



NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE  
280 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10017  
(212) 450-2000 \* FAX (212) 681-7573  
[WWW.NFLMedia.com](http://WWW.NFLMedia.com)

Joe Browne, Executive Vice President-Communications  
Greg Aiello, Senior Vice President-Public Relations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NFL-REG-17 12/23/08

## IN THE FINAL WEEK, IT'S ALL ON THE LINE!

"Playoffs? I think we're there," says a kidding Atlanta Falcons rookie quarterback **MATT RYAN**.

He's right. The Falcons are indeed in the 2008 playoffs, as are six other teams. But the quest is so challenging that it's easy to see why players might want to check one more time to make sure that they are, indeed, in the NFL postseason.

For those fighting for a spot in that exclusive category, this is "last-chance" Sunday. You either do it now in Week 17 or start planning for 2009.

"You win, you keep playing," says defensive end **ALEX BROWN** of the Chicago Bears, one of 11 teams scrambling for the final five playoff berths.

Sunday is packed with suspense. Even before the games kick off, there are some unique pairings:

- Denver visits San Diego in the AFC West. It's either the division title -- or nothing. There's no in-between in this one. The winner wins the division. The loser goes home, missing the playoffs.
- Two games – Miami at the New York Jets and Dallas at Philadelphia – feature four teams at fever pitch scratching for the playoffs.
- And there's the AFC East. Three teams – Miami, New England and the New York Jets – are in position to win the division. The Dolphins and Jets play each other, and the Patriots play the fourth division team, the Bills.

Plus, there are other pivotal games. "Everything you are fighting for and want is right there," says Dallas Cowboys head coach **WADE PHILLIPS**. "All you have to do is go get it."

Some of the Week 17 "go-get-it" games:

**NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (10-5) at BUFFALO BILLS (7-8) (Sunday, CBS, 1:00 PM ET)**

***STORYLINE: Pats hope Buffalo doesn't keep playing the spoiler.***

New England has defeated the Bills 10 times in a row. They come into Buffalo wary, though, after seeing what the Bills pulled last week in Denver. Buffalo came back from an early 13-point deficit and scored on five consecutive possessions to delay any divisional clinching by the Broncos. "We might not be a playoff team," said Buffalo wide receiver **FRED JACKSON**, "but we played like one."

And if it's snowing in Buffalo? No problem, apparently, for the Pats. They performed like it was a steaming September afternoon last week in the middle of a Foxboro snowstorm, posting 514 yards in a 47-7 victory over Arizona.

New England has to win with other scenarios to clinch the division or a playoff berth.

\*\*\*\*\*

### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF '58 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME SALUTED ON SEASON'S FINAL DAY

**THIS SUNDAY**, the final day of the NFL regular season, will mark to the day the 50th anniversary of the "Greatest Game Ever Played," the 1958 NFL Championship sudden-death overtime between the Baltimore Colts and New York Giants.

The Baltimore Ravens will conduct special halftime ceremonies at their game against Jacksonville to salute the players who brought Baltimore its 1958 NFL championship.

"None of us on the Colts had really played on a championship team," says one of those Colts who will be honored Sunday, Pro Football Hall of Fame receiver **RAYMOND BERRY**. "It was a tremendous experience just winning our Western Conference championship and being able to play the Giants at Yankee Stadium for the world championship. We were so thrilled about that, that we really had no idea about the significance of what was going to happen."

\*\*\*\*\*

**JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS (5-10) at BALTIMORE RAVENS (10-5) (Sunday, CBS, 4:15 PM ET)**

***STORYLINE: "We've got one more game to get!"***

So says Ravens All-Star **LB TERRELL SUGGS**. Baltimore could join Atlanta (**MIKE SMITH/QB MATT RYAN**) as the teams to make the 2008 playoffs with rookie head coaches and rookie quarterbacks – the Ravens' **JOHN HARBAUGH** and **QB JOE FLACCO**.

