

### NFL 2009, Week 13

by Joe Mulder

It was bound to happen sooner or later; lack of sleep, the demands of parenthood and an outside gig have all conspired to prevent me from doing a full NFL picks column. But I wanted to get the picks themselves in, at least.

Last Week: 7-8-1

Overall: 87-87-2

All right. We need a big week. I started strong and I'm fading down the stretch; I'm like the Vikings in any season other than this one.

The Smartest Thing I Said Last Week:

The Broncos' 6-0 start was clearly a mirage. Following their bye week, Week 7, they've lost four in a row and haven't really even looked competitive in any of those games.

The Giants, however, might not be that much better. Throw in the home field advantage for Denver and it's difficult for me to imagine how this Giants team – who struggled to beat the possibly lousy Falcons at home last week – could be favored by [6 1/2 points].

The Giants lost by 20. I'm no better at picking NFL games than a flipped coin, apparently, and even I saw that one coming.

The Dumbest Thing I Said Last Week:

PATRIOTS @ Saints -1.5

Here's where the Vikings move into a tie for the best record in the NFC. This is the year. I can't help it; I'm setting myself up. The fall could be hard. But the Vikings are 9-1, after this week they'll be 10-1, and so will the Saints.

The Patriots haven't won a Super Bowl in almost five years. It's probably time for me to stop thinking they're going to win every big game they play.

Jets @ BILLS +3

And we start off with an incorrect pick in the Thursday game, as is this column's wont. By the way, I will now be Tweeting my Thursday night pick before the game starts, just so it's time-stamped. Although my abysmal record picking Thursday games in this Friday (or, in today's case, Saturday) column should probably be enough to convince you that I'm not cheating.

EAGLES @ Falcons +5.5

The Eagles are the Jets of the NFC; they always suck their fans in *just* enough to think they might do something, which of course they won't.

Except that unlike the Jets, the Eagles actually go as far as making the playoffs.

Buccaneers @ PANTHER -5.5

Pants QB Jake Delhomme is out, so the Bucs can't count on the customary three or four interceptions that Carolina usually doles out.

Rams @ BEARS -9.5

I picked Cutler at home vs. the Rams over Romo on the road vs. the Giants for fantasy football this week, and I need a win to make the playoffs. Just so you know.

Lions @ BENGALS -13

Lions QB Matt Stafford was in the *Sports Illustrated* "pop culture grid" thing this week, where they ask irreverent questions of four athletes and publish their brief answers. One question was "*New Moon* is....," and Stafford answered "...one of the phases of the moon?"

I know the Lions stink, but this is a good sign. If I'm a Lions fan, I want my young franchise QB so immersed in football, and in trying to make my hapless franchise better, that he has so little time for anything to do with popular culture that he's probably the only 21-year-old in the entire English-speaking world who's not aware of the *Twilight* sequel.

TITANS @ Colts -6.5

We all want the Titans to run the table and make the playoffs after starting 0-6, right?

Texans @ JAGUARS pk

The Texans desperately need this game, so, being the Texans, they'll lose.

BRONCOS @ Chiefs +5

The Broncos are something like 1-16 in Kansas City in December all-time, but that's one of those things like how if the Redskins win their last home game before a presidential election the party in control of the White House always keeps control: it's true until it's not. I.e., the Broncos' all-time record in Kansas City in December doesn't really affect the 2009 Broncos either way.

PATRIOTS @ Dolphins +4.5

They Pats are due.

## POOP READING

---

Raiders @ STEELERS -14.5

Steelers already honked an important one against the lousy Chiefs; they're not going to honk one against the lousy Raiders.

SAINTS @ Redskins +9.5

I was tempted to make this my fourth or fifth "this is the week the Saints finally falter" pick, but I decided against it.

CHARGERS @ Browns +13.5

No comment. Don't care.

Cowboys @ GIANTS +2.5

I really hope "Cutler over Romo" doesn't end up like being this century's "Bowie over Jordan."

49ERS @ Seahawks pk

Although I don't feel good about the 49ers.

VIKINGS @ Cardinals +3

The Vikes have sucked me in to the point that I'd be legitimately surprised and upset if they lost this game.

Ravens @ PACKERS -3

That's it; next week hopefully I'll be able to get a real picks column up.

---