

NFL GAMEDAY

WEEK 17

CAROLINA PANTHERS @ ATLANTA FALCONS

NEITHER THE FALCONS NOR THE PANTHERS PLAYED GREAT THIS YEAR. BOTH HAD LOSING RECORDS. BOTH ALSO KNEW THE STAKES IN THE SEASON FINALE. THE LOSER...OUT OF THE PLAYOFFS. THE WINNER...DIVISION CHAMPION.

CLEVELAND BROWNS @ BALTIMORE RAVENS

THE RAVENS NEEDED HELP FROM THE CHIEFS TO EARN A PLAYOFF SPOT, BUT FIRST THEY NEEDED TO HELP THEMSELVES.

TRAILING 10-6 MIDWAY THROUGH THE THIRD QUARTER, TORREY SMITH AND JOE FLACCO COMBINED ON A TWO-PLAY TOUCHDOWN DRIVE.

THE BALTIMORE DEFENSE CLAMPED DOWN ON THIRD-STRING BROWNS QUARTERBACK CONNOR SHAW AND NAILED DOWN A POSTSEASON BERTH.

DETROIT LIONS @ GREEN BAY PACKERS

IN A GAME THAT DECIDED THE NFC NORTH CHAMPION // THE PACKERS JUMPED ALL OVER THE LIONS.

TWO DRIVES LED BY AARON RODGERS BACKUP MATT FLYNN NETTED TWO TOTAL YARDS.

WITHOUT THEIR M-V-P, THE PACKERS LOOKED LIFELESS. IN GREEN BAY, IN AARON THEY TRUST.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS @ KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

ENTERING WEEK 17 THE CHIEFS AND CHARGERS STILL HAD A CHANCE TO MAKE THE PLAYOFFS // AND JUSTIN HOUSTON HAD A CHANCE TO BREAK THE NFL'S SINGLE SEASON SACK RECORD.

THE NEWS IN THE LOCKER ROOM IS NOT WHAT HOUSTON WANTS TO HEAR: THE TEXANS AND RAVENS HAVE BOTH WON.

IT MEANS THE CHIEFS WON'T MAKE THE PLAYOFFS.

JUST LIKE THE CHARGERS, THEIR SEASON IS OVER.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES @ NEW YORK GIANTS

IN A BATTLE BETWEEN TWO TEAMS HEADED NOWHERE, THE GIANTS WENT NOWHERE FASTER.

NEARLY EVERY ASPECT OF THIS GAME PROVED FRUSTRATING FOR NEW YORK'S PLAYERS (PAUSE) AND FANS.

TWO TOUCHDOWN PASSES BY MARK SANCHEZ AMPED UP THE AGGRAVATION LEVEL.

ODELL BECKHAM, JR. PUT AN EXCLAMATION POINT ON HIS EYE-OPENING ROOKIE SEASON.

WHILE THE TWO OFFENSES COMBINED FOR OVER 900 YARDS, IT WAS SPECIAL TEAMS THAT DETERMINED THE FINAL OUTCOME.

CINCINNATI BENGALS @ PITTSBURGH STEELERS

(HUDDLE – RADIO; ANTONIO BROWN PUNT RETURN TD)

THE BENGALS ANSWERED TO TIE THE GAME AT SEVEN.

(RADIO – BERNARD TD)

BEN ROETHLISBERGER AND THE STEELERS BUILT A 20 TO 10 HALFTIME LEAD.

(RADIO – BRYANT TD)

THE BENGALS CUT THE DEFICIT TO 20 TO 17, AND WERE DRIVING TOWARD A GO-AHEAD SCORE IN THE FOURTH QUARTER.

(RADIO – FUMBLE; ANTONIO BROWN TD; GAME END)

ST LOUIS RAMS @ SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

THE NFC WEST DIVISION TITLE. MANY MEN HAVE FLIRTED WITH TAKING IT HOME. BUT ONLY ONE WILL SUCCESSFULLY WOO IT.

[With mock sincerity.] THE WOO WAS GONE. WOO'ED IT EVER RETURN?

ARIZONA CARDINALS @ SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

WHILE PREDICTIONS THAT JIM HARBAUGH AND THE 49ERS WOULD PART WAYS PROVED TRUE. NO ONE KNEW IF SUNDAY WAS FRANK GORE'S LAST GAME IN SAN FRANCISCO.

