

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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COMMUNICATIONS

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NFL APPROACHES QUARTER MARK WITH KEY WEEK 4 GAMES

Seven teams – Arizona, Atlanta, Carolina, Cincinnati, Denver, Green Bay and New England – remain undefeated as the NFL enters Week 4.

“It’s the kind of start you always want to have,” says Bengals quarterback **ANDY DALTON**, who leads the AFC in passer rating (121.0), about the team’s 3-0 record. “It says a lot about the people we have on this team. We’re going to keep playing one week at a time but we like where we are right now.”

The chances of making the playoffs after a 3-0 start are good but far from certain. Since 1990, when the current playoff format was adopted, 93 of the 124 teams (75 percent) to start 3-0 have qualified for the postseason.

“It’s hard to win games in this league so any time you can start 3-0, it’s a big deal,” says Panthers center **RYAN KALIL**.

Atlanta, which missed the postseason a year ago, is the first team in NFL history to start 3-0 after trailing in the fourth quarter of every game. That’s just another example of the unpredictability of the NFL. In fact, since the 12-team playoff format was adopted in 1990, at least four clubs made the playoffs each season that were not in the postseason the previous year.

“The sky’s the limit for this team,” says Falcons wide receiver **JULIO JONES**, whose 34 receptions are the most by a player in the first three games of a season in NFL history. “We’ve just got to believe and stay together.”

There are 13 teams with a 2-1 record or better – Arizona (3-0), Atlanta (3-0), Buffalo (2-1), Carolina (3-0), Cincinnati (3-0), Dallas (2-1), Denver (3-0), Green Bay (3-0), Minnesota (2-1), New England (3-0), the New York Jets (2-1), Oakland (2-1) and Pittsburgh (2-1) – and five of them did not make the playoffs in 2014 (Atlanta, Buffalo, Minnesota, the Jets and Oakland).

Don’t count out any teams yet. Since 1990, 67 teams with a losing record after the first three games made the playoffs. That includes two teams last season – Green Bay and Indianapolis. Both of those clubs advanced to their Conference Championship Game. So, entering Week 4, hope is still very much alive for everyone.

As the NFL approaches the quarter mark of the season, Week 4 kicks off with an important divisional contest between the Baltimore Ravens and Pittsburgh Steelers on Thursday night (8:25 PM ET, CBS/NFLN). Also this week, the NFL returns to London for the first of three games this season. For the first time, a game at Wembley Stadium will feature division rivals as the Miami Dolphins clash with the New York Jets (9:30 AM ET, CBS). Week 4 will conclude with a pair of primetime matches as the New Orleans Saints host the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday night (8:30 PM ET, NBC) and the Detroit Lions visit the Seattle Seahawks on Monday night (8:30 PM ET, ESPN). Among the key games on the schedule this week:

NEW YORK JETS (2-1) at MIAMI DOLPHINS (1-2) (Sunday, CBS, 9:30 AM ET)

The NFL makes its return to London with the first of three games to be played in the UK this season. For the first time, two division opponents will face off at Wembley Stadium.

Under first-year head coach **TODD BOWLES**, the Jets lead the NFL with 11 takeaways, including four by cornerback **DARRELLE REVIS** (three fumble recoveries, one interception), and have surrendered a league-low 41 points (13.7 per game).

“We dissect our opponent each week,” says Revis, “and we go through the game plan to try and find ways to create turnovers.”

Miami is looking to bounce back from consecutive losses and hope a trip to the UK can help them earn a key division victory.

“We know we’re a better team than we’ve showed,” says Dolphins quarterback **RYAN TANNEHILL**. “There’s no panic here. But definitely an urgency to get this thing turned around.”

HOUSTON TEXANS (1-2) at ATLANTA FALCONS (3-0) (Sunday, CBS, 1:00 PM ET)

Running back **ALFRED BLUE** rushed for 139 yards with a touchdown and wide receiver **DE ANDRE HOPKINS** had eight catches for 101 yards with a touchdown as the Texans notched their first win of the season last week against Tampa Bay.

"I was having fun out there," says Blue. "When you go out there and have fun, you compete and have great games."

The Falcons are having fun this season as the team has started 3-0 with all three wins coming while trailing in the fourth quarter. Last week, Atlanta scored 25 unanswered points in a 39-28 win at Dallas. The Falcons became the third team in NFL history to have both a rusher with at least 100 yards and three touchdowns (**DEVONTA FREEMAN**, 141 yards and three TDs) and a receiver with at least 150 yards and two touchdowns (**JULIO JONES**, 164 yards and two TDs) in the same game. Jones is off to a record-setting pace as his 34 catches are the most in the first three games of a season in NFL history and he is the only player in league annals to record at least 135 receiving yards in each of his team's first three games.

