

## 2017 COLLEGE & PRO FOOTBALL NEWSLETTER

**Issue # 12**

**Games of November 14 - 20, 2017**

### NFL Overs & Unders – A Total-ly Different Perspective – Part 1

For nearly 4 decades wagering on the total points scored in NFL games has increased greatly in popularity. Totals allow the handicapper to concentrate on the flow or pace of a game rather than which team will have greater success. Obviously there is much overlap between the quality of the teams involved and the total points that will be scored but by looking at a game from an Over/Under perspective several weaknesses in the Totals line can be exploited. Of paramount importance is a knowledge of 'key' numbers for Totals much as 'key' numbers are important from a regular pointspread perspective. Here's a look at the key numbers for total points scored in the 8,526 NFL regular season games played between 1981 and 2016.

Total Points	Pct.		Total Points	Pct.	Points Range	Pct.
37	4.47 %		43	3.11 %	0 - 21	5.68 %
41	3.85 %		33	3.05 %	22 - 33	22.62 %
51	3.59 %		47	3.03 %	34 - 41	22.05 %
44	3.46 %		48	2.92 %	42 - 51	25.70 %
30	3.27 %		40	2.90 %	52 +	23.95 %

The first part of the Chart shows the ten most common total points results over the past 36 seasons and the percentage of the time that each has occurred. For example, 37 total points is the most common result and it has occurred 4.47% of the time, or just under one game in 20. The 10 most common results have accounted for 33.64% of all results. In other words, slightly more than one game in three has fallen on one of these ten 'key' numbers. The right hand part of the Chart looks at how frequently the total points in a game falls within one of five ranges. About 1 game a week will feature total points of 21 or less while about 3 or 4 games each week will see 52 or more points scored. Next week we will present some interesting data which will show why wagering on Overs and Unders presents some very good opportunities based partly on the above data and also on how the linesmaker is restricted in setting lines for Totals.

The college season starts winding down as 4 teams are playing their twelfth game of the season. Another 100 are playing their eleventh. Over the next two weeks many games will feature traditional season ending rivals. Often the weaker team – the underdog – makes for a solid play in these games as they have a chance to salvage an otherwise disappointing season with a win over their most bitter foe. In some games the lesser foe can make its season by spoiling a great season for its rival. Bowl bids may be on the line for one or both teams and that adds to the intensity of the rivalry. That's part of the pageantry and widespread appeal of college football.

**COLLEGE SELECTION OF THE WEEK: UL LAFAYETTE + 4 over New Mexico State** – Both teams are 4-5 and seeking 2 wins for Bowl eligibility. New Mexico State is already assured of its best season since going 4-9 in 2011. ULL has gone Bowling in 5 of the last 6 seasons, missing out 2 seasons ago. The teams have met in each of the past 4 seasons since becoming conference foes. ULL won the first two meetings, both by double digits. But NMSU has won each of the past 2 seasons, both as underdogs, by 3 and 6 points. This will be the first time NMSU is favored over ULL. The Aggies have been road favorites twice this season already, winning and covering at 0-9 Georgia Southern and at 2-8 Texas State. ULL is much better than both of those foes and the Ragin' Cajuns have played 6 of their first 9 games on the road (as has NMSU). ULL has faced a slightly tougher overall schedule and while NMSU has made nice strides this season there does

not appear to be justification to favor them over this foe on the road. UL Lafayette wins 34-31.

**Other Featured College Selections**

**UTAH STATE - 11 over Hawaii** – Utah State needs a win here or next week at Air Force to become Bowl eligible. At 5-5 all of Utah State’s losses have been to teams that are already Bowl eligible while 3 of their 5 wins have been on the road. Hawaii is 3-7 but has lost 7 of 8 since starting 2-0. The Rainbow Warriors are just 1-8-1 ATS and last week’s Push at Fresno State ended a streak of 8 straight ATS losses following their lone cover in their opener. These teams have played 4 common foes. Hawaii is 1-3, outscored by 8.5 points per game. Utah State is 2-2, outscoring those foes by 14.3 ppg. Prior to this season’s disappointment Hawaii was 7-7 last season, making it to a Bowl for the first time in 6 seasons. Utah State has the reverse profile, making 5 straight Bowls prior to a 3-9 season in 2016. Hawaii’s program is making progress but a lack of depth has taken a toll over the second half of the season. And they have, for them, a big game next week at home against BYU to end their season. Utah State is looking to prove last season was an aberration and the strides made the previous 5 seasons have resumed. Utah State has the better defense, Hawaii the better offense. Utah State has the intangible edges in playing its final home game. Utah State wins 41-24.