(OFF OF "HOW DO I LOOK" "YOU LOOK GOOD") RYAN LINDLEY LOOKED REAL GOOD IN THE FIRST HALF, THROWING FOR 260 YARDS.

THE SECOND HALF BELONGED TO SAN FRANCISCO.

GORE DIDN'T BREAK ONE, BUT HE GROUND DOWN THE CLOCK, AND REACHED TWO MILESTONES.

GORE SOAKED IN THE MOMENT OF MAYBE HIS LAST 49ERS WIN, WHILE HARBAUGH GOT ONE LAST WINNER'S SOAKING.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS @ HOUSTON TEXANS

ALL KIDS LOVE JJ WATT – EXCEPT FOR THE ONE PLAYING QUARTERBACK IN JACKSONVILLE.

BLAKE BORTLES WENT DOWN THREE TIMES, MAKING HIM THE RECIPIENT OF SIX OF WATT'S 20 AND A HALF SACKS THIS YEAR.

WATT BECAME THE FIRST PLAYER IN NFL HISTORY TO SCORE ON A RECEPTION, A FUMBLE RECOVERY, AN INTERCEPTION AND A SAFETY IN THE SAME SEASON.

MVP ANYONE?

DALLAS COWBOYS @ WASHINGTON REDSKINS

FIGURING OUT THE NEW GADGET HE GOT FOR CHRISTMAS WAS A LOT TOUGHER FOR TONY ROMO THAN FIGURING OUT THE WASHINGTON DEFENSE.

OF COURSE IT HELPS TO HAVE A COOL GIZMO CALLED DEZ BRYANT TO PLAY WITH.

DALLAS ROUTED D.C. TO CAP A 12-4 SEASON.

CHICAGO BEARS @ MINNESOTA VIKINGS

TEDDY BRIDGEWATER JUST MAY BE A QUARTERBACK MINNESOTA CAN COUNT ON FOR THE FUTURE.

EVEN THOUGH THIS CATCH DIDN'T COUNT.

NOR DID THIS ONE.

BUT THIS ONE DID, AND IT PUT THE VIKINGS AHEAD TO STAY.

WITH A SEVEN WIN SEASON, THE YOUNG VIKINGS APPEAR TO HAVE FIGURED OUT THE MECHANICS OF WINNING.

THE BEARS, NOT SO MUCH.

WHIPAROUND: Indianapolis @ Tennessee; Oakland @ Denver; Buffalo @ New England; New York Jets @ Miami; New Orleans @ Tampa Bay

EVERY GAME COUNTS IN THE NFL, THOUGH SOME HIGHLIGHTS END UP IN A STRANGE PLACE.

A PLACE MORE UNUSUAL THAN AN ONSIDE PUNT.

A PLACE WHERE REFS ARE FLEET OF FOOT.

YES, IT'S THE RETURN OF THE WHIP.

AW COME ON, THE WHIP'S NOT THAT BAD...WE'RE A LITTLE LIKE THE TENNESSEE TITANS.

WE GIVE IT EVERYTHING WE HAVE WEEK IN AND WEEK OUT... THOUGH WE GENERALLY COME UP A LITTLE SHORT IN THE END.

THE COLTS STRETCHED OUT JUST FAR ENOUGH FOR AN ELEVENTH WIN.

OL' MAN PEYTON DIDN'T THROW A TOUCHDOWN PASS IN HIS SEASON FINALE, LETTING YOUNG C.J. ANDERSON DO THE WORK.

IN NEW ENGLAND, YOUTH LOOKED BACK AT A LEGEND -- AND A LEGEND LOOKED ACROSS THE LINE AT YOUTH.

THE YOUNG BILLS DEFENSE FINISHED STRONG...AS DID REX RYAN'S JETS.

HIS DEFENSE PLAYED INSPIRED...AND HIS QUARTERBACK BLEW UP WITH A CAREER AFTERNOON.

BALLOON BALL ANYONE?

THE SAINTS PLAYOFF BALLOON BURST LAST WEEK, AND THEY SEEMED DESTINED TO FINISH WITH A FIZZLE AT TAMPA.

BUT DREW BREES RALLIED NEW ORLEANS FROM A 13-POINT FOURTH QUARTER DEFICIT FOR THE WIN...TO WHICH BUCANNEER FANS SAID, "TANKS!"