

2013



EFL NEWS

ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

2013

Week Thirteen

Week Thirteen

January 5, 2014



VV	34	CAR	7	CHP	21	LA	17	ICC	10	DTL	45	COW	33	TCT	34	GWG	6	SEB	31
DVU	36	YOR	23	MOH	34	MMV	4	CHI	27	SBE	31	MAR	23	PIC	21	SC	13	GAR	34

ONWARD!



Robert Griffin III skirts past a diving Paul Posluszny on his way to a 24-yard run in 3rd quarter action at the Graveyard. In a strange and thrilling game full of ups and downs for both teams, the Undertakers slipped past the Violators 36-34.

LATEST EFL NEWS INSIDE

- UNDERTAKERS DIG OUT OF HOLE AT GRAVEYARD
- SWORDFISH SCARE MUSTANGS
- KINGS SHOOT DOWN STARS
- HELLFIRE BLAST FRIES PATRIOTS
- SPARTANS TRUMPED BY TRIUMPH
- CUBS CAGED AT BIG HOUSE
- YORK DOWNS ROOKIE QB
- AND MORE.....

Also in this issue

- EFL FAN BLOG MOOZINGS.COM
- SPATS
- JIMMY THE GEEK
- THIS WEEK IN THE EFL



Who was slick in Week Thirteen?

"BRYLCREEM" THE EFL'S FIRST SPONSOR



Drew Brees
QB
Durham Thunder
Lizards

34 of 44, 437 yds, 4 TDs. League-leading TD pace versus Eagles.



James Harrison
OLB
Chino
Convicts

5 Tackles, 1 Hur., 1 INT. 88-yard fumble recovery TD sparked win.



8-5-0



GAME OF THE WEEK



7-6-0

Virден

34

MVP

RGIII

36

Death Valley

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
Stafford	13	21	167	0
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Charles	20	98	4.9	1
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Bryant	5	84	16.8	0

Team	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
Virден	3	0	24	7	-	34
Death Valley	3	10	14	9	-	36

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Cmp	Att	Yds	TD
RGIII	28	38	276	4
Rushing	Car	Yds	Avg	TD
Ridley	18	134	7.4	0
Receiving	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD
Gronkowski	9	101	11.2	1

Play of the Game

In a game with so many big plays, the biggest was an onside kick recovery by Death Valley's **Brandon Carr** with 1:01 left in the game and the Undertakers trailing 34-33, setting up the game-winning FG

SUMMARY: The Undertakers took back a game they seemed determined to give away by making a dramatic onside kick recovery with one minute remaining in the game. After surrendering four turnovers and a 103-yard kickoff return for a TD by **Leon Washington**, Death Valley was still within striking distance of the Violators with just over 5 minutes remaining. Trailing 34-27, **RGIII** took the field at his own 32. Showing patience and poise, the Undertakers' QB guided his offence up the field by completing short passes to his tight ends before connecting with receiver **Randall Cobb** on a slant. **Vontae Davis** dragged the speedster down by the facemask for a 15-yard penalty to bring the Undertakers inside the Virден red zone. But tackle **Paul Soliai** sacked Griffin for a 5-yard loss on the next play, pushing them back. Griffin bounced right back with a bullet down the middle to **Rob Gronkowski** for a 22-yard TD that appeared almost certain to tie the game with 1:08 remaining. But Undertakers' coach **Chris Worthley** opted for a 2-point convert attempt to try and take the lead. The surprise gambit failed when RGIII missed Gronkowski on a crossing pattern, leaving them trailing by 1 point. With the Virден hands team on the field, **Brandon Carr** recovered the bouncing ball, giving the Undertakers a second chance. They drove to the Virден 27 where, out of timeouts and with 0:19 remaining, **Alex Henery** kicked the game-winner from 45 yards out to a standing ovation.

QUOTES: "We've talked about doing that in practice, like someday we might be in a situation where we need to go for the win, you know? But to be honest I wasn't expecting it today. Coach will sometimes do that, spring something big on you so you don't think too hard about it. I just missed the throw." – Death Valley QB, **RGIII**, on the call for a 2-point convert late in the game.
 "We let one get away from us today. There's not much more to say about it, but I'll stand here and blab on anyway." – Virден coach, **Lance Barrate**.



ANGRY FAN



titter

HAPPY FAN



ShuffleStorm@bizarroo4

Staff never recovered from that pick in the end zone. Coach played it safe after that. Lucky to be in this one at all.



Larry @skullncoffinsouvenirs

RGIII! The most exciting player in the league! CW! The craziest coach! LOVE THE RIDE!

01-01-2014 Graveyard Temp: 10 Wind: 10-20 None MVP: **Robert Griffin III**

1 9:20	Death Valley	FG Henery 39 (9-54-5:29)	0-3
1 2:01	Virден	FG Tynes 27 (9-36-4:07)	3-3
2 14:13	Death Valley	TD Griffin III 9 pass to Johnson (Henery) (7-54-2:49)	3-10
2 0:00	Death Valley	FG Henery 50 (6-29-1:18)	3-13
3 9:32	Virден	FG Tynes 21 (12-64-5:16)	6-13
3 9:18	Virден	TD Wilson 8 run (Tynes) (1-8-0:06)	13-13
3 8:51	Virден	TD Wilson 34 run (Tynes) (1-34-0:11)	20-13
3 2:36	Death Valley	TD Griffin III 7 pass to Hernandez (Henery) (13-80-6:15)	20-20
3 0:12	Death Valley	TD Griffin III 20 pass to Hernandez (Henery) (5-52-2:19)	20-27
3 0:05	Virден	TD Washington 103 kick return (Tynes)	27-27
4 5:26	Virден	TD Charles 6 run (Tynes) (7-60-3:44)	34-27
4 1:08	Death Valley	TD Griffin III 22 pass to Gronkowski (2 - failed) (9-68-4)	34-33
4 0:15	Death Valley	FG Henery 45 (6-26-0:42)	34-36

	VV	DVU
First Downs	18	30
Rushes	22-140	31-245
Passes	21-13-167	38-28-276
Sacked	3-26	6-50
Fumble	0	2
Penalties	4-41	6-53
Turnovers	1	4
Missed Tackles	13	10
Blitzes	7	26
Time	22:50	37:10
Third Down	4-10	9-13
Fourth Down	0-0	0-0
Red Att/Td/Fg	5/2/2	5/4/0
Net Offense	281	471



EFL
ELITE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

QUICK COUNTS!!

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



PATRIOTS
8-5-0

7	0	14	0	0	21
OT					

Adrian Peterson
19 Carries, 158 yards



HELLFIRE
4-9-0

10	10	0	14	0	34
OT					

Jonathan Dwyer
31 Carries, 160 yards, 2 TDs

Dwayne Gratz intercepted **Peyton Manning** and returned it to the Pats' 22 to set up the opening TD and a 10-0 Mohave lead. Manning got it back with a 13-yard TD pass to **Michael Crabtree** but Mohave returned fire with a 12-yard TD run by **Jonathan Dwyer**. Another Manning interception led to a **Matt Prater** FG for a 20-7 Mohave lead. A Pats' march before the half closed ended when Manning was picked off in the end zone by **Chris Houston**. After battling back to take a 21-20 lead, the Pats gave fell behind to a pair of skillful Mohave TD drives before Manning's 4th pick ended it.



CANNIBALS
4-9-0

0	7	0	0	0	7
OT					

Lavonte David
8 Tackles, 4 Run Stuffs



EXCALIBURS
7-6-0

10	7	6	0	0	23
OT					

Giovani Bernard
18 Carries, 100 yards, 1 TD

Taking advantage of the first pro start for Carthage rookie **EJ Manuel**, the Excabiburs jumped out to a quick 10-0 lead after **Danieal Manning** returned an interception 56 yards for a TD in the 1st quarter. The Cannibals answered early in the 2nd with their best drive of the day, ending with a 1-yard sneak by Manuel. But Manuel's second interception of the day set up a 17-yard TD run by **Giovani Bernard** to give York a 17-7 lead heading into the half. A lacklustre 2nd half saw the Excabiburs control the ball and add two field goals while Manuel struggled to keep the Carthage offence moving.



KNIGHTS
4-9-0

7	3	0	7	0	17
OT					

T.J. McDonald
2 Tackles, 1 INT, 1 TD



MONARCHS
4-9-0

0	7	10	7	0	24
OT					

Ryan Tannehill
13 of 27, 236 yards, 2 TDs, 1 INT

Knights QB, **Alex Smith** evaded the blitz and stepped into the end zone for a TD from 2 yards out to open the scoring. The Monarchs evened it up when **Sam Bradford** was picked off at the Monarch's 17 yard line, setting up an eventual 35-yard TD pass to **Mike Williams** from **Ryan Tannehill**. The Knights regained the lead on a 31-yard FG by **Rian Lindell** before half time. The game broke in favour of the Monarchs when **Dennis Pitta** opened the 3rd with a 78-yard TD reception. **Shonn Greene** then fumbled away the ball at the Knights' 27, setting up a 4-yard TD run by **DeMarco Murray**.

