

BEST OPENING MONTH RECORDS, PAST 10 YEARS

Getting off to a strong start is important. In the past 10 years, 16 teams have a combined record of .500 or better through their first four games. Those 16 clubs have combined for 80 playoff appearances in those years and accounted for nine of the 10 Super Bowl champions over that period.

The top opening month records (.500 or better) of the past 10 years (1994-03):

TEAM	RECORD	PCT.	TEAM	RECORD	PCT.
Miami	30-10	.750	New England	22-18	.550
Denver	29-11	.725	Pittsburgh	22-18	.550
Green Bay	28-12	.700	Seattle	22-18	.550
Kansas City	27-13	.675	Buffalo	21-19	.525
Minnesota	25-15	.625	Dallas	21-19	.525
St. Louis	24-16	.600	Indianapolis	21-19	.525
San Francisco	24-16	.600	N.Y. Giants	20-20	.500
Oakland	23-17	.575	Tampa Bay	20-20	.500



2004 KICKOFF WEEKEND NOTES

It's a special time, Kickoff Weekend, which begins Thursday, September 9 this season in primetime. It's when things start to count.

"Every game matters and this is the first one," says Green Bay Packers head coach **MIKE SHERMAN**. "You want to get off to a good start."

Some clubs have excelled in openers. Some notable active NFL kickoff streaks:

- The Super Bowl champion **NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS**, who host the Indianapolis Colts in the spotlight Kickoff 2004 game on Thursday night, have won seven of their past nine home openers, including a perfect 2-0 record at Gillette Stadium.
- The **INDIANAPOLIS COLTS**, who travel to New England to face the Patriots in a primetime rematch of the AFC Championship Game, have won five consecutive openers, the longest current streak in the NFL.
- Since the 1970 merger, the **MIAMI DOLPHINS** are 29-5 (.853) in home openers, the best mark in the NFL during that time. The Dolphins own a 22-15-1 (.595) opening-game mark and have won 11 of their past 12 openers.
- The **DALLAS COWBOYS** have an NFL-best 30-13-1 (.698) record in openers. The Cowboys have won seven of their past 10 home openers, for an overall 23-9 (.719) home kickoff record.
- The **JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS** have won six of their past eight openers for an AFC-best 6-3 (.667) opening-game record (minimum five games).
- The **OAKLAND RAIDERS** are 27-6-1 (.809) in home openers since 1970.
- **MIKE SHANAHAN**, head coach of the **DENVER BRONCOS**, is 9-2 (.818) in career openers. The Broncos, who open the season in a primetime divisional matchup on Sunday night against the Kansas City Chiefs, have won 12 of their past 15 openers. Denver is 27-6-1 (.809) in home openers since 1970.
- The **TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS** have won five of their past seven home openers and head coach **JON GRUDEN** is 4-2 (.667) in his career in home openers.
- The **HOUSTON TEXANS** have never lost an opener in the franchise's history (2-0).
- The **NEW YORK JETS**, who host the Cincinnati Bengals, open the season at home for just the 12th time in the club's 45-year history.
- The **ST. LOUIS RAMS** have won eight of their past 12 openers and seven of their past nine openers in St. Louis.
- **NFC NORTH DIVISION STREAKS:** The **MINNESOTA VIKINGS** have won 14 of their past 17 home openers. The **CHICAGO BEARS** have won 15 of their last 20 home openers. The **DETROIT LIONS** have won nine of their past 13 home openers. The **GREEN BAY PACKERS** have won six of their past eight home openers.
- **HOME SWEET HOME:** The **KANSAS CITY CHIEFS** have won 12 of their past 15 home openers. The **SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS** have won nine of their last 11 home openers, outscoring opponents 347-205 in those games. The **SAN DIEGO CHARGERS** have won eight of their past 11 home openers. The **NEW ORLEANS SAINTS** have won five of their past six home openers.
- **ROAD WARRIORS:** The **ARIZONA CARDINALS** open the season in St. Louis, the 16th time in the past 17 years they have opened on the road.