With a win or other scenarios, Baltimore clinches a playoff spot. They can be in the postseason even before they take the field if New England loses to Buffalo in their 1:00 PM game. But that won't stop the Ravens from going full bore, as they always do. No less an authority than **LB RAY LEWIS** attests to that. "The only thing we can think about is a 60-minute game against Jacksonville," says the All-Star. "When we finish that one, then we can think about the playoffs."

**MIAMI DOLPHINS (10-5) at NEW YORK JETS (9-6) (Sunday, CBS, 4:15 PM ET)**

***STORYLINE: Somehow, back in August, you knew it would come to this.***

When the Jets traded for **QB BRETT FAVRE** last summer and their anticipated starter **CHAD PENNINGTON** went to Miami, people wondered if the teams' final regular-season game against each other would be important. Well, it's not important, it's *critical*.

The Dolphins or Jets could be division champs...could make it as Wild Cards...or could be out of the playoffs completely. Funny how it all turned out, right?

"This is the only way fate would have it," says Pennington. "I just don't think it would happen any other way. There wouldn't be any other scenario. This is how sports works."

The Jets have topped the Dolphins five times in a row, including in the first week of the season, 20-14, when eventual All-Star **CB DARRELLE REVIS** intercepted Pennington in the end zone with five seconds left.

**DALLAS COWBOYS (9-6) at PHILADELPHIA EAGLES (8-6-1) (Sunday, FOX, 4:15 PM ET)**

***STORYLINE: Another division royale between old foes fighting for their playoff lives.***

On top of that, if the game is anything like the explosion that erupted the last time the teams met, on a Monday night in Week 2, it could well be a donnybrook. There were 54 first-half points (a MNF record)...seven lead changes...and the most total points (78 in Dallas' 41-37 victory) in the 98-game series between the teams.

But that was then. This is inescapably now. Both clubs come off disheartening losses after big victories and, in the Eagles' case, a three-game winning streak. But both have the guys at quarterback who can ignite their teams when it counts. Their QBs rank No. 1 (Dallas' **TONY ROMO**) and No. 7 (Philadelphia's **DONOVAN MC NABB**) in fourth-quarter passer rating. Between them, they have thrown only one interception (Romo) in the quarter.

The teams will be ready. "There is still light at the end of the tunnel," says Eagles head coach **ANDY REID**. "Obviously, everybody wants to get to the playoffs, and we still have that opportunity."

**DENVER BRONCOS (8-7) at SAN DIEGO CHARGERS (7-8) (Sunday night, NBC, 8:15 PM ET)**

***STORYLINE: What a way to end it all!***

And it's just that – all or nothing. The winner captures the AFC West. The loser goes home. There's no in-between.

"If you told us at the beginning of the year that it was a one-game series with us down in San Diego to go to the playoffs, we probably would have taken it," says Broncos All-Star **QB JAY CUTLER**. "We've got to keep our heads up."

Denver will confront a hot team. The Chargers have won three in a row after traveling cross-country last week to hand Tampa Bay its first home loss, 41-24.

If it comes down to a Sunday night aerial show, the QBs can hold their own. Cutler ranks third in the league in yards (4,210) and San Diego's **PHILIP RIVERS** (the top-rated passer in the league, 104.6) sits fifth with 3,802 yards.

How'd he know?: Here's Rivers after the Chargers lost to Denver 39-38 in Week 2: "We'll get another shot at them later in the year. Hopefully, it'll be for all the marbles." Well you got that right, Philip!

