

NFL GameDay

WEEK 16

NEW YORK GIANTS @ NEW YORK JETS

THE BATTLE FOR NEW YORK HAD SPECIAL MEANING FOR FORMER GIANT PLAXICO BURRESS.

HE WAS THE ONLY OFFENSIVE PLAYER INTRODUCED WITH THE JETS DEFENSE. AND HE WAS THE ONLY JET SENT OUT FOR THE COIN TOSS. BUT THE STORY OF THIS GAME WASN'T ABOUT THIS RECEIVER. // IT WAS ABOUT THIS ONE.

HE WAS AN UNKNOWN ROOKIE WEARING NUMBER 3 LAST YEAR WHEN THESE 2 TEAMS MET IN THE PRESEASON.

NUMBER 3 SCORED 3 TOUCHDOWNS THAT NIGHT.

REX RYAN NOW KNOWS WHO VICTOR CRUZ IS. // BUT HE'S STILL A GUY THE JETS HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT HOW TO STOP.

MARK SANCHEZ HAD 30 COMPLETIONS, BUT THEY CAME ON 59 PASS ATTEMPTS.

THAT'S HARDLY GROUND AND POUND.

AND THE NORMALLY ACCURATE ELI MANNING COMPLETED JUST 9 PASSES ALL GAME. THAT'S HOW MANY PUNTS EACH TEAM HAD. THERE WERE 7 PUNTS IN THE THIRD QUARTER ALONE BEFORE VICTOR CRUZ HELPED SET UP THE GIANTS SECOND TOUCHDOWN.

"TALK IS CHEAP, PLAY THE GAME." THAT'S WHAT TOM COUGHLIN SAID LAST WEEK. AND IF YOU WATCHED COUGHLIN IT LOOKED LIKE HE DID PLAY. HE EVEN TOOK A VICIOUS HIT. // AND IN THE END, HE WATCHED HIS TEAM WIN THE BATTLE OF NEW YORK.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES @ DALLAS COWBOYS

DALLAS: LAND OF THE STAR....AND STARLETTES...AND A STAR-CROSSED QUARTERBACK FACING THE NFL'S TOP PASS RUSH.

IT WASN'T A SACK...BUT THIS FIRST QUARTER BLOW TO TONY ROMO'S RIGHT HAND RESULTED IN A PRECAUTIONARY BENCHING FOR THE REST OF THE GAME DUE TO THE TEXAS-SIZED SWELLING THAT FOLLOWED.

IN THE END, THERE WAS NO MAJOR SIGNIFIGANCE TO THIS GAME THANKS TO THE GIANTS EARLIER VICTORY OVER THE JETS.

DESPITE BEING ELIMINATED FROM THE PLAYOFFS, THE EAGLES WENT ALL OUT FOR A MORAL VICTORY -- WHILE THE COWBOYS, WITH NOTHING TO GAIN, ACCEPTED AN INCONSEQUENTIAL DEFEAT.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS @ DETROIT LIONS

THE LAST TIME THE LIONS MADE THE PLAYOFFS WAS IN 1999. DETROIT AND ITS FANS HAD WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS MOMENT AND WEREN'T GOING TO LET IT SLIP AWAY. THE LIONS OFFENSE SCORED ON ALL FOUR OF ITS FIRST HALF POSSESSIONS.

THE CHARGERS WERE ALSO TRYING TO KEEP THEIR PLAYOFF HOPES ALIVE, BUT SAN DIEGO COULD ONLY MANAGE ONE TOUCHDOWN AGAINST A DETERMINED LIONS DEFENSE.

THE MOTOR CITY WAS REVVED UP, AND IN THE SECOND HALF, THE LIONS CROSSED THE FINISH LINE INTO THE POST SEASON.

CHICAGO BEARS @ GREEN BAY PACKERS

ALL GREEN BAY WANTED FOR CHRISTMAS WAS TO BEAT CHICAGO AND SECURE HOME-FIELD ADVANTAGE THROUGHOUT THE PLAYOFFS.

AARON RODGERS HAS BEEN MORE THAN A HANDFUL FOR DEFENSES ALL YEAR. HE DRESSED DOWN CHICAGO BY THROWING FIVE TOUCHDOWNS IN A GAME FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CAREER.

RODGERS' MVP CALIBER SEASON NOW INCLUDES 45 TOUCHDOWN PASSES, AND A FRANCHISE RECORD 4,643 PASSING YARDS.

TAMPA BAY @ CAROLINA PANTHERS

PLAYING FOOTBALL, CAM NEWTON LOOKS LIKE A KID ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

HE ALSO LOOKS LIKE PERHAPS THE NFL'S BEST ATHLETE.

CAROLINA DID ITS SHARE OF TAKING AS WELL, FORCING FOUR TAMPA BAY TURNOVERS.

DEANGELO WILLIAMS AND THE PANTHERS OFFENSE SCORED ON EIGHT OF THEIR ELEVEN POSSESSIONS.

AGAINST THE BUCS, CAM NEWTON BROKE PEYTON MANNING'S ROOKIE PASSING RECORD AND NEEDS JUST 107 YARDS IN WEEK 17 TO BE THE FIRST ROOKIE TO THROW FOR 4,000 YARDS.