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



CUBS
8-5-0

0	3	0	7	0	10
OT					

Darren Sproles
6 Catches, 90 yards, 91-yd PR TD



CONVICTS
7-6-0

10	14	3	0	0	27
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Cam Newton
17 of 22, 146 yds, 1 TD, 1 rush TD

Cam Newton capped the opening drive with a dump-off to tight end **Ben Hartsock** in the end zone for a TD. On the Cubs' first drive, **Russell Wilson** threw the first of 2 picks on the day to set up a 28-yard **Dan Bailey** FG. **Colin Kaepernick** took over at QB for the Cubs and led them to a FG, but the Convicts responded with a TD on a 16-yard run by Newton to give Chino a 17-3 lead. On the Cubs' next possession **Barry Cofield** forced a fumble by Kaepernick that **James Harrison** grabbed and ran back 88 yards for a TD. The Convicts continued to contain the Cubs' offence the rest of the way.



T-LIZARDS
10-3-0

7	21	3	14	0	45
OT					

Drew Brees
34 of 44, 437 yards, 4 TDs, 1 INT



BLUE EAGLES
4-9-0

7	7	10	7	0	31
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Wes Welker
8 Catches, 148 yards, 1 TD

Blue Eagles' RB back **Ray Rice** rushed for 2 TDs and Durham QB **Drew Brees** threw 2 TD passes to make the teams even half way through the 2nd quarter. The T-Lizards started to pull away with a 14-yard TD pass to **Megatron** followed by a 3-yard TD run by **Reggie Bush** to take a 28-14 lead into the locker room. **Wes Welker** got the home team back in it by breaking 4 tackles on the way to 78-yard catch and run for a TD then Rice tied it at 31 with his 3rd TD of the day. But Brees-to-Megatron hooked up for a 25-yard TD pass and **Toby Gerhart** added a late TD run to give the Lizards the win.



CORN KINGS
7-6-0

3	10	0	20	0	33
OT					

Joe Flacco
28 of 42, 341 yards, 3 TDs



NORTH STARS
10-3-0

6	3	14	0	0	23
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DeAngelo Williams
16 Carries, 82 yards

A 9-3 battle of FGs in favour of Markham was snapped in the 2nd by a 34-yard TD pass on a long fly from **Joe Flacco** to **Cecil Shorts III**. **Corey Webster** then intercepted **Eli Manning** and returned it 40 yards to set up a **Nick Novak** FG to give Cowtown a 13-9 lead at half time. That lead was wiped out on the 1st play of the 2nd half when **Percy Harvin** returned the opening kickoff 97 yards for a TD. Markham added a TD-run by **Armando Allen** to make it 23-13, but a 19-play, 8:00 drive for a TD by the Kings signalled the start of a 20-point 4th quarter that ended with Shorts hauling in a 59-yard TD.

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



TRIUMPH
6-7-0

0	14	10	10	0	34
OT					

Pierre Garçon
8 Catches, 153 yards, 3 TDs



SPARTANS
8-5-0

7	7	7	0	0	21
OT					

Steven Jackson
27 Carries, 140 yards

Six straight hand-offs to **Steven Jackson** started a Pickering drive that ended with **DeMaryius Thomas** catching a 14-yard TD pass for a 7-0 lead. **Jay Cutler** would find **Pierre Garçon** open for two scores in the 2nd quarter then **Matt Schaub** would answer with a 42-yard bomb to **Golden Tate** to knot the game at 14 just before the half. **Darius Slay** picked off Schaub to start the 3rd, leading to a TD, then a Triumph FG made it 24-14. But a pick-6 by **Sheldon Brown** and an injury to Cutler gave the Spartans hope before a 46-yard TD pass from **Jason Campbell** to Garçon finished them off.



GLADIATORS
5-8-0

0	3	0	3	0	6
OT					

Ahmad Bradshaw
14 Carries, 83 yards



REGULATORS
7-6-0

3	3	7	0	0	13
OT					

Tony Romo
28 of 38, 233 yards, 1 TD

The Regs dominated the TOP in the 1st half, holding the ball for nearly 20 minutes, but came away with just FGs. **Robert Geathers** sacked **Tony Romo** on 4th and inches at the Gwinnett 9 to keep the faltering Glads in the game, down just 6-3 at half time. Gwinnett moved well to start the 2nd half but stalled on 4th down at the Regs 39 yard line. From there, Romo made up for his red zone blunder by going 5 of 7 for 48 yards and a 12-yard TD to **Greg Jennings** on the game's only TD drive. The Glads' pass attack was contained by a disciplined Reg's defence, thwarting any serious comeback.



SWORDFISH
2-11-0

0	14	14	3	0	31
OT					

Andy Dalton
19 of 29, 222 yards, 2 TDs



MUSTANGS
10-3-0

0	6	8	17	3	34
OT					

Matt Ryan
30 of 50, 377 yards, 3 TDs, 1 INT

A 52-yard interception return for a TD by **Ronde Barber**, a pair of TDs by **Willis McGahee**, and a 17-yard TD pass from **Andy Dalton** to **Kenny Britt** had the heavy underdog Swordfish in front of the Mustangs 28-14 to start the 4th quarter. **Anquan Boldin** snared a 7-yard TD pass from **Matt Ryan** to pull Garland within a TD, but a 50-yard FG by **Adam Vinatieri** gave Sebastian a 10-point lead. **Nick Folk** kicked a FG with 1:56 left then the Mustangs' D held. A 54-yard bomb to **Jeremy Kerley** tied the game with 0:13 left then a 31-yard FG by Folk at the 9:17 mark of OT avoided the upset.

WEEK THIRTEEN

STANDINGS

Charleswood	8	5	0	0.615	404	31.1	313	24.1	7	3 3 0	3 2 0	6 3 0
Virden	8	5	0	0.615	352	27.1	313	24.1	3	4 2 0	4 1 0	6 3 0
York	7	6	0	0.538	314	24.2	266	20.5	3.7	5 2 0	3 3 0	5 4 0
Mohave	4	9	0	0.308	241	18.5	375	28.8	-10.3	2 5 0	2 4 0	3 6 0
Carthage	4	9	0	0.308	215	16.5	339	26.1	-9.5	4 3 0	2 4 0	3 6 0
West	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Iowa City	8	5	0	0.615	305	23.5	290	22.3	1.2	4 3 0	5 1 0	6 3 0
Chino	7	6	0	0.538	362	27.8	279	21.5	6.4	5 2 0	4 2 0	6 3 0
Death Valley	7	6	0	0.538	396	30.5	422	32.5	-2	4 2 0	2 3 0	4 5 0
Los Angeles	4	9	0	0.308	231	17.8	339	26.1	-8.3	1 5 0	1 4 0	3 6 0
Mission Viejo	4	9	0	0.308	199	15.3	336	25.8	-10.5	2 4 0	2 4 0	3 6 0
North	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Durham	10	3	0	0.769	411	31.6	285	21.9	9.7	6 0 0	3 2 0	7 2 0
Markham	10	3	0	0.769	345	26.5	251	19.3	7.2	5 2 0	5 1 0	7 2 0
Pickering	8	5	0	0.615	332	25.5	311	23.9	1.6	4 3 0	3 3 0	6 3 0
Cowtown	7	6	0	0.538	372	28.6	272	20.9	7.7	4 3 0	1 5 0	4 5 0
Twin Cities	6	7	0	0.462	281	21.6	320	24.6	-3	3 3 0	2 3 0	3 6 0
South	W	L	T	Pct	Pts	Ave	Opp	Ave	Diff	Home	Div	Conf
Garland (z)	10	3	0	0.769	392	30.2	205	15.8	14.4	5 2 0	5 1 0	6 3 0
South Carolina	7	6	0	0.538	266	20.5	280	21.5	-1.1	5 1 0	3 3 0	4 5 0
Gwinnett	5	8	0	0.385	256	19.7	272	20.9	-1.2	4 2 0	3 2 0	4 5 0
Scarborough	4	9	0	0.308	237	18.2	363	27.9	-9.7	1 5 0	2 3 0	3 6 0
Sebastian	2	11	0	0.154	204	15.7	284	21.8	-6.2	0 7 0	1 5 0	1 8 0