**BYU - 4 over Massachusetts** – To say this is a disappointing season for BYU is a huge understatement. The Cougars are 3-8 with a game next week at Hawaii and even a pair of wins to end the season will still leave BYU with its first losing record in more than a decade. BYU has won 2 of its last 3 games while going 3-0 ATS. UMass was 0-8 before winning 3 of its last 4. However all 3 wins were at home including last week over an FCS foe, Maine. Both teams are Independents and as such play rigorous schedules although the foes may take these games more lightly than their conference games. BYU has played the tougher overall competition. They have also played 4 of their last 5 games on the road, winning the lone home game in a 41-20 rout over lowly San Jose State. Last week BYU won on the road at UNLV. UMass has played of its last 5 at home, losing the lone road game, although covering, at Mississippi State. Both teams are seeking to continue their late season momentum. They met on this field late last season with BYU, favored by 28, routing the Minutemen 51-9. While an adjustment in the line from last season is certainly warranted, more than a 20 point adjustment is not. This may not be a rout but BYU should win comfortably. BYU wins 34-16.

**California + 16 over STANFORD** – “The Big Game” has produced many big moments over the years and this will be edition 120 for Cal and Stanford. Cal has made major progress under first season coach Justin Wilcox and Cal needs a win here or next week at UCLA to earn a Bowl Bid (although their APR could get them one at 5-7). Stanford can still claim the Pac 12 North Title and play USC for the Conference Title with a win and a loss by Washington State in one of its final two games. Stanford is off its upset win last week over Washington while Cal is rested after defeating Oregon State two weeks ago. Stanford has dominated this series recently, winning 7 straight and going 6-1 ATS in the process. But this may be Cal’s best tam in the past half dozen seasons and the past two seasons have seen Stanford win by 14 and 13 points, less than the line for this game. Stanford is 7-3 and will have trouble reaching the double digit win total its reached in 6 of the last 7 seasons. Stanford is still a solid program but many metrics strongly suggest the overall level of the program has been in decline over the past season or two. And while Cal still has a Pac 12 game next week at UCLA, Stanford will be in non Pac 12 action, hosting Notre Dame. Stanford wins but by just 34-24.

**Best of the Rest (Opinion)**

Eastern Michigan + 3 ½ over MIAMI OHIO [2]	NO ILLINOIS - 9 ½ over West Michigan [2]
SOUTH FLORIDA - 22 ½ over Tulsa [3]	Unlv Pick ‘em over NEW MEXICO [4]
Cincinnati - 3 ½ over EAST CAROLINA	VIRGINIA TECH - 15 ½ over Pittsburgh
Minnesota + 7 over NORTHWESTERN	Texas + 3 ½ over WEST VIRGINIA
WYOMING + 1 over Fresno State	Louisiana Tech - 17 over UTEP
Tcu - 7 over TEXAS TECH	IOWA - 8 ½ over Purdue
Arizona Pick ‘em over OREGON	Uab + 11 over FLORIDA
Arizona State - 7 over OREGON STATE	MEMPHIS - 11 over Smu
VANDERBILT + 9 over Missouri	PENN STATE - 26 over Nebraska
TENNESSEE + 16 ½ over Lsu	TULANE + 9 ½ over Houston

IDAHO - 9 over Coastal Carolina	Army + 3 over NORTH TEXAS
MISSISSIPPI - 3 over Texas A&M	Michigan + 7 over WISCONSIN

**The Rest (Leans)**

Ohio U - 11 ½ over AKRON [1]	Central Michigan - 18 over KENT STATE [1]
Toledo - 17 over BOWLING GREEN [2]	BALL STATE + 20 ½ over Buffalo [3]
WEST KENTUCKY + 3 over Middle Tennessee [4]	INDIANA - 11 over Rutgers
Kentucky + 21 ½ over GEORGIA	DUKE + 6 ½ over Georgia Tech
TEMPLE + 14 over Central Florida	WAKE FOREST - 1 ½ over North Carolina State
LOUISVILLE - 12 ½ over Syracuse	MICHIGAN STATE - 16 ½ over Maryland
Oklahoma - 36 ½ over KANSAS	Air Force + 17 ½ over BOISE STATE
Rice + 9 ½ over OLD DOMINION	SOUTHERN MISS - 17 over Charlotte
GEORGIA SOUTHERN + 6 over South Alabama	Illinois + 40 over OHIO STATE
Virginia + 19 ½ over MIAMI FLA	Iowa State - 9 ½ over BAYLOR
ARKANSAS + 12 over Mississippi State	WASHINGTON - 17 over Utah
UL Monroe + 37 over AUBURN	OKLAHOMA STATE - 20 ½ over Kansas State
COLORADO STATE - 32 ½ over San Jose State	Navy + 18 ½ over NOTRE DAME
ARKANSAS STATE - 26 over Texas State	FLORIDA ATLANTIC - 15 over Florida Int's
Connecticut + 21 over Boston College [5]	UT SAN ANTONIO Pick 'em over Marshall
USC - 16 over Ucla	SAN DIEGO STATE - 15 over Nevada

[1] Tuesday, Nov 14

[2] Wednesday, Nov 15

[3] Thursday, Nov 16

[4] Friday, Nov 17

[5] at Fenway Park

**NFL SELECTION OF THE WEEK: New England - 6 ½ over Oakland (at Mexico City)** – Oakland returns from its Bye having won 2 of 3 following a 4 game losing streak. 4 of their last 6 games have been decided by 6 points or less. New England continues to play at peak level, winning 5 in a row after their 2-2 start. In their 5 game win streak the Pats have not allowed any foe to top 17 points. In their 2-2 start the Pats allowed 3 of 4 foes to score at least 33 points. A major difference in these teams has been turnovers. New England has committed more turnovers than the opponent just once in 9 games whereas Oakland has committed more turnovers than the opponent in 6 of 9 games. Both teams have played 2 games in which the turnovers were even. The Pats are 4-0 away from home (3-0-1 ATS) and continue to make the key plays on both sides of the football, something that cannot be said for the Raiders. After defeating Denver Sunday night the Pats are spending this week in Colorado Springs at the Air Force Academy, enabling them to be fully acclimated to the high altitude they'll face in Mexico City, perhaps an edge in the second half. New England wins 34-17.

