patriot Greek nation on the shoulders of Gus Konstantakos and his team, and if that is not enough pressure to freak out Robert Griffin more than his opponents already do, then the uncertainty and cacophony of the Mexican replacement fans in Mohave will make his experience a bizarre as well as a stressful one. The Hellfire have an opportunity to win back their real fans with a strong outing against a reeling, but still dangerous opponent; but I expect them to waste it. The defence is just too weak and the offence not strong enough or imaginative enough to keep pace. The Spartans will return to the win column, but it may be too late to save their season. **PICK: PICKERING**

### **COMMONWEALTH @ SCARBOROUGH (line – BLUE EAGLES by 10)**

The Commonwealth Cinderellas lost one of their glass slippers last week in Texas and are about to have their other one smashed in Scarborough this week. Unfortunately, a child will have to witness it. The strange transaction that put a 10-year-old on the Commonwealth sideline with full control over the team still boggles my mind. Apparently there are people out there who like the idea, including the owner, who is AWOL in the wilderness evading a nation-wide warrant for child abuse. There will be a little relief for the poor kid as LaMarr Woodley and Justin Tuck are out for Scarborough, but after the fifth sack and third interception of Josh Freeman he won't notice or care. It's going to be another ugly game in a week with plenty of them. **PICK:**

**SCARBOROUGH**

### **LOS ANGELES @ SOUTH CAROLINA (line – Pick'Em)**

It is still too early to start doing the math to calculate elimination dates, but that date will certainly come soon for the Knights if they don't win this game. At 4-4, the Regulators are in better shape, but three of their four wins have come against soft targets. The Knights will not be polite guests, so South Carolina should ditch the southern hospitality and attack the vulnerable knights' secondary. We all know it will be coming back the other way, so you should expect a typical southern shootout, with gun-slinger Tony Romo still standing when the sun sets. **PICK: SOUTH CAROLINA**

### **GWINNETT @ DEATH VALLEY (line – UNDERTAKERS by 11)**

The only aspect of this game I am confident betting on is that Drew Brees will set a new TD pass record. Other than that there is uncertainty. Based on the overall records and the Undertakers' supernatural offence, it is a safer bet to go with the favourite here, even with the 11-point spread, because when games against Death Valley get out of hand, the result is often a blowout. But the Glads are on a four-game winning streak during which they have looked a lot more like the team that made it to the Final last year. After throwing 10 picks in his first four games, Big Ben has thrown just 1 since, and a mistake-free Roethlisberger can do a lot of damage. Not as much as Brees, of course, but if the Glads can force Brees to the air on their terms, the Undertakers' pivot is no stranger to trying to fit the ball into tight spaces under pressure and getting picked off instead. Of course, a lot of wild things can happen in the unnatural Graveyard weather so I'll just sit back, enjoy the show, and bet on Gwinnett to keep it close. **PICK: GWINNETT**

### **IOWA CITY @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 8)**

The Cubbies stepped up and surprised the complacent Blue Eagles last week, falling by a single field goal to a team that should have flayed them without a second thought. Such are the Cubs – unpredictable. But don't expect Durham to celebrate early as Scarborough did after jumping out to a 17-0 lead. Expect them, instead, to demolish a Cubs' secondary that is ill-equipped to handle three top notch receivers and two play-making tight ends on the field simultaneously, to swat down Russell Wilson passes at the line of scrimmage, and to pick off a pass at a key moment to turn the game into a laughter. **PICK: DURHAM**

### **CHINO @ GARLAND (line – MUSTANGS by 6)**

This is an interesting game – interesting because the Garland corners will match up favourably against a weak set of starting wide receivers, opening up more aggressive defensive options for the typically conservative Mustangs' coach. Interesting, because of what people are hoping to see from Cam Newton against a stay-at-home defence loaded with talent; and interesting also because, while these teams are very different, they own identical records, hold identical positions in their respective divisions behind unbeaten teams, and both need every win they can get. I don't expect to see much success in the conventional running game for either team, which means this game will come down to aerial strikes from Matt Ryan versus the all-purpose commando style of Cam Newton, with a long list of potential game-changers on both defences looking for their shot to make a difference. Like I said, it is an interesting game. **PICK: CHINO**

### **MISSION VIEJO @ SEBASTIAN (line – SWORDFISH by 5)**

The owner of the Swordfish is sponsoring a free fish fry to promote tailgating and to attract fans to the Fish Tank. It is part of an effort to turn around flagging ticket sales that have resulted in two straight local TV blackouts in Sebastian in the past two games. It's a nice gesture, but there's not enough fish in the sea to attract fans to a game against Mission Viejo. If only they could find a way to get more fans to this particular game it would help the cause of Florida football because the Swordfish are going to look like pretty good against the team that is ranked dead last in both offence and defence. **PICK: SEBASTIAN**