(z)-clinched division

(y)-clinched wildcard

PASSING

Passing	Att	Cmp	C%	Yards	In	I%	Lg	TD	TD%	Rate	
1 Smith, A	LAK	229	169	73.8	1695	5	2.2	54	16	7.0	108.6
2 Manning, P	CHP	416	301	72.4	3359	11	2.6	59	24	5.8	104.2
3 Brees	DTL	481	315	65.5	4046	16	3.3	59	36	7.5	102.8
4 Ryan, M	GDM	411	275	66.9	3102	9	2.2	62	23	5.6	98.8
5 Griffin II	DVU	374	239	63.9	2816	13	3.5	77	28	7.5	97.2
6 Newton, C	CHI	342	222	64.9	2635	10	2.9	69	20	5.8	95.6
7 Wilson, R	ICC	314	212	67.5	2597	10	3.2	60	14	4.5	94.4
8 Romo	SC	436	300	68.8	3190	12	2.8	78	19	4.4	93.0
9 Stafford	VV	429	243	56.6	3135	11	2.6	54	30	7.0	92.4
10 Rodgers, A	SBE	485	321	66.2	3294	9	1.9	87	20	4.1	91.6
11 Flacco	COW	478	277	57.9	3510	12	2.5	71	29	6.1	90.7
12 Manning, E	MAR	357	210	58.8	2586	13	3.6	46	26	7.3	90.4
13 Roethlisbe	GWG	294	184	62.6	1732	3	1.0	39	14	4.8	90.4
14 Brady	YOR	469	279	59.5	3440	6	1.3	69	17	3.6	89.0
15 Cutler	TCT	388	238	61.3	2748	11	2.8	58	19	4.9	87.2
16 Rivers, P	CAR	365	245	67.1	2196	9	2.5	57	12	3.3	83.8
17 Schaub	PIC	473	279	59.0	3270	16	3.4	73	25	5.3	83.6
18 Tannehill	MVM	374	214	57.2	2401	10	2.7	78	17	4.5	80.5
19 Luck	MOH	336	189	56.3	2152	11	3.3	52	15	4.5	76.9
20 Dalton	SS	415	241	58.1	2631	13	3.1	82	13	3.1	74.3
21 Hekker	COW	1	1	100.0	12	0	0.0	12	0	0.0	116.7
22 Hill, Sh	LAK	13	8	61.5	96	0	0.0	21	1	7.7	109.8
23 Kaepernick	ICC	82	49	59.8	685	1	1.2	64	4	4.9	97.9
24 Cousins	CHI	50	35	70.0	394	2	4.0	46	3	6.0	96.6
25 Vick	DVU	120	60	50.0	959	5	4.2	82	11	9.2	90.2

RUSHING

Rushing		Att	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Peterson,A	CHP	318	1644	5.2	29	19
2	Morris	COW	295	1620	5.5	44	12
3	Jackson,S	PIC	248	1286	5.2	30	6
4	Martin,D	TCT	276	1281	4.6	31	8
5	Charles,J	VV	218	1205	5.5	71	2
6	Johnson,C	CHI	246	1152	4.7	60	4
7	Foster,A	GDM	225	1102	4.9	66	17
8	Greene	LAK	258	1034	4.0	29	1
9	Gore	SC	200	978	4.9	39	6
10	Bush,R	DTL	173	956	5.5	35	7
11	Bradshaw	GWG	183	889	4.9	41	7
12	Ball,M	MOH	200	794	4.0	27	5
13	Ridley	DVU	179	781	4.4	23	2
14	Pierce	MVM	172	734	4.3	34	4
15	Richardson	ICC	154	716	4.6	33	5
16	Williams,D	MAR	148	713	4.8	48	5
17	Turner,M	YOR	178	710	4.0	48	9
18	Dwyer	MOH	113	625	5.5	35	2
19	Newton,C	CHI	115	608	5.3	27	7
20	Spiller	SBE	144	607	4.2	17	3
21	Bernard	YOR	133	603	4.5	44	7
22	Griffin II	DVU	93	588	6.3	34	4
23	Forte	GDM	126	555	4.4	51	2
24	Lacy	CAR	124	521	4.2	55	2
25	Rice,R	SBE	122	499	4.1	49	5

RECEIVING

Receiving		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Johnson,C	DTL	96	1589	16.6	59	17
2	White,R	CHI	90	1377	15.3	69	10
3	Welker	SBE	81	973	12.0	87	4
4	Crabtree,M	CHP	80	1078	13.5	59	11
5	Graham,J	MOH	78	826	10.6	31	4
6	Thomas,D	PIC	78	1103	14.1	57	9
7	Witten	CHP	76	713	9.4	44	4
8	Johnson,A	DVU	73	1663	22.8	82	22
9	Bryant,D	VV	73	1101	15.1	54	13
10	Lloyd,B	GDM	70	975	13.9	62	4
11	Wayne	GWG	70	828	11.8	39	10
12	Marshall	SBE	68	877	12.9	87	7
13	Cobb	DVU	67	635	9.5	25	6
14	Jackson,V	PIC	65	1011	15.6	73	6
15	Cruz	YOR	65	1029	15.8	55	6
16	Jones,J	VV	63	914	14.5	31	9
17	Rudolph	CAR	61	529	8.7	29	5
18	Decker	DTL	60	806	13.4	50	4
19	Boldin	GDM	60	762	12.7	46	13
20	Smith,S	ICC	59	1116	18.9	64	9
21	Pitta	MVM	56	578	10.3	78	6
22	Fitzgerald	COW	56	713	12.7	44	7
23	Green,A	SC	55	716	13.0	77	6
24	Gonzalez	ICC	54	622	11.5	27	3
25	Colston	MAR	53	813	15.3	46	8

KICKING

Kicking		FGA	FGM	FG%	40	50	Lg	Pts	
1	Folk	GDM	24	23	95.8	5	2	55	111
2	Tynes	VV	25	22	88.0	6	2	52	106
3	Walsh	YOR	27	23	85.2	9	3	57	104
4	Bailey,D	CHI	25	20	80.0	7	1	50	102
5	Dawson	DTL	18	16	88.9	5	2	54	99
6	Prater	MOH	26	24	92.3	9	1	54	95
7	Zuerlein	ICC	27	20	74.1	9	1	51	95
8	Novak	COW	24	20	83.3	9	1	53	94
9	Henery	DVU	18	17	94.4	9	4	54	94
10	Graham,S	MAR	23	17	73.9	4	0	49	93
11	Hartley	CHP	16	14	87.5	5	1	52	92
12	Scobee	PIC	23	19	82.6	5	3	54	92
13	Suisham	GWG	22	20	90.9	6	3	51	86
14	Bironas	SC	23	19	82.6	8	0	47	84
15	Hauschka	CAR	23	19	82.6	8	3	54	77
16	Lindell	LAK	20	17	85.0	7	2	54	75
17	Gostkowski	TCT	15	12	80.0	3	1	54	71
18	Vinatieri	SS	18	15	83.3	6	2	54	62
19	Janikowski	SBE	13	9	69.2	1	1	51	57
20	Carpenter	MVM	13	10	76.9	5	2	53	53

TACKLES

Tackles			
1	Kuechly	SC	131
2	Riley	SS	121
3	Dunbar	CHI	114
4	Freeman, J	SBE	111
5	Mayo	DVU	105
6	Willis, P	ICC	104
7	Barwin	LAK	103
8	Posluszny	VV	99
9	Washington	PIC	92
10	Wagner	TCT	91
11	Bowman	GDM	88
12	Laurinaiti	GWG	83
13	Barnett	VV	83
14	Jackson, D	MAR	83
15	Ninkovich	MAR	82
16	Hawk	MVM	79
17	Bailey, C	DTL	78
18	Houston, J	MOH	76
19	Johnson, J	MVM	76
20	Winfield	TCT	75
21	McClain, R	SC	74
22	Miller, V	YOR	74
23	Greenway	LAK	73
24	Hali	SC	73
25	Finnegan	CHI	72

SACKS

Sacks			
1	Smith, A	VV	20
2	Watt	GDM	13
3	Atkins	YOR	12
4	Johnson, C	DVU	10
5	Long, C	DVU	10
6	Johnson, M	YOR	10
7	Ninkovich	MAR	9
8	Wake	MOH	9
9	Griffen	COW	7
10	Dumervil	DTL	7
11	Irvin, B	MOH	7
12	Abraham	MAR	7
13	Peppers	CHI	7
14	Harrison, J	CHI	7
15	Houston, J	MOH	7
16	Smith, A	VV	7
17	Quinn, R	LAK	7
18	Jordan, C	MVM	7
19	Smith, W	GDM	7
20	Hardy	CAR	7
21	Kerrigan	COW	6
22	Dareus	COW	6
23	Liuget	ICC	6
24	Sheard	PIC	6
25	Bennett, M	LAK	6