**Other Featured NFL Selections:**

**MINNESOTA - 2 ½ over L A Rams** – This is a surprising matchup between a pair of NFC Division leaders. Whereas Minnesota was considered a contender to make the Playoffs the ascension of the Rams to the top of the NFC West is a major surprise. Not only are both teams 7-2 SU but they are also both 6-3 ATS, a sign that the markets have still not fully bought in to the improvement each team has shown. It's easy to make a case for either team in what could be a Playoffs preview. Perhaps the scheduling dynamics can also lend greater support to the hosts. This is Minnesota's first home game since Week 7 and with their next 3 on the road their next home game will be in Week 15. The Rams have the better offense, the Vikings the better defense and when those two collide the defense generally prevails. Minnesota wins 27-20.

**Jacksonville - 7 ½ over CLEVELAND** – 0-9 Cleveland jumped out to a 10-0 at Detroit last week but still lost

by 14 points (38-24) and standing a woeful 2-7 ATS. Jacksonville faced the “better than their record suggests” Chargers and got a FG in overtime to win and improve to 6-3 SU. Their loss to the spread still leaves them profitable at 5-4 ATS and the Jags lead the NFL in rushing offense (163 yards per game) and now also lead in defensive yard per play (4.59). Cleveland has shown an ability to run the football, topping 110 yards in 4 of its last 5 games. But the passing game is very weak. They’ve topped 18 points just twice in 9 games. Jacksonville is clearly the better team but their relative inexperience with success makes it tough to lay significant points on the road. Still the Jags remained largely undervalued relative to their strengths. Both teams are able to run the football which often results in fewer possessions. With the Browns losing an NFL high 2.6 turnovers per game, Jacksonville’s defense should dictate the tempo of this game and if not scoring directly off turnovers, setting up the offense in good field position. Jacksonville wins 24-9.

**Atlanta + 3 over SEATTLE (Monday)** – Both teams have been more disappointing than pleasing this season despite winning SU records. 5-4 Atlanta is just 3-6 ATS whereas 6-3 Seattle is 3-5-1 ATS. Atlanta’s impressive 27-7 home win over Dallas last week snapped a 1-4 SU and 0-5 ATS stretch. Seattle has won 5 of 6 but is 0-2-1 ATS in their last 3 games. 7 of Seattle’s 9 games have been decided by 8 points or less. While Atlanta’s offensive struggle in converting yards into points has been a concern for much of the season the defense has been steady, holding 8 of 9 foes to 23 points or less and allowing just 26 points to the ninth. Atlanta still has the NFL’s best yards per play differential at plus 1.1. Seattle continues to be plagued by penalties and have suffered additional key injuries. Despite Seattle’s strong home field the 2 of Seattle’s 3 home wins have been by a FG and the third was their blowout of lowly Indianapolis in which they trailed at the half. And they lost their last home game to Washington. Last week’s win over Dallas may have been the ‘buy’ signal for the Falcons who face the them they knocked out of the Playoffs last season and are seeking revenge. Whereas Seattle’s window is closing, Atlanta’s remains open. Atlanta wins 23-17.

**Best of the Rest (Opinions)**

PITTSBURGH - 7 over Tennessee (Thursday)	MIAMI - 3 over Tampa Bay
Washington + 7 ½ over NEW ORLEANS	DALLAS + 3 ½ over Philadelphia

**The Rest (Leans)**

Detroit - 3 over CHICAGO	N Y GIANTS + 10 ½ over Kansas City
Baltimore - 2 over GREEN BAY	Arizona - 1 ½ over HOUSTON
L A CHARGERS - 4 over Buffalo	Cincinnati + 2 ½ over DENVER

Byes:	Carolina	Indianapolis	N Y Jets	San Francisco
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**Best of the NFL Totals**

Detroit/Chicago UNDER 41 ½	Baltimore/Green Bay OVER 38
Jacksonville/Cleveland UNDER 38	Washington/New Orleans OVER 51
Cincinnati/Denver UNDER 40	Atlanta/Seattle UNDER 45

**Money Line Recommendations**

College:	Texas	Minnesota	UL LAFAYETTE	Army
Pro:	MIAMI	Cincinnati	DALLAS	Atlanta

**NOTE:** All Selections are picked to win Against the Spread (ATS). Unless otherwise indicated, HOME TEAMS are in CAPS. All material is provided as news matter only and is not to be used in violation of any Federal, State or Local law(s).



