

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

345 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10154
p. (212) 450-2000
f. (212) 681-7573
nflmedia.com



Greg.Aiello@nfl.com
Senior Vice President of Communications
Brian.McCarthy@nfl.com
Vice President of Corporate Communications
Michael.Signora@nfl.com
Vice President of Football Communications

COMMUNICATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

9/30/14

<http://twitter.com/nfl345>

NFL SEASON ENTERS SECOND QUARTER

The first quarter of the NFL season is over and 24 of the league's 32 teams (75 percent) are currently either in first place or within a game of the top spot in the division. But there's a lot of season left to be played.

There are only two unbeaten teams remaining – Arizona (3-0) and Cincinnati (3-0).

And all 32 teams know there's room for improvement. And, while not every club has gotten off to a hot start, nothing is a given in the NFL.

Since 1990, when the current 12-team playoff format was adopted, 106 teams (36.8 percent of the 288 playoff clubs) have advanced to the postseason after starting the season 2-2 or worse. There were six such teams – Carolina (1-3), Cincinnati (2-2), Green Bay (2-2), Philadelphia (1-3), San Diego (2-2) and San Francisco (2-2) – last season, including four division winners (Panthers, Bengals, Packers and Eagles).

That's the unpredictability of the NFL. So entering Week 5, while it certainly helps to be near the top of the standings, don't count anyone out. Some of the key games this weekend:

MINNESOTA VIKINGS (2-2) at GREEN BAY PACKERS (2-2) (Thursday, CBS/NFLN, 8:25 PM ET)
--

The Vikings defeated Atlanta 41-28 last week behind the play of rookie quarterback **TEDDY BRIDGEWATER** (317 passing yards, one rushing touchdown) and running backs **MATT ASIATA** (three rushing touchdowns) and rookie **JERICK MC KINNON** (135 rushing yards). Bridgewater, who did not throw an interception, joined **ROBERT GRIFFIN III** (September 9, 2012) as the only rookie quarterbacks in the past decade with at least 300 passing yards and no interceptions in their first NFL start.

"I like how this team competes," says Minnesota head coach **MIKE ZIMMER**. "I like how it works. I like how it studies. I thought our guys played very hard. This was a great team win."

Green Bay is coming off a 38-17 win at Chicago in which quarterback **AARON RODGERS** (302 yards, 151.2 passer rating) threw four touchdown passes – two apiece to wide receivers **RANDALL COBB** and **JORDY NELSON**. Cobb (seven catches, 113 yards) and Nelson (10 catches, 108 yards) are the first Packers teammates to each have at least 100 receiving yards and two touchdowns in a game since December 21, 1969 (CARROLL DALE and BOYD DOWLER).

"We know what we're capable of as an offense" says Cobb. "We have a lot of playmakers. We're going to continue to gel."

HOUSTON TEXANS (3-1) at DALLAS COWBOYS (3-1) (Sunday, CBS, 1:00 PM ET)

Texans defensive end **J.J. WATT** returned an interception 80 yards for a touchdown in Houston's 23-17 win over Buffalo. Trailing 10-7 in the third quarter, Watt changed the momentum of the game by picking off a pass and returning it 80 yards for a score. It marked his second career interception-return touchdown and the first in the regular season. He is the only player in NFL history with at least 35 sacks (38.5), an INT-TD and a touchdown reception in his first four seasons.

"It was just a great play," says Houston head coach **BILL O'BRIEN** about Watt's INT-TD. "It really turned the game, no question about it. He's a very instinctive, great player."

Behind the strong play of running back **DE MARCO MURRAY**, the Cowboys are off to a 3-1 start for the first time since 2008. Murray, who leads the league in rushing with 534 yards and five touchdowns, is just the fourth player in NFL history to start a season with at least 100 rushing yards and a rushing touchdown in each of his team's first four games.

"I have to give credit to the offensive line," says Murray. "We're all on the same page. They make it a lot easier for me."

BALTIMORE RAVENS (3-1) at INDIANAPOLIS COLTS (2-2) (Sunday, CBS, 1:00 PM ET)

The Ravens have won three in a row, including last week's 38-10 win over Carolina. Wide receiver **STEVE SMITH, SR.** had seven catches for 139 yards and two touchdowns. He has 429 yards this season, the most ever by a player 35 years old or older through the first four games of a season. Smith, who is the Panthers' all-time leading receiver with 12,197 yards, is only the second player in NFL history (TORRY HOLT) to have a 100-yard performance in his first game against a franchise for which he had at least 10,000 receiving yards.

"I was ready to play ball once I was out there," says Smith about facing his former team.