INTERCEPTIONS

Interceptions		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD	
1	Clark, R	YOR	5	77	15.4	66	0
2	Elam	DVU	5	70	14.0	26	0
3	Hayward, C	ICC	5	68	13.6	30	0
4	DeCoud	GWG	5	62	12.4	34	0
5	Barber	SS	5	120	24.0	52	1
6	Sherman	DTL	4	40	10.0	16	0
7	Jones, R	ICC	4	51	12.8	43	0
8	Reid, E	TCT	4	51	12.8	29	0
9	Jackson, K	CHP	4	70	17.5	28	1
10	Ward, T	PIC	3	81	27.0	81	0
11	Slay	TCT	3	47	15.7	47	0
12	Wagner	TCT	3	91	30.3	49	1
13	Johnson, L	CHP	3	116	38.7	51	3
14	Finnegan	CHI	3	121	40.3	63	0
15	Samuel	YOR	3	19	6.3	13	0
16	Mathieu	DTL	3	49	16.3	47	1
17	Williams, T	VV	3	85	28.3	43	0
18	McDonald, T	LAK	3	48	16.0	34	1
19	Vaccaro	LAK	3	95	31.7	39	0
20	Cox, D	SBE	3	36	12.0	32	0
21	Peterson, P	GDM	3	53	17.7	26	1
22	Thomas, E	GDM	3	116	38.7	57	1
23	Weddle	GDM	3	32	10.7	18	0
24	Byrd, J	MAR	3	48	16.0	22	1
25	Moore, W	GWG	3	65	21.7	40	0

KICK RETURNS

Kick Returns		No	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Washington VV	44	1268	28.8	103	1
2	Rainey COW	40	1132	28.3	102	1
3	Cobb DVU	40	1089	27.2	99	1
4	Jones, J CHP	42	1138	27.1	108	2
5	McKelvin GWG	28	752	26.9	57	0
6	Cribbs LAK	49	1302	26.6	72	0
7	Hester DTL	29	751	25.9	34	0
8	McKnight MAR	15	387	25.8	103	1
9	Cadet CAR	45	1157	25.7	49	0
10	Holliday, T CHI	39	999	25.6	102	2
11	Patterson MOH	43	1098	25.5	62	0
12	Tate, B MVM	50	1231	24.6	38	0
13	Logan SS	28	685	24.5	99	1
14	Robinson, D PIC	17	396	23.3	30	0
15	Austin, T ICC	29	641	22.1	36	0
16	Rodgers, J SC	23	494	21.5	33	0
17	Bolden, O YOR	25	430	17.2	33	0
18	Wheaton TCT	34	581	17.1	33	0
19	Edelman GDM	20	233	11.7	25	0
20	Royster SBE	16	185	11.6	23	0
21	Pettis SBE	14	152	10.9	13	0
22	Welker SBE	21	226	10.8	16	0
23	Harvin MAR	12	408	34.0	97	1
24	James, L ICC	5	152	30.4	36	0
25	Sproles ICC	1	28	28.0	28	0

PUNT RETURNS

Punt Returns		No	Fc	Yds	Ave	Lg	TD
1	Sanders, E CAR	16	16	279	17.4	87	1
2	Jones, A PIC	40	4	525	13.1	78	2
3	Cribbs LAK	37	6	455	12.3	74	0
4	Martin, K CHI	25	12	300	12.0	79	1
5	Tate, B MVM	23	11	272	11.8	46	0
6	Jones, J CHP	20	7	211	10.6	83	1
7	Austin, T ICC	15	3	155	10.3	76	1
8	Cobb DVU	13	12	125	9.6	40	0
9	Harris, D SS	22	1	211	9.6	22	0
10	Peterson, P GDM	30	8	275	9.2	38	0
11	Arenas SC	24	9	218	9.1	22	0
12	Ginn Jr. TCT	22	6	183	8.3	22	0
13	Welker SBE	16	0	130	8.1	21	0
14	Parrish MAR	27	6	217	8.0	18	0
15	Sherels VV	18	16	110	6.1	14	0
16	Banks MOH	31	5	189	6.1	15	0
17	Bernard YOR	32	8	176	5.5	23	0
18	Hilton DTL	31	8	170	5.5	14	0
19	Franklin, J COW	15	20	67	4.5	12	0
20	Sproles ICC	8	0	141	17.6	91	1
21	McKelvin GWG	9	8	107	11.9	19	0
22	Jenkins, J DVU	1	0	10	10.0	10	0
23	Easley YOR	2	0	19	9.5	18	0
24	Williams, K COW	9	3	83	9.2	22	0
25	Decker DTL	1	0	9	9.0	9	0

SCORING

Scoring		FG	XP	2Pt	Run	Rec	Int	KR	PR	Fmb	Sf	Tot
1	Johnson, A DVU	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	132
2	Peterson, A CHP	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	114
3	Folk GDM	23	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	111
4	Tynes VV	22	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	106
5	Walsh YOR	23	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	104
6	Johnson, C DTL	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	102
7	Bailey, D CHI	20	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	102
8	Foster, A GDM	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	102
9	Dawson DTL	16	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99
10	Prater MOH	24	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	95
11	Zuerlein ICC	20	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	95
12	Henery DVU	17	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	94
13	Novak COW	20	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	94
14	Graham, S MAR	17	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	93
15	Hartley CHP	14	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92
16	Scobee PIC	19	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92
17	Suisham GWG	20	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
18	Bironas SC	19	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	84
19	Morris COW	0	0	0	12	1	0	0	0	0	0	78
20	Bryant, D VV	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	78
21	Boldin GDM	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	78
22	Hauschka CAR	19	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77
23	Lindell LAK	17	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75
24	Gostkowski TCT	12	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71
25	Crabtree, M CHP	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	66

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WHERE FANS SPEAK

WHO IS CECIL SHORTS

III?

BY CLEMENT GREEN (CONTRIBUTOR) ON JANUARY 4, 2014

Cecil Shorts-III



Who is Cecil Shorts III? That is the question most fantasy footballers and broadcasters are asking themselves after the wide receiver's 8-catch, 189 yard, and 2-TD performance in the Corn Kings' 33-23, Week 13 upset of the defending champions North Stars.

It wasn't the first time he has put up big numbers in a game this year, but it was the first time on national TV. Shorts had a 165-yard, 4-touchdown performance against Chino in Week 9. He now has 39 receptions for a 19.1-yard average and 9 touchdowns on the season. Those are pretty amazing numbers for a receiver who started the season at #4 on the

depth chart. His ability to get open in critical situations and break free for long touchdowns has moved him past Donnie Avery and now sharing playing time with Malcom Floyd at #2.

But until he suddenly appeared on the Week 5 score sheet as the recipient of a 71-yard TD pass against Twin Cities, the most notable aspect of Cecil Shorts was the "III" at the end of his name. Son of Cecil Shorts Jr., and grandson of Cecil Short Sr., Cecil Shorts III is now the most successful of a line of previously unknown Shortses. An 8th round draft pick of the Corn Kings in 2011 out of Mount Union, Shorts III was a star receiver at a small school and little was expected of him. For two seasons he lived up to the low expectations, appearing in 12 games and not catching a single pass, getting targeted only once. But a good camp this off-season, with his roster spot in jeopardy, nudged him ahead of career Corn King, Santana Moss on the depth chart. The ageing Cowtown star, with just 4 catches in 8 games this year, might see even less playing time now that Shorts is playing "tall." But the veteran is philosophical about his situation:

"I am there with him, every game, every play," Moss said recently. "I am always ready to step in, but if I have to it means someone is hurt or not getting the job done. As a veteran leader, it's my job to help Cecil get the job done and he's a great student."



AROUND THE



With Spats McChad



NEW YORK – Happy New Year dear readers! Did you realize that 2014 is the Year of the Horse in the Chinese Astrological Chart? If you didn't, you may not have any Chinese friends, or not a scintilla of cultural awareness in this rapidly closing Global Village called Earth, or else you don't give a fig. The Chinese are inscrutable to the chauvinistic Westerner at the best of times. Their astrological chart is based on traditional astronomy but takes on philosophical twists that only the Chinese truly understand. Instead of twelve rather cool signs of the Zodiac: like Aries (the ram); Taurus (the bull); Leo (the lion); and the coolest of all – Sagittarius (the human archer with the body of a horse); the Chinese signs include such loathsome creatures as the Rat, the Pig, and the Snake, along with such lowly beasts as the Sheep, Rabbit and Ox. Of course, there are some cool ones mixed in: the Dragon is probably the ultimate cool sign in any astrological system while the Tiger can hold its own. Rooster and Monkey have attitude, which would make them decent pop stars or celebrities the astrological universe, while the Dog and the Horse are signs we in the West can embrace with warmth, having built a nation on their backs and barks.

So, what does this have to do with football? Well, is it mere coincidence that, in the Year of the Horse, all signs seem to be pointing to a Mustangs ascendancy to the top of the EFL? Or, do the Chinese know a thing or two about destiny? The Mustangs clinched the South Division this week, about 3 weeks earlier than most analysts predicted. But it took a real battle against an astrological Rabbit to close the deal. Read on.....