RARELY DOES A ROOKIE TRANSFORM A FRANCHISE AS NEWTON HAS IN 2011. HIS ABILITY AND ENERGY HAVE BEEN INFECTIOUS AND FANS ARE EAGERLY AWAITING THE GIFTS HE MIGHT DELIVER AT THIS TIME NEXT YEAR.

DENVER BRONCOS @ BUFFALO BILLS

ROOKIE NOSE TACKLE MARCELL DAREUS WAS INTENT ON ENDING BOTH BUFFALO'S SEVEN-GAME LOSING STREAK -- AND THE TIDAL WAVE OF TEBOW-MANIA. TO DO SO HE'D HAVE TO OVERCOME DENVER'S DOUBLE-TEAM BLOCKING.

DAREUS BOWLED OVER THE BRONCOS -- AND TEAMMATE C.J. SPILLER DID THE SAME ON OFFENSE. SPILLER RUSHED FOR A HUNDRED YARDS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS NFL CAREER, AND ALSO SCORED A TOUCHDOWN.

THE BILLS DEFENSE ALSO CASHED IN.

BUT TEBOW'S TORMENT WASN'T QUITE OVER.

ST. LOUIS RAMS @ PITTSBURGH STEELERS

CHARLIE BATCH STARTED AT QUARTERBACK AND GOT CLOCKED.

HE TOOK A LICKING BUT KEPT ON TICKING.

ARIZONA CARDINALS @ CINCINNATI BENGALS

WELL, CHRISTMAS HAS COME AND GONE, BUT LOOK WHO ROSE TO THE OCCASION. JEROME SIMPSON! AND THIS HIGH-KICKING SANTA VAULTED OVER THE ARIZONA CARDINALS.

THERE'S A REASON SOME TEAMS ARE STILL ALIVE FOR THE PLAYOFFS, AND OTHERS ARE NOT.

MIAMI DOLPHINS @ NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

THE 2011 DOLPHINS, KNOWN FOR PLAYING TEAMS TOUGH BUT STILL LOSING, JUMPED OUT TO A 17-TO-NOTHING LEAD OVER THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS.

BUT THEN TOM BRADY FOUND WES WELKER...

ROB GRONKOWSKI #87 BROKE A FEW TACKLES...

AND ONCE AGAIN, THE PATRIOTS ARE IN LINE FOR THE AFC'S TOP SEED.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS @ SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

WATCH OUT JIM HARBAUGH, PETE CARROLL'S HERE TO CHEW BUBBLE GUM AND KICK BUTT, AND HE'S ALL OUT OF BUBBLE GUM.

THE SEAHAWKS ALSO SCORED THE FIRST RUSHING TOUCHDOWN ON THE NINERS ALL SEASON. BUT ULTIMATELY FELL TO A 37-YEAR-OLD, BUTT-KICKING, KICKING MACHINE.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS @ TENNESSEE TITANS

BY HOOK OR BY CROOK, OR BY COOK, THE TITANS KEPT THEIR PLAYOFF HOPES ALIVE AGAINST JACKSONVILLE.

TIGHT END JARED COOK LED THE LEAGUE IN RECEIVING IN WEEK 16 WITH 169 YARDS.

THE JAGUARS ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE THE WORST OFFENSE IN THE NFL. BUT THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE THEY'LL SCORE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

WHIPAROUND:

Cleveland @ Baltimore; Atlanta @ New Orleans; Oakland @ Kansas City; Houston @ Indianapolis; Minnesota @ Washington

BY WEEK 16, IT'S EASY TO SEPARATE THE PRETENDERS FROM THE LEGITIMATE PLAYOFF TEAMS.

BUT ON ANY GIVEN SATURDAY, VISIONS OF A CHRISTMAS EVE MIRACLE CAN DANCE IN A LAST PLACE TEAM'S HEAD.

FOR 27 YEARS NO QUARTERBACK COULD PUT AWAY DAN MARINO, UNTIL DREW BREES BROKE THE SINGLE-SEASON PASSING RECORD.

WEARING THE SAME #3 AS RAIDER LEGEND DARYL LAMONICA, THE NEW MAD BOMBER IN OAKLAND IS CARSON PALMER.

THE RAIDERS ALSO HAVE SOME MAD BLOCKERS – RICHARD SEYMOUR SNUFFED OUT TWO KANSAS CITY FIELD GOAL ATTEMPTS BEFORE OAKLAND LINED UP FOR THEIR OWN GAME WINNER IN OVERTIME.

CHRISTMAS IS A GREAT DAY TO BE A KID; YOU CAN UNWRAP A FEW GADGETS THEN GO OUT AND PLAY *FREEZE TAG*OR CHUCK A BALL AROUND AND TRY TO *HIT STUFF*, THEN GO TO SLEEP WHILE DREAMING ABOUT A GAME-WINNING TOUCHDOWN PASS.

OK -- SAINT NICK, UNCLE SAM, AND FORMER HEAD OF OFFICIALS ART MCNALLY WALK INTO A BAR.

BARTENDER SAYS -- WHAT DO WORLD WAR TWO'S BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC AND BEATING THE REDSKINS HAVE IN COMMON? THE VIKINGS LOOK AT THE BARTENDER AND SAY -- *SUBS*.