## 2008 NFL STANDINGS

### American Football Conference - 2008 Regular Season

AFC East Team	W	L	T	▼ Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Miami Dolphins	10	5	0	.667	321	300	21	37	5-3	5-2	3-2	.600	7-4	.636	3-1	4W	4-1
New England Patriots	10	5	0	.667	397	309	88	42	5-3	5-2	3-2	.600	6-5	.545	4-0	3W	4-1
New York Jets	9	6	0	.600	388	332	56	46	5-2	4-4	4-1	.800	7-4	.636	2-2	1L	2-3
Buffalo Bills	7	8	0	.467	336	329	7	35	3-4	4-4	0-5	.000	5-6	.455	2-2	1W	2-3
<b>AFC North Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>▼ Pct</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Net Pts</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Home</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Div</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Conf</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Non-Conf</b>	<b>Streak</b>	<b>Last 5</b>
z- Pittsburgh Steelers	11	4	0	.733	316	223	93	34	5-2	6-2	5-0	1.000	9-2	.818	2-2	1L	4-1
Baltimore Ravens	10	5	0	.667	358	237	121	39	5-2	5-3	4-2	.667	7-4	.636	3-1	1W	4-1
Cleveland Browns	4	11	0	.267	232	319	-87	20	1-7	3-4	1-4	.200	3-8	.273	1-3	5L	0-5
Cincinnati Bengals	3	11	1	.233	188	358	-170	19	2-4-1	1-7	1-5	.167	2-9	.182	1-2-1	2W	2-3
<b>AFC South Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>▼ Pct</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Net Pts</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Home</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Div</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Conf</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Non-Conf</b>	<b>Streak</b>	<b>Last 5</b>
*- Tennessee Titans	13	2	0	.867	375	211	164	41	7-1	6-1	4-1	.800	9-2	.818	4-0	1W	3-2
y- Indianapolis Colts	11	4	0	.733	354	298	56	43	5-2	6-2	3-2	.600	9-2	.818	2-2	8W	5-0
Houston Texans	7	8	0	.467	335	370	-35	36	5-2	2-6	2-4	.333	5-7	.417	2-1	1L	4-1
Jacksonville Jaguars	5	10	0	.333	295	340	-45	34	2-6	3-4	2-4	.333	3-8	.273	2-2	1L	1-4
<b>AFC West Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>▼ Pct</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Net Pts</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Home</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Div</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Conf</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Non-Conf</b>	<b>Streak</b>	<b>Last 5</b>
Denver Broncos	8	7	0	.533	349	396	-47	39	4-4	4-3	3-2	.600	5-6	.455	3-1	2L	2-3
San Diego Chargers	7	8	0	.467	387	326	61	44	4-3	3-5	4-1	.800	6-5	.545	1-3	3W	3-2
Oakland Raiders	4	11	0	.267	232	364	-132	23	2-6	2-5	2-4	.333	4-8	.333	0-3	1W	2-3
Kansas City Chiefs	2	13	0	.133	285	424	-139	34	1-7	1-6	2-4	.333	2-9	.182	0-4	3L	1-4