YEAR OF THE HORSE

The sellout crowd at the Corral were abnormally boisterous on a chilly afternoon in Garland. They knew that a win would clinch a first ever Division Title for their beloved Mustangs and they were in a mood to celebrate. In three or four hours, once their heroes had dispatched the feeble Swordfish, it would be official. The name of **Doug Shirley** came up in certain conversations – “wouldn't it be nice if he were here to witness history,” somebody said in the Press Box – but with the Mustangs trampling all who dared oppose them since the departure of Garland's 'Father of Football,' few were willing to dwell too long on that noble sentiment. Shirley may have been the biological father of the franchise, but he had abandoned the home. They had a new “dad” now, and what a character *he* had turned out to be!

Ricky “Coco” Main was fast becoming a legend in the Garland area – legendary due to the fact that so few fans had actually seen him as much as due to his football achievements. Since that introductory Press Conference prior to the Week Eight whitewash of the Cubs, Main rarely appeared in public. Certainly he never spoke in public, leaving his Polynesian man servant, **Popopali** and assistant coach **Josh Battleford**, to answer questions from the Press after the game. Rumours persisted that the Headball injury that had robbed him of his speech had simultaneously given him special mental powers that allowed him to communicate telepathically with his players and staff. One unidentified inside source had even claimed that Main was able to remotely stimulate pain and pleasure centers in the player's brains to reward and punish them. This feedback, being instantaneous, had a powerful behavioural modification effect during drills, enabling rapid learning. If this wild story was even half true, it would explain a lot. But, then again, if it were true, Ricky Main must have been asleep at the telepathic switch on Sunday as his Mustangs became unexpectedly locked in a brutal struggle with basement-dwelling Sebastian.

With nothing to play for apart from a remote chance of rising out of last place, the Swordfish played as if they, not the Mustangs, had a stake in the playoffs. They caught Garland flat-footed and probably over-confident, taking the wind out of the bellowing home crowd early with a 52-yard interception return for a touchdown by veteran safety **Ronde Barber** to open the scoring. Garland answered with a 55-yard **Nick Folk** field goal after an unimpressive attempt to catch the Swordfish off balance with consecutive draw plays on 2nd and 3rd down. Sensing their opponent may not have awoken, the Swordfish charged back 80 yards down the field, scoring from 8 yards out on a fake reverse – the kind of play that usually only works in high school. Again, the Mustangs answered with a field goal after failing to take full advantage of a 54-yard bomb to **Brandon Lloyd**. Garland trailed 14-6 at half time, but Garland supporters did not become truly worried until the 2nd half.

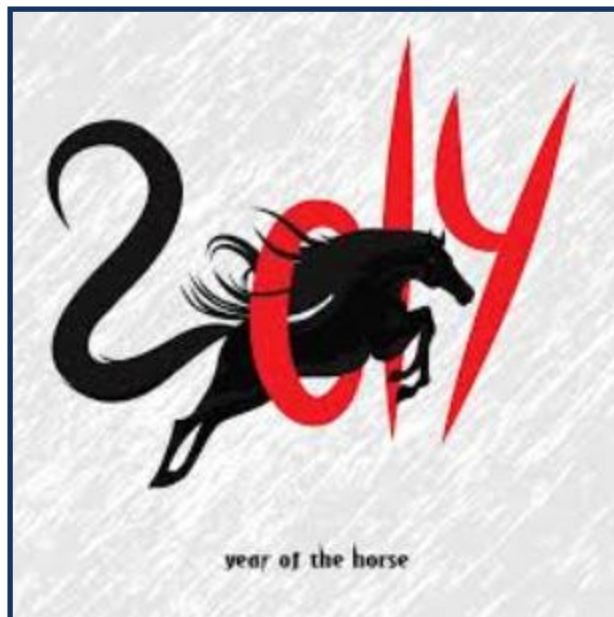
Sebastian jumped out of the gate in the 3rd quarter with a 2-yard touchdown pass from **Andy Dalton** to **Willis McGahee** to take a 21-6 lead. Garland got that one back on their first drive and drew within 7 when Lloyd caught a short hitch in the end zone for the successful 2-point conversion. But Sebastian turned up the heat even more with an impressive drive that started from their 22 yard line. Dalton found **Kenny Britt** all alone in the end zone from 17 yards away to double up the

home team 28-14 just prior to the start of the 4th quarter.

The Mustangs were becoming agitated on the sidelines. This situation was not what they had envisioned – the worst offence in the league was making their top-ranked defence look ragged, and time was running out on a comeback for their sputtering offence.

On their next possession, **Matt Ryan** found Lloyd wide open for a 27-yard completion inside the Swordfish red zone then, on 4th down, Ryan connected with **Anquan Boldin** for a 7-yard TD pass. That brought the crowd to its feet and, for the first time since the opening kickoff, the crowd acted like they believed in a comeback. But the Swordfish would not swim meekly away; they bounced back with a time-consuming drive and came away with a 50-yard field goal by **Adam Vinatieri** as a reward. With 8:32 remaining, the Swordfish led by 10 points, 31-21.

While the Garland crowd struggled to overcome its glumness with forced chants, the network commentators began to talk seriously about an upset when the Mustangs failed to convert 4th down and 5 at the Sebastian 43 yard line with 7:06 left. The way the Swordfish had moved the ball, another score was a distinct possibility and, with it, a nearly impossible situation for the home team. But the Mustangs' defence finally held, forcing the first **Mike Scifres** punt since early in



It is the Year of the Horse in the Chinese Zodiac – a powerful omen for fans in Garland. Will the Mustangs leap through the ring of final victory in 2014?

the second quarter after a much needed three-and-out.

The Mustangs moved slowly back up the field, taking 17 snaps to move 62 yards and finally stalling at the Sebastian 18 yard line, where Folk made it a one-score game with a 36-yard field goal at the 1:56 mark. After a failed outside kick, the game was now in the fins of the Swordfish. They had an opportunity to run out the clock if their offence could squeeze out a first down. A holding penalty on **Zach Streif** made that task more difficult, but a completed pass and a run later and the Swordfish faced a very makeable 3rd and 3 at the Garland 45. With the Mustangs crowding the line looking for the run, Dalton changed the play at the line and fired deep and incomplete to **Michael Jenkins**. It was a bold move – under the circumstances a possible winning move – but it may very well have cost them the game. Scifres punted into the end zone for a touchback and the Mustangs took over at their 20 yard line with 1:11 remaining and no timeouts.

A nice 22-yard completion to **Jeremy Kerley** got things started on the right hoof for the Mustangs, but an ill-advised check down to **Matt Forte** that went for just 4 yards burned precious time off the clock. Facing 3rd and 6 at their own 46 yard line, with 0:27 left, Ryan heaved a deep ball that snuck past the safety and into the arms of Kerley, who ran it for a near miraculous 54-yard touchdown. It was the tying the score, but it may as well have been the winning score. From that point on, there was no mistaking the stronger team. The Swordfish got the ball first in overtime, but three plays into their drive, **Patrick Peterson** popped the ball out of Britt's hands at mid field and Garland recovered, setting up the game-winning field goal drive.

Some analysts immediately read from this game that the Mustangs had reached the end of the hot streak sparked by their new coach. The idea that the usually hapless Swordfish could push around any defence, let alone the Mustang 'Thoroughbreds,' was too far-fetched; the Garland defence must not be as good as advertised. I beg to differ. The Swordfish *were* that good on this particular afternoon, and the Mustangs got a desperately-needed tune-up as a result, one they are going to need if they are going to fulfil the promise of the Year of the Horse.

EXTREME FOOTBALL

It was a game that could only have happened in the bleak surface netherworld of Death Valley. In temperatures reaching as low as -24 degrees due to winds as high as 20 mph in Hell, Michigan, the Death Valley Undertakers and Virden Violators played as if it was a calm and balmy 72 degrees outside. The teams combined for 80 points and did not let the cold affect them, at least not until a momentary brain freeze on the part of the Undertakers' coach **Chris Worthley** nearly undid what was arguably one of his young and fragile quarterback's finest moments. But then, this game, a Spats front-runner for Most Memorable Game of 2013 (but actually played in 2014), would not have been as memorable if not for an impulsive gambit born of the Head Undertaker's famously capricious nature. For bringing his fans a new and exhilarating experience, without costing his team a win in the standings, Worthley deserves the credit and the notoriety. But watching the Undertakers can be a bit like riding a roller coaster without a seatbelt – tragedy is always one mis-step away from the thrill.