"All the plays Julio makes, it just feels normal to him," says Atlanta head coach **DAN QUINN**. "He's just a really unique guy in terms of the way he competes. He's used to making those special plays and he has all the confidence in the world in that."

NEW YORK GIANTS (1-2) at BUFFALO BILLS (2-1) (Sunday, FOX, 1:00 PM ET)

The Giants got their first win of the year with a 32-21 victory over Washington last Thursday night. Wide receivers **RUEBEN RANDLE** (seven catches for 116 yards) and **ODELL BECKHAM JR.** (seven catches for 79 yards) each had a touchdown reception for New York.

"The win gives us confidence," says Giants quarterback **ELI MANNING**. "It's a long season and there's a lot of football left to play. You've got to get one win and just keep it going. Now let's try to get another and put some things together because I feel like we've been playing pretty good football."

Buffalo improved to 2-1 last week with a 41-14 win at Miami. Bills quarterback **TYROD TAYLOR** completed 21 of 29 passes (72.4 percent) for 277 yards with three touchdowns and no interceptions for a 136.7 passer rating. Buffalo rookie running back **KARLOS WILLIAMS** added 110 rushing yards and a touchdown, his third consecutive game with a rushing TD.

"It was very big for us as a team to get this win," says Taylor. "We went out there and battled together. We fed off of each other's energy. Collectively, we won that game. We are going to learn from it, get back to work and start moving forward."

ST. LOUIS RAMS (1-2) at ARIZONA CARDINALS (3-0) (Sunday, FOX, 4:25 PM ET)

The Rams are seeking their second division victory of the season after Week 1's win over Seattle. St. Louis, led by defensive tackle **AARON DONALD** (3.5 sacks) and defensive end **ROBERT QUINN** (three), is tied for the league lead with 13 sacks.

The Cardinals lead the league with 126 points scored, tied for the fourth-most in NFL history through three games. Last week, in a 47-7 win over San Francisco, Arizona became the first team in 70 years (1945 Green Bay) to return two interceptions for touchdowns (**JUSTIN BETHEL**, 21 yards and **TYRANN MATHIEU**, 33 yards), record a safety and score at least 40 points in a game. Offensively, wide receiver **LARRY FITZGERALD** (nine catches for 134 yards and two touchdowns) recorded his second consecutive game with at least 100 yards and two touchdowns while running back **CHRIS JOHNSON** had 150 scrimmage yards (110 rushing, 40 receiving) and two TDs.

"I've never played on a team like this with so many offensive threats," says Johnson. "To be able to go out there and contribute, it just feels great."

MINNESOTA VIKINGS (2-1) at DENVER BRONCOS (3-0) (Sunday, FOX, 4:25 PM ET)

The Vikings won their second consecutive game with a 31-14 victory over San Diego last week. Minnesota running back **ADRIAN PETERSON** rushed for 126 yards and two touchdowns, including a 43-yarder. Peterson has 16 career touchdown runs of at least 40 yards, the second-most in NFL history behind only Pro Football Hall of Famer **BARRY SANDERS** (20).

"I felt good, the body felt good and my mind was in a great place," says Peterson. "I think I'm back."

Denver improved to 3-0 with a 24-12 win on Sunday night at Detroit. Defensively, the Broncos forced three turnovers (two interceptions, one fumble) and recorded four sacks. On offense, quarterback **PEYTON MANNING** passed for 324 yards and two touchdowns.

"We knew we were playing a team who was going to come out with everything they had," says Manning about the win over Detroit. "This is a team that ranked No. 2 in defense last year and they were playing at home for the first time. So for us to go in there and get a win, you can't discount that."

2015 NFL STANDINGS

American Football Conference

East Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
New England Patriots	3	0	0	1.000	119	70	2-0-0	1-0-0	3-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
New York Jets	2	1	0	.667	68	41	1-1-0	1-0-0	2-0-0	0-0-0	Lost 1
Buffalo Bills	2	1	0	.667	100	68	1-1-0	1-0-0	2-1-0	1-1-0	Won 1
Miami Dolphins	1	2	0	.333	51	74	0-1-0	1-1-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	Lost 2

North Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Cincinnati Bengals	3	0	0	1.000	85	56	1-0-0	2-0-0	3-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
Pittsburgh Steelers	2	1	0	.667	76	52	1-0-0	1-1-0	0-1-0	0-0-0	Won 2
Cleveland Browns	1	2	0	.333	58	72	1-1-0	0-1-0	1-2-0	0-0-0	Lost 1
Baltimore Ravens	0	3	0	.000	70	84	0-1-0	0-2-0	0-3-0	0-1-0	Lost 3

South Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Indianapolis Colts	1	2	0	.333	56	80	0-1-0	1-1-0	1-2-0	1-0-0	Won 1
Jacksonville Jaguars	1	2	0	.333	49	91	1-1-0	0-1-0	1-1-0	0-0-0	Lost 1
Houston Texans	1	2	0	.333	56	60	1-1-0	0-1-0	0-1-0	0-0-0	Won 1
Tennessee Titans	1	2	0	.333	89	77	0-1-0	1-1-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	Lost 2

West Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Denver Broncos	3	0	0	1.000	74	49	1-0-0	2-0-0	2-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
Oakland Raiders	2	1	0	.667	77	86	1-1-0	1-0-0	2-1-0	0-0-0	Won 2
San Diego Chargers	1	2	0	.333	66	83	1-0-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	0-0-0	Lost 2
Kansas City Chiefs	1	2	0	.333	79	89	0-1-0	1-1-0	1-1-0	0-1-0	Lost 2

National Football Conference

East Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Dallas Cowboys	2	1	0	.667	75	75	1-1-0	1-0-0	2-1-0	2-0-0	Lost 1
New York Giants	1	2	0	.333	78	72	1-1-0	0-1-0	1-2-0	1-1-0	Won 1
Washington Redskins	1	2	0	.333	55	59	1-1-0	0-1-0	1-1-0	0-1-0	Lost 1
Philadelphia Eagles	1	2	0	.333	58	63	0-1-0	1-1-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	Won 1

North Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Green Bay Packers	3	0	0	1.000	96	68	2-0-0	1-0-0	2-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
Minnesota Vikings	2	1	0	.667	60	50	2-0-0	0-1-0	1-1-0	1-0-0	Won 2
Detroit Lions	0	3	0	.000	56	83	0-1-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	0-1-0	Lost 3
Chicago Bears	0	3	0	.000	46	105	0-2-0	0-1-0	0-3-0	0-1-0	Lost 3

South Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Carolina Panthers	3	0	0	1.000	71	48	2-0-0	1-0-0	1-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
Atlanta Falcons	3	0	0	1.000	89	72	1-0-0	2-0-0	3-0-0	0-0-0	Won 3
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	1	2	0	.333	49	80	0-1-0	1-1-0	1-0-0	1-0-0	Lost 1
New Orleans Saints	0	3	0	.000	60	84	0-1-0	0-2-0	0-3-0	0-2-0	Lost 3

West Division

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Div	Streak
Arizona Cardinals	3	0	0	1.000	126	49	2-0-0	1-0-0	3-0-0	1-0-0	Won 3
St. Louis Rams	1	2	0	.333	50	67	1-1-0	0-1-0	1-1-0	1-0-0	Lost 2
San Francisco 49ers	1	2	0	.333	45	93	1-0-0	0-2-0	1-1-0	0-1-0	Lost 2
Seattle Seahawks	1	2	0	.333	74	61	1-0-0	0-2-0	1-2-0	0-1-0	Won 1

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS SEPTEMBER 24, 27-28

(Home Team in Caps)

Thursday, September 24

NEW YORK GIANTS 32, Washington 21

Sunday, September 27

Cincinnati 28, BALTIMORE 24

CAROLINA 27, New Orleans 22

Oakland 27, CLEVELAND 20

Atlanta 39, DALLAS 28

HOUSTON 19, Tampa Bay 9

MINNESOTA 31, San Diego 14

NEW ENGLAND 51, Jacksonville 17

Sunday, September 27 (cont'd)

Philadelphia 24, NEW YORK JETS 17

Pittsburgh 12, ST. LOUIS 6

Indianapolis 35, TENNESSEE 33

ARIZONA 47, San Francisco 7

Buffalo 41, MIAMI 14

SEATTLE 26, Chicago 0

Denver 24, DETROIT 12

Monday, September 28

GREEN BAY 38, Kansas City 28

2015 NFL WEEK 4 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, SUNDAY & MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 4-5

Byes: New England, Tennessee

(All times local)

Thursday, October 1

Baltimore at Pittsburgh, 8:25 PM (CBS/NFLN)

Sunday, October 4

New York Jets at Miami, 2:30 PM (London)

Houston at Atlanta, 1:00 PM

New York Giants at Buffalo, 1:00 PM

Oakland at Chicago, 12:00 PM

Kansas City at Cincinnati, 1:00 PM

Jacksonville at Indianapolis, 1:00 PM

Carolina at Tampa Bay, 1:00 PM

Sunday, October 4 (cont'd)

Philadelphia at Washington, 1:00 PM

Cleveland at San Diego, 1:05 PM

St. Louis at Arizona, 1:25 PM

Minnesota at Denver, 2:25 PM

Green Bay at San Francisco, 1:25 PM

Dallas at New Orleans, 7:30 PM (NBC)

Monday, October 5

Detroit at Seattle, 5:30 PM (ESPN)