### National Football Conference - 2008 Regular Season

NFC East Team	W	L	T	▼ Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
*- New York Giants	12	3	0	.800	408	274	134	44	7-1	5-2	4-2	.667	9-2	.818	3-1	1W	3-2
Dallas Cowboys	9	6	0	.600	356	321	35	43	6-2	3-4	3-2	.600	7-4	.636	2-2	1L	3-2
Philadelphia Eagles	8	6	1	.567	372	283	89	40	5-2	3-4-1	1-4	.200	6-5	.545	2-1-1	1L	3-2
Washington Redskins	8	7	0	.533	241	269	-28	24	4-4	4-3	3-3	.500	7-4	.636	1-3	1W	2-3
<b>NFC North Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>▼ Pct</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Net Pts</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Home</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Div</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Conf</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Non-Conf</b>	<b>Streak</b>	<b>Last 5</b>
Minnesota Vikings	9	6	0	.600	359	314	45	39	5-2	4-4	4-2	.667	7-4	.636	2-2	1L	4-1
Chicago Bears	9	6	0	.600	351	319	32	39	6-2	3-4	4-2	.667	7-5	.583	2-1	3W	4-1
Green Bay Packers	5	10	0	.333	388	359	29	44	3-4	2-6	3-2	.600	4-7	.364	1-3	5L	0-5
Detroit Lions	0	15	0	.000	247	486	-239	26	0-8	0-7	0-5	.000	0-11	.000	0-4	15L	0-5
<b>NFC South Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>▼ Pct</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Net Pts</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Home</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Div</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Conf</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Non-Conf</b>	<b>Streak</b>	<b>Last 5</b>
y- Carolina Panthers	11	4	0	.733	381	298	83	44	8-0	3-4	3-2	.600	7-4	.636	4-0	1L	3-2
y- Atlanta Falcons	10	5	0	.667	360	298	62	39	6-1	4-4	3-3	.500	7-4	.636	3-1	2W	4-1
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	9	6	0	.600	337	292	45	35	6-1	3-5	3-3	.500	8-4	.667	1-2	3L	2-3
New Orleans Saints	8	7	0	.533	432	360	72	53	6-1	2-6	2-3	.400	5-6	.455	3-1	1W	3-2
<b>NFC West Team</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>▼ Pct</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Net Pts</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Home</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Div</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Conf</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Non-Conf</b>	<b>Streak</b>	<b>Last 5</b>
z- Arizona Cardinals	8	7	0	.533	393	405	-12	47	5-2	3-5	5-0	1.000	6-5	.545	2-2	2L	1-4
San Francisco 49ers	6	9	0	.400	312	357	-45	33	3-4	3-5	3-3	.500	4-7	.364	2-2	1W	3-2
Seattle Seahawks	4	11	0	.267	273	358	-85	29	2-6	2-5	3-2	.600	3-8	.273	1-3	2W	2-3
St. Louis Rams	2	13	0	.133	205	434	-229	17	1-7	1-6	0-6	.000	2-9	.182	0-4	9L	0-5

x - Clinched playoff

y - Clinched Wild Card

z - Clinched Division

\* - Clinched Division and Homefield Advantage

## LAST WEEK'S NFL RESULTS (DECEMBER 18, 20-22)

(Home team in CAPS)

### Thursday, December 18

Indianapolis 31, JACKSONVILLE 24

### Saturday, December 20

Baltimore 33, DALLAS 24

### Sunday, December 21

Cincinnati 14, CLEVELAND 0

New Orleans 42, DETROIT 7

Miami 38, KANSAS CITY 31

NEW ENGLAND 47, Arizona 7

San Francisco 17, ST. LOUIS 16

### Sunday, December 21, Cont.'d.

San Diego 41, TAMPA BAY 24

TENNESSEE 31, Pittsburgh 14

Buffalo 30, DENVER 23

OAKLAND 27, Houston 16

SEATTLE 13, N.Y. Jets 3

Atlanta 24, MINNESOTA 17

WASHINGTON 10, Philadelphia 3

N.Y. GIANTS 34, Carolina 28 (OT)

### Monday, December 22

CHICAGO 20, Green Bay 17 (OT)

## WEEK 17 SCHEDULE – DECEMBER 28

(All times local)

### Sunday, December 28

St. Louis at Atlanta, 1:00 PM

New England at Buffalo, 1:00 PM

Kansas City at Cincinnati, 1:00 PM

Detroit at Green Bay, 1:00 PM

Chicago at Houston, 1:00 PM

Tennessee at Indianapolis, 1:00 PM

N.Y. Giants at Minnesota, 1:00 PM

Carolina at New Orleans, 1:00 PM

### Sunday, December 28, Cont.'d.

Cleveland at Pittsburgh, 1:00 PM

Oakland at Tampa Bay, 1:00 PM

Seattle at Arizona, 4:15 PM

Jacksonville at Baltimore, 4:15 PM

Miami at N.Y. Jets, 4:15 PM

Dallas at Philadelphia, 4:15 PM

Washington at San Francisco, 4:15 PM

Denver at San Diego, 5:15 PM (NBC)