I am getting ahead of myself – but not really. The first half of the game unfolded at a pedestrian pace. Two sack and turnover-prone quarterbacks both failed to do much more than make the opposing defences look good over the first 30 minutes. The Undertakers got the better of that exchange and headed into the locker room up 13-3 thanks to **Robert Griffin III** managing to keep it together for one drive and accounting for the first half's only major score on a 9-yard TD pass to favourite target **Andre Johnson**. Anybody who switched the channel at that point to see what was up with Charleswood trailing Mohave 20-7 would

have been excused for never returning to this game. But those who stayed to the end certainly did not regret it – regardless of which team they supported.

Things turned positively surreal in the 3rd quarter. After the Violators capped a 64-yard drive to the Death Valley 3 yard line with a **Lawrence Tynes** field goal to nudge a little closer, back-to-back turnovers by **RGIII** in a 22-second span led to a pair of quick Virden touchdowns on single-play touchdown drives of 8-yard and 34-yard runs by **David Wilson**, giving the Violators a 20-13 lead. The Graveyard Howlers blared menacingly from the cold stands, patience for their EFL-sophomore quarterback running thin where it was not already at an end. **RGIII** would redeem himself very soon by leading back-to-back touchdown drives, separated by a successful onside kick, to take a 27-20 lead. But lightning struck a third time for the Violators when **Leon Washington** returned the ensuing conventional kickoff 103-yards for a touchdown to draw even at 27.

In scoring three touchdowns in the 3rd quarter, Virden had possessed the ball for just 24 seconds; or an average of 8 seconds per touchdown. There have probably been plenty of times this season when the 'Undertaker Devoted' must have felt that their beloved 'Shrouded Ones' were being paid back in bad bounces for the sins of 2012; and the 3rd quarter of this game would have been one of those times. But there was nothing particularly mystifying or unfortunate about Virden's go-ahead touchdown with 5:26 left in the 4th quarter. A Death Valley pre-occupation with stopping **Jamaal Charles** left **Dez Bryant** open for a 23-yard completion, followed by an 8-yard pass interference penalty called on **Brandon Carr**. With the Undertakers shifting to a pass defence, Charles went to work with runs of 17 and 7 yards to set up a 2nd down inside the Death Valley 10. Two plays later, Charles jumped through a gaping hole in the middle of the line for the major score.

With time running down, the Undertakers responded with a methodical drive back up the field consisting of short passes until Griffin struck on a medium slant that **Rob Gronkowski** carried in 22 yards for the apparent tying touchdown with 1:08 remaining. But the Undertaker coach would have no part of a boring tie. He kept his offence on the field in an all-or-nothing gambit that had both a sniff of desperation and the glint of temporary madness to it.

The decision was met with shock in both the stands and in the broadcast booth, where Undertaker colour commentator, the deceased **Al Davis**, deadpanned, "The suspense is killing me." But nobody appeared to be more shocked, or nervous, than **RGIII** himself. His short pass over the middle intended for the Gronk sailed high and through the upright, in the precise spot where, if it had been kicked, would have tied the game. Instead, Death Valley trailed by a single point with a kickoff coming.

But the team that made surprise onside kickoffs an art form last year, showed they could recover one when it was not a surprise to the other team. With Virden's hands team on the field, speedy **Brandon Carr** leaped into the air and snagged a Death Valley bounce to recover the ball at the Undertakers' 47 yard line. Death Valley had been, ironically, given another life. Seizing the opportunity to redeem himself and, possibly, earn some love from skeptical Undertakers' fans, Griffin continued to show poise and patience in picking apart the Violators' defence with short slant passes, changing it up to a short out pass on an 8-yard completion to **Mario Manningham** that brought the ball to the Virden 27 with 19 seconds left.

Out of timeouts, and possibly concerned that the uncommon streak of un-intercepted passes by **RGIII** might be coming to an end, Worthley sent out **Alex Henery** on first down to try a 45-yarder. Henery, who had missed a 50-yard attempt early in the 4th quarter, put the final nail into the Violators' coffin with a true kick down the middle for the game-winning points. A furious **Lance Barrate** stomped off the field after a desperation bomb from **Matt Stafford** to Bryant was deflected by Carr with the Undertaker corner riding Bryant's back. A split second earlier **Chris Long** had crashed, apparently late, into Stafford after he released the pass. No flags on either end of that final play, putting the improbable Undertaker victory into the books.

The post game press conference was a madhouse as reporters tried to get inside the heads of **Chris Worthley** and **RGIII** on that rare two-point conversion attempt. Adrenaline still pumping, Worthley was barely coherent. He didn't really explain the decision in a way that satisfied rational minds, "We went for the win, baby! Go big or go home! It didn't work that way but we found another way! This team never quits!"

On the decision to kick on first down with 19 seconds left, Worthley clearly had a reason in mind that he wasn't prepared to share candidly with the media. "It was time," he said simply. "I looked at the options and I liked our chances with Alex in that spot." When asked if he was worried about another **RGIII** turnover, Worthley refused to deny it, but offered some rare support for his young quarterback by saying: "Robert put us in a position to win the game and that's all I can ask of him. He'd done his part at that point."

Reports in the Death Valley press have hinted at tensions behind the scenes between **RGIII** and the mercurial Worthley. If half of what inside sources are saying is true, Worthley may feel he has nothing to lose by putting the game insanely on the line while putting his 'prima dona' on the spot. When the spotlight was on him in that moment, **RGIII** looked painfully ill-at-ease. It did not look like a vote of confidence, rather it had the appearance of a "put up or shut up" moment. With the unexpected happy ending, who knows what lies in store for the EFL's most volatile and newsworthy team.

SERIOUS FOOTBALL

If Cowtown's season amounts to anything this year, followers may end up pointing back to "The Drive" as the turning point. That would be when, trailing 23-13 at the Dawg Pound in Markham, **Joe Flacco** showed why, despite a season of inconsistency, he still has supporters in Cowtown, especially the Joneses in West Cowtown. Starting at their 34, and facing the top ranked defence in the league, twice the Corn Kings faced 4th down and twice Flacco was able to convert by checking down to the open man when his

primary receiver was covered. The second conversion, a 4th and 7 at the Markham 39 came against a nearly perfect defence – a pass rush applying pressure with excellent downfield coverage. But Flacco found **Larry Fitzgerald** near the first down marker and snuck a throw past a leaping **Calais Campbell** that Fitz caught for a first down.

The North Stars' defence played hard, but somehow Flacco still managed to move the ball patiently in small chunks through the air, the longest play an 11-yard completion to **Donnie Avery**. Eventually the Markham defence began to show tell tale signs of fatigue. **Antonio Cromartie** hung on to **Cecil Shorts III** a little too long on a pass into the end zone and was flagged for pass interference. With a 1st and goal at the one, twice the winded but stout Markham defenders stood up Cowtown running back **Alfred Morris** for no gain. On the third try, with Markham gunning once more for the Corn King star, Flacco faked to Morris, spun and threw to an open Fitzgerald at the pylon for a touchdown.

Trailing 23-20 at that point, Cowtown was not out of the woods, but their defence, which been wavering in the 3rd quarter, stood strong again, denying Eli's Stars any traction on their own field. After Cowtown tied it on a field goal, a frustrated Manning tried to force a throw to track star **Percy Harvin** that **Stephen Tulloch** deflected into the hands of **Terrence Newman** for an interception, setting up the go-ahead field goal. Later, with possession of the ball and a chance to force Markham to burn their remaining timeouts, Flacco finished off the Stars with the cold-blooded precision of a master, calmly faking the handoff to Morris one more time and throwing a dart to Shorts, who was open behind Cromartie and took off like a jet for a 59-yard TD.

If this game turns out to be the Corn Kings' signature victory of 2013, it could end up being Markham's signature loss. At home, with a 10-point lead, a chance to bury their rival and stay a full game ahead of peaking Durham, the Stars could not bring down the hammer. The effort was there, but they were stymied by a more desperate and not less talented team. Decision Day for title of the EFL North could very well be in Week 16, when Markham visits the steam bowl at Jurassic Park to face Durham.

AROUND THE EFL

There were more great games in Week 13 than I can do justice to, even in an expanded article. Here are the best of the rest:

Mohave demonstrated their mastery of the Patriots, starting strong and finishing stronger to upset the East Division's top team 34-21 at The Fiery Depths. The blistering Mohave pass rush turned up the burners on the combustible Charleswood front five, putting pressure on **Peyton Manning** that he felt whether he was in the grasp of a defender or not. The EFL's top quarterback was picked four times, two of them returned for 30+ yards, and the opportunistic Hellfire offence capitalized. In another sign that it was really not the Patriots day, Mohave running back **Jonathan Dwyer** out-rushed **Adrian Peterson**, 160 yards to 158.