Indianapolis has won two consecutive games and the Colts have scored at least 40 points in each. Quarterback **ANDREW LUCK** completed 70.7 percent of his passes (29 of 41) for 393 yards with four touchdowns and one interception for a 123.3 passer rating in last week's 41-17 win over Tennessee. The previous week in a 44-17 win over Jacksonville, Luck completed 31 of 39 passes (79.5 percent) for 370 yards with four touchdowns and no interceptions for a 140.4 passer rating. He is the first player in NFL history to post consecutive games with at least 370 passing yards, four or more touchdown passes, a completion percentage above 70 percent and one or no interceptions.

"We're blessed with a bunch of great playmakers, guys that need the ball in their hands," says Luck. "As a quarterback, that's what you want."

ARIZONA CARDINALS (3-0) at DENVER BRONCOS (2-1) (Sunday, FOX, 4:05 PM ET)

For just the third time since the 1970 merger, the Cardinals posted an undefeated record in September (1974, 2012). Arizona has allowed just 45 points in three games and leads the NFC in points allowed per game (15.0). In the fourth quarter, the Cardinals have yet to allow a single point, outscoring opponents 30-0.

"It's good to be 3-0, but we're not satisfied because we're trying to get somewhere," says Arizona defensive coordinator **TODD BOWLES**. "We're trying to get to the playoffs and the Super Bowl."

Denver quarterback **PEYTON MANNING** has thrown eight touchdown passes in three games this season and enters this week's game just one shy of 500 for his career. Manning is on the verge of joining BRETT FAVRE (508) as the only players in NFL history with 500 touchdown passes.

"I'm just happy I get to catch some of them," says Broncos wide receiver **DEMARYIUS THOMAS**. "Because you know most of those are going to be touchdowns in games you win. They're going to be plays that mean something for us."

CINCINNATI BENGALS (3-0) at NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (2-2) (Sunday, NBC, 8:30 PM ET)

The 3-0 Bengals have allowed a league-low 33 points and 11.0 points per game. Cincinnati is the only team in the league to allow 16 points or fewer in every game. Offensively, quarterback **ANDY DALTON** has a 95.4 passer rating and the team has three players with 12 receptions each – wide receivers **A.J. GREEN** (233 yards) and **MOHAMED SANU** (164) and running back **GIOVANI BERNARD** (148).

"This is nothing more than a good first quarter," says veteran tackle **ANDREW WHITWORTH**. "You can't let up. October is a month for adjustments. Teams begin to find out who they are. October is a big month."

New England looks to bounce back from last week's loss at Kansas City. Patriots quarterback **TOM BRADY** has 49,940 career passing yards and needs 60 yards to become the sixth player in NFL history with 50,000. He would join **BRETT FAVRE** (71,838), **PEYTON MANNING** (65,778), **DAN MARINO** (61,361), **DREW BREES** (52,284) and **JOHN ELWAY** (51,475).

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS (2-1) at WASHINGTON REDSKINS (1-3) (Monday, ESPN, 8:30 PM ET)

The Seahawks have won eight consecutive games on Monday night and quarterback **RUSSELL WILSON** is 3-0 with seven touchdowns, no interceptions and a 121.6 rating on Mondays. This season, Wilson's 108.9 passer rating ranks third in the NFL and Seattle is 19-3 (.864) when he has a rating of at least 100 (including the playoffs).

"You have to put him in there," says Seahawks cornerback **RICHARD SHERMAN** about Wilson being considered the best quarterback in the NFL. "If you're basing that judgment off of winning, you have to put him in that discussion."

Washington linebacker **RYAN KERRIGAN** ties for the NFL lead with five sacks and since entering the league in 2011, is one of only two players (JASON PIERRE-PAUL) with at least 25 sacks and two interception-return touchdowns. Redskins wide receiver **DE SEAN JACKSON** has scored five touchdowns (four receiving, one rushing) in his past six Monday night games, averaging 62.8 yards per TD.

2014 NFL STANDINGS

American Football Conference

East Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Buffalo Bills	2	2	0	.500	79	75	1-1-0	1-1-0	1-2-0	1-0-0	Lost 2
Miami Dolphins	2	2	0	.500	96	97	1-1-0	1-1-0	2-2-0	1-1-0	Won 1
New England Patriots	2	2	0	.500	80	90	1-0-0	1-2-0	1-2-0	0-1-0	Lost 1
New York Jets	1	3	0	.250	79	96	1-2-0	0-1-0	1-0-0	0-0-0	Lost 3

North Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Cincinnati Bengals	3	0	0	1.000	80	33	2-0-0	1-0-0	2-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
Baltimore Ravens	3	1	0	.750	103	60	2-1-0	1-0-0	2-1-0	2-1-0	Won 3
Pittsburgh Steelers	2	2	0	.500	97	99	1-1-0	1-1-0	1-1-0	1-1-0	Lost 1
Cleveland Browns	1	2	0	.333	74	77	1-1-0	0-1-0	0-2-0	0-2-0	Lost 1

South Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Houston Texans	3	1	0	.750	87	67	2-0-0	1-1-0	2-0-0	0-0-0	Won 1
Indianapolis Colts	2	2	0	.500	136	95	1-1-0	1-1-0	2-1-0	2-0-0	Won 2
Tennessee Titans	1	3	0	.250	60	110	0-1-0	1-2-0	1-2-0	0-1-0	Lost 3
Jacksonville Jaguars	0	4	0	.000	58	152	0-1-0	0-3-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	Lost 4

West Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
San Diego Chargers	3	1	0	.750	102	63	2-0-0	1-1-0	2-0-0	0-0-0	Won 3
Denver Broncos	2	1	0	.667	75	67	2-0-0	0-1-0	2-0-0	1-0-0	Lost 1
Kansas City Chiefs	2	2	0	.500	102	79	1-1-0	1-1-0	2-2-0	0-1-0	Won 2
Oakland Raiders	0	4	0	.000	51	103	0-2-0	0-2-0	0-4-0	0-0-0	Lost 4

National Football Conference

East Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Philadelphia Eagles	3	1	0	.750	122	104	2-0-0	1-1-0	1-1-0	1-0-0	Lost 1
Dallas Cowboys	3	1	0	.750	115	86	1-1-0	2-0-0	2-1-0	0-0-0	Won 3
New York Giants	2	2	0	.500	103	91	1-1-0	1-1-0	1-2-0	1-0-0	Won 2
Washington Redskins	1	3	0	.250	95	109	1-1-0	0-2-0	0-2-0	0-2-0	Lost 2

North Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Detroit Lions	3	1	0	.750	85	62	2-0-0	1-1-0	2-1-0	1-0-0	Won 2
Minnesota Vikings	2	2	0	.500	91	84	1-1-0	1-1-0	2-1-0	0-0-0	Won 1
Green Bay Packers	2	2	0	.500	92	96	1-0-0	1-2-0	1-2-0	1-1-0	Won 1
Chicago Bears	2	2	0	.500	92	100	0-2-0	2-0-0	1-1-0	0-1-0	Lost 1

South Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Atlanta Falcons	2	2	0	.500	131	113	2-0-0	0-2-0	2-1-0	2-0-0	Lost 1
Carolina Panthers	2	2	0	.500	73	96	1-1-0	1-1-0	2-0-0	1-0-0	Lost 2
New Orleans Saints	1	3	0	.250	95	110	1-0-0	0-3-0	1-2-0	0-1-0	Lost 1
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	1	3	0	.250	72	119	0-2-0	1-1-0	0-3-0	0-2-0	Won 1

West Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Arizona Cardinals	3	0	0	1.000	66	45	2-0-0	1-0-0	2-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
Seattle Seahawks	2	1	0	.667	83	66	2-0-0	0-1-0	1-0-0	0-0-0	Won 1
San Francisco 49ers	2	2	0	.500	88	89	1-1-0	1-1-0	2-2-0	0-1-0	Won 1
St. Louis Rams	1	2	0	.333	56	85	0-2-0	1-0-0	1-2-0	0-0-0	Lost 1

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS SEPTEMBER 25, 28-29

Byes: Arizona, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Denver, Seattle, St. Louis
(Home Team in Caps)

Thursday, September 25

New York Giants 45, WASHINGTON 14

Sunday, September 28

BALTIMORE 38, Carolina 10

Green Bay 38, CHICAGO 17

HOUSTON 23, Buffalo 17

INDIANAPOLIS 41, Tennessee 17

Detroit 24, NEW YORK JETS 17

Sunday, September 28 (cont'd)

Miami 38, OAKLAND 14 (London)

Tampa Bay 27, PITTSBURGH 24

SAN DIEGO 33, Jacksonville 14

MINNESOTA 41, Atlanta 28

SAN FRANCISCO 26, Philadelphia 21

DALLAS 38, New Orleans 17

Monday, September 22

KANSAS CITY 41, New England 14

2014 NFL WEEK 5 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, SUNDAY & MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 5-6

Byes: Miami, Oakland

(All times local)

Thursday, October 2

Minnesota at Green Bay 7:25 PM (CBS/NFLN)

Sunday, October 5

Chicago at Carolina 1:00 PM

Houston at Dallas 12:00 PM

Buffalo at Detroit 1:00 PM

Baltimore at Indianapolis 1:00 PM

Pittsburgh at Jacksonville 1:00 PM

Tampa Bay at New Orleans 12:00 PM

Atlanta at New York Giants 1:00 PM

Sunday, October 5 (cont'd)

St. Louis at Philadelphia 1:00 PM

Cleveland at Tennessee 12:00 PM

Arizona at Denver 2:05 PM

New York Jets at San Diego 1:25 PM

Kansas City at San Francisco 1:25 PM

Cincinnati at New England 8:30 PM (NBC)

Monday, October 6

Seattle at Washington 8:30 PM (ESPN)