The Triumph rebounded from a Week 12 blowout loss to the Gladiators with a stunning 34-21 Week 13 upset of the Spartans at Thermopylae Stadium. **Pierre Garçon** caught 8 passes for 158 yards and 3 touchdowns, prompting Triumph fans to ponder what might have been had the receiver been healthy for an entire season. On the down side, just as **Jay Cutler** was beginning to really groove with his "go-to guy," he went down with a sprained knee and has been already ruled out for next week against Markham. With the Triumph's playoff hopes already hanging by a spider-web filament, the loss of Cutler almost certainly means the Triumph will be playing spoiler the rest of the way.

The Glads' faint playoff hopes passed away in the South Carolina night with hardly anyone noticing. They certainly played as if there was no hope, going through the motions as the Regulators put them down, 13-6. All attention focused on the Regulators and their improbable run at the playoffs. The fans celebrated, but the football people in Columbia weren't overly impressed with the manner of their 7th victory. "*We successfully pulled the trigger of a shotgun placed at the head of a dying horse on Sunday, but forgot to load the weapon. We finally got it loaded, and did the deed, but at the expense of needless suffering,*" wrote **Johnny Rebb** of *The State*.

EJ Manuel got a taste of the pros on the first drive of his first EFL start. On 3rd and 8 at his own 42, Manuel overthrew **Lance Moore**. York safety **Danieal Manning** picked it clean and ran it back 56 yards for the game's first touchdown. The rookie finished with 3 interceptions and 0 touchdowns as the Cannibals dropped their 6th straight, losing 23-7 to the Excaliburs. It was not all lowlights for Manuel, however. With the help of the refs he directed a jittery drive from his team's 21 to the York 30. From there he threw his best pass of the day, lobbing it over the top to a sprinting Moore for a 27-yard gain to the York 3 yard line. After **Eddie Lacy** fell short of the goal line, Manuel pushed it across from a couple of inches for his team's only score. Manuel clearly has the physical tools to compete but looked like a nervous nelly for the entire game, making it an easy win for the Swords, a team that is not accustomed to having it easy. If the Cannibals stick with him over **Philip Rivers** they won't win another game.

The Convicts got an encore performance from ageing 'Lockdown Crew' member **James Harrison** as Chino bumped off Iowa City 27-10 at The Big House in a must win game. Harrison scooped up a fumble and returned it 88 yards for a touchdown and made a 4th quarter interception to clinch the win. While **Rob Nazar** must be pleased with the sudden resurgence of his defence to something approaching previously dominant form, **Deron Redding** must be concerned about the performance of his twin QBs, **Russell Wilson** and **Colin Kaepernick**, who combined to turn the ball over three times in the loss.

Fights broke out in the stands and pieces of rickety old Bluff's Stadium fell into Lake Ontario as the Blue Eagles dropped a 45-31 decision to the Thunder Lizards. While the Eagles' offence showed signs of life, the defence gave up, surrendering 437 yards through the air to **Drew Brees**. **Megatron** added 8 receptions to bring his total on the season to 96 – tops in the league.

Finally, on Student's Day at MHK Royal Coliseum, 7,500 students cashed in their free passes and watched the Monarchs dispatch the Knights 24-17. It was a good day for Monarchs' football and for bored students who like roaming from seat to seat, as there were plenty of empty ones.

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RECORD VS THE SPREAD AFTER WEEK 13:

79-48-3

PLAYOFF PICTURE AT A GLANCE

PACIFIC-ATLANTIC CONFERENCE		CAN-AM CONFERENCE			
OUT	ALIVE	IN	IN	ALIVE	OUT
			1		
			2		
			3		
			4		

JIMMY'S WEEK FOURTEEN PICKS

GAMES TO WATCH

CHINO @ DEATH VALLEY (line – CONVICTS by 1)

INJURIES: Chino – Davon House (OUT), Chris Ivory (OUT) Jarius Wright (OUT); Death Valley – Adrian Clayborn (OUT), Brent Grimes (OUT), Jake Long (OUT).

Two exciting and dynamic quarterbacks go toe-to-toe in a game with significant playoff implications for both the wild card and possibly the division. Part of the excitement that accompanies these two strong-armed running quarterbacks is fans never knowing when either will throw the ball to the wrong team, or put the ball on the ground while trying to avoid a sack. But, as we have seen, when RGIII and the Magnificent Cam are on their game it's enough to make a GM throw away a league MVP or use a first round pick to acquire one of them. The one sure bet is that this game will be wild; trying to predict which team will prevail is the challenge. Vegas likes the Convicts a little better here. This is probably due to their convincing win over a strong Cubs team last

week. It is also no doubt due to the unorthodox, some would say “lucky,” way the Undertakers upended Virden last week. For my money I think it will not be a very close game, although undoubtedly filled with memorable moments. An implosion by either quarterback will make it easy for the victor, unless both implode equally. Then we will have a game where the outcome will dance on the head of a pin until a late but total collapse by the loser. One thing the melodrama at the Graveyard in Week 13 showed us was that the Undertakers never give up. Death Valley took down the Convicts at the Big House in their first meeting this year; at the Graveyard they are that much tougher. **PICK: DEATH VALLEY**

YORK @ CHARLESWOOD (line – PATRIOTS by 5)

INJURIES: York – Chris Gamble (OUT), Ryan Williams (OUT), Eric Wright (OUT); **Charleswood** – Marcus Gilbert (OUT);

York has gone from playoff long shot to the 4th seed in the PAC playoff pool if the season were to end today. With both the Pats and Virden losing last week, the Magic Swords now have a credible shot at the division title. It will take some fancy slicing and dicing to overcome the monsters in the way and help from a friend to succeed in their quest, but with the Pats and Violators playing down to their opponents these days, I would bet on York, provided they can take care of their own business. That will be a challenge, starting this week on the road against the league’s top rated quarterback who isn’t nursing a cold on the sidelines. Peyton Manning’s mastery of the air took a blow last week from the team that has the Pats’ number. Mohave picked off “the Man” 4 times en route to a 34-21 thrashing. The Hellfire were not afraid to blitz; and why would they be with some of the top pass-rushing talent in the league on their roster. The Excaliburs have some players like that, namely Von Miller, Michael Johnson and Geno Atkins. Those three will have to perform if the Swords are going to rip one away from the Pats and even their face-to-face season record. For the Pats to win, they simply need to get top grade performances from their top grade offensive talent. That may be more difficult than expected; York has crept into the #1 rank in defensive efficiency and in defending the run. Adrian Peterson will be a factor, but to be the difference he will need an outstanding performance by his questionable offensive line. The tendency of the Pats to sag at home is matched by York’s tendency to wilt on the road. I see the Pats edging out a close one, but under the spread. **PICK: YORK**

GAMES OF NOTE

PICKERING @ DURHAM (line – THUNDER LIZARDS by 7)

INJURIES: Pickering – None; **Durham** – David DeCastro (OUT);

With the North Stars now hanging onto the North Division by a tie-breaker, the Lizards have an opportunity to swoop in for the kill if they can continue winning games. After some growing pains early in the season, Drew Brees is picking up where he left off last year and has led his team to 6 straight victories. In that stretch he has thrown 18 TD passes, enough to place him indisputably at the top of that category to this point in the season with 36. He has also thrown 16 interceptions, too high by league standards, but the price to be paid for throwing all the time and rarely throwing short. Speaking of interceptions, the Spartans’ promising season is starting to rattle with each unforced interception thrown by Matt Schaub, who also has 16 on the season. He does not throw them every game, but when he throws 2 or more Pickering is 0-3 – a record to be expected considering that in two of those games he threw 5 drive-killers. Obviously, Pickering will want to score first and lead with the run to keep the “Bad Schaub” well shielded from the top-ranked Durham secondary. There is also another reason to establish the ground game – the Lizards have not figured out a way to stop it, having given up a league-worst 4.9 yards a carry. Scheming by the Pickering offensive coordinator may yield an extra touchdown by game’s end, but it will not address the other side, which involves the league’s top-ranked passing and scoring offence against what is really just a mediocre Spartans’ pass defence. Pickering edged past Durham in Round One when Steven Jackson ran wild. The bruising back is slowing down now while the Lizards seem to be picking up speed. **PICK: DURHAM**

MOHAVE @ VIRDEN (line – VIOLATORS by 9)

INJURIES: Mohave – Eric Fisher (PROBABLE); **Virden** – Brandon Meriweather (OUT), Fili Moala (OUT);

The Hellfire have gone from being almost as irrelevant as Sebastian to being the league’s new ‘Giant Killers.’ 4-9 Mohave turned in a blistering defensive performance last week to knock off the Patriots for the second time this year. Their other two victories came against Twin Cities on the road and Death Valley at home. The Violators might look like another tall target ready to be cut down to size by the vicious Hellfire pass rush, except that Lance Barrate’s team has the opposite reputation from the Hellfire. Virden falls to

“Giants” and crushes the league’s midgets – a club to which the Hellfire still belong despite their recent muscle flexing. The Violators danced all over Mohave in their first encounter. This time they are at home, where they know all of the music. Last time they faced each other Matt Stafford posted a perfect QB rating, throwing for over 300 yards and tossing 4 TD passes. In that game Stafford got protection more than not and, when he did, the scattershot Mohave secondary was not up to the job of keeping up with Dez Bryant and Julio Jones. This is an important game for Virden in their neck-and-neck race for the East Division title. Expect the Hellfire to go down guns-blazing and the Violators to back off after building a big lead. **PICK: VIRDEN**

COWTOWN @ SOUTH CAROLINA (line – CORN KINGS by 2)

INJURIES: Cowtown – None; South Carolina – Tracy Porter (OUT), Brandon Thompson (OUT).

Both these teams are jockeying for a possible wild card spot and watching closely to see if Pickering falters down the home stretch. With the Spartans in tough at Jurassic Park this week, the opportunity presents itself for one of these teams to gain ground. But both have already lost to the Spartans this year, so a Pickering loss will not budge it from the #4 seed – yet. While they both need lots of help to reach the post season, neither team is likely to get too distracted by whatever else is going on around the league while preparing for each other. The Regulators eliminated the Gladiators last week by sticking to their game plan, whatever that is, while the Corn Kings kept their playoff aspirations in the realm of the realistic by downing Markham on the road. If one team is riding more of a crest than the other it would be the Corn Kings, but the smell of southern BBQ and corn bread at the Slammer has a way of making visiting teams drowsy. The Regulators continue to impress defensively while managing to keep the key to their success a secret from film junkies. The Corn Kings are showing more flashes of 2011 in their play, but cannot claim to be consistent on either side of the ball this year. Although the Regs and Kings are ranked 19th and 20th respectively in take-ways so far this year, expect this game to turn on turnovers, or a turnover. **PICK: COWTOWN**

MARKHAM @ TWIN CITIES (line – NORTH STARS by 2)

INJURIES: Markham – Kyle Long (QUESTIONABLE), Jah Reid (OUT); Twin Cities – Jay Cutler (OUT), Glenn Dorsey (OUT), Eric Reid (OUT).

The North Stars remain at the top of the North Division but their grip on it weakened with last week’s demoralizing loss at home to Cowtown. Eli Manning’s three interceptions against the team with the fewest in the league coming into that game cannot be sitting well with Darrin Jones, who may be running out of ways to protect his quarterback from exposure to prowling secondaries. No doubt Markham will want to batter the Triumph defensive line and exploit its weaker edges before putting the ball into Eli’s hands. Or else they might decide to throw caution to the wind and let Percy Harvin and Jordy Nelson try their magic early. If Eli can avoid another multiple interception day (and that is a sizeable “if”) the offence will fare well and the big difference will boil down to the Markham defence, which is very interested in testing Jason Campbell’s pocket awareness as he starts for an injured Jay Cutler. Campbell is a serviceable back-up, but he is still a back-up. **PICK: MARKHAM**

HOLIDAY LEFTOVERS

CARTHAGE @ MISSION VIEJO (line – MONARCHS by 2)

INJURIES: Carthage – Justin Hunter (DOUBTFUL), Jacob Lacey (DOUBTFUL), Jon Beason (OUT), Orlando Scandrick (OUT); Mission Viejo – Michael Brockers (PROBABLE), Brice McCain (QUESTIONABLE), Atari Bigby (OUT), Aaron Maybin (OUT).

If you are gob-smacked by the Monarchs being favoured, consider that the Cannibals have lost 6 in a row and have yet to win a game away from the Killing Field. Also consider that Philip Rivers rode the bench last week in favour of rookie EJ Manuel, yielding unpleasant results at York. While pride is often an issue for losing teams, it seems there may be a little less of that quality where these two teams are concerned. The Monarchs showed some life last week against the harebrained, rabid Knights, winning convincingly in front of a sparse crowd at MHK Royal Coliseum. Expect them to promote next year’s season ticket sales by attempting to pummel the Cannibals’ rookie quarterback, and being somewhat successful at it. **PICK: MISSION VIEJO**

IOWA CITY @ LOS ANGELES (line – CUBS by 4)

INJURIES: Iowa City –LaMichael James (OUT); Los Angeles – Barry Church (OUT), Brian Orakpo (OUT).

The Cubs saw their division lead shrink by another game after falling flat at the Big House last week. No question the Cubs are motivated to win this game and no question the Knights will attempt to give them all they can handle. But unlike when kids play sports, there are no medals or points in pro football for participation, trying your hardest, or being “most improved.” The youthful Cubbies are going through a jittery phase in their development, but when comparing their talent with the Knights, they are like men playing against kids. No participation medal for LA after this one, just a big fat ‘L.’ **PICK: IOWA CITY**

GARLAND @ SCARBOROUGH (line – MUSTANGS by 8)

INJURIES: **Garland** –Julian Edelman (OUT); **Scarborough** – Dont’a Hightower (DOUBTFUL), Derek Cox (OUT), Ryan Kalil (OUT), Jordan Norwood (OUT), Darrelle Revis (OUT).

It is hard to believe that this game, circled on football calendars everywhere at the beginning of the season, now means next to nothing in the playoff race. The Mustangs sewed up the South Division title in dramatic fashion last week with a nail-biter in overtime over Sebastian. Getting pushed to the wall by the Swordfish wasn’t exactly how the Mustangs expected to clinch their playoff berth, but it accomplished the task. With their ticket to the post-season is bought and paid for, now the Mustangs have their sights set on the #1 seed. The Blue Eagles showed some life on offence last week but their defence was pounded by the Thunder Lizards air attack. Scarborough continues to be a basket case and it is hard to imagine them pulling it together against a team like the Mustangs. I got burned by them last week, but my stubborn side, and a hunch, tells me that the Eagles have it in them to cover the spread against a Garland squad that may be still recovering from the fright instilled in them by a 2-11 team. After having their way with some pretty good competition since Ricky “Coco” Main took the reins, the Mustangs showed they can be tripped up by anybody. The Blue Eagles want to show that the Mustangs can be beaten. **PICK: SCARBOROUGH**

SEBASTIAN @ GWINNETT (line – GLADIATORS by 5)

INJURIES: **Sebastian** – Usama Young (OUT); **Gwinnett** –Bill Bentley (OUT), Josh Brown (OUT), Nate Burleson (OUT), Ed Dickson (OUT).

Big Ben disappeared in action against the Regulators last week and, with him, any hope for a Gladiators’ post-season berth. In a painfully boring game the Glads looked completely adrift, a state more commonly associated with their opponent this week. The Swordfish, by contrast, looked better than ever but could not overcome the superior talent of the Mustangs. So where do these two teams go from here? Sebastian has to be let down after a heroic effort against the division’s powerhouse and favourite to advance to the final. The Glads have to be looking at the game film from South Carolina and wondering what team they are watching. Expect both of these squads to return to their normal states this week. **PICK: GWINNETT**



ANCIENT HISTORY
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PRESENTS
This Week in EFL History
With Professor Sterling Smitherman

FROM THE EFL ARCHIVES – 2007 – To bring our look back at the first EFL season up to date, I am going to review Weeks 12 and 13 together. In Week 12, runners dominated the big offensive performances. Gwinnett running back Willie Parker led a half-dozen 100+ yard rushers with a 198-yard, 1 TD performance in a 27-16 loss to the Patriots. Not a single QB managed to pass for 300 yards or more that week as defences stabilized around the league. The Florida Dragons surprised the Mohave Hellfire 38-21 to solidify their playoff spot in the East and allow the Patriots to pull closer behind Mohave. The big win over-shadowed another

astounding upset by the Iowa City Cubs, who knocked off the Thunder Lizards 21-20 at Jurassic Park on a last second TD pass from Jeff Garcia to Lee Evans. The Cubs remained in the playoff hunt despite a 5-7 record. In the West, LA linebacker Kamerion Wimbley almost caused an upset of Chino at the Big House, with 4 sacks and a FF in a 16-13 loss.

In Week 13, Peyton Manning tossed 6 TD passes in a 52-0 slaughter of the Swamp Dogs. It was the 38th TD pass surrendered by Meadowlands and the 3rd game surrendering 6 or more TD passes to a single QB. The win brought Charleswood into a tie for the top of the East Division after faltering Mohave lost their second game in a row, 23-10, to the Golden Bears.

Meanwhile, the Corn Kings took control of the West after beating early front-runner Chino for the second time. The story of the game was how both offences pushed around solid defences in combining for 972 yards and 75 points in a 41-34 Cowtown victory at the Big House. Santana Moss set the record for longest pass reception with a 95-yard TD catch in the 2nd quarter. Cowtown now had the best record in the league, 10-3, a rank few had expected at the start of the season.