



NFL PRESEASON WEEK 3

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NFL FOOTBALL LANDSCAPE

WHAT BETTORS NEED TO KNOW THIS WEEK

1. Finale week is about motivation and roster decisions more than regular-season power ratings. Some clubs are protecting starters while others are using the night to settle backup-quarterback and final roster jobs.
2. Buffalo has ruled Josh Allen out. Cleveland has announced that neither Deshaun Watson nor Shedeur Sanders will play, leaving Dillon Gabriel and Taylen Green to handle the Browns' quarterback work.
3. Atlanta is treating Friday as a dress rehearsal while Miami has scored only 10 points through two preseason games. Jack Strand and Cooper Rush were efficient for Atlanta last week.
4. Quarterback competitions should keep several offenses aggressive deep into games. Las Vegas, the Jets, Dallas and Indianapolis all have meaningful reserve-QB evaluation work remaining.
5. Late-week news can move preseason prices quickly. Joint practices, starter-rest decisions and the looming roster deadline matter more here than regular-season reputation.
6. Last week of preseason so beware. Don't forget college football starts this week.

BEST BET

LAS VEGAS over San Francisco by 11 points

Line Las Vegas -3.5 O/U 37.5

Las Vegas has the more useful preseason quarterback setup for four quarters. Fernando Mendoza and Aidan O'Connell both need evaluation work, while San Francisco has significant skill-position attrition and every reason to protect players needed for the regular season. Brock Purdy saw only brief work last week. The Raiders should have the stronger reserve offense once the game reaches the second half, when preseason finales are decided.

PROJECTED SCORE: Las Vegas 24, San Francisco 13

TAKE: Las Vegas -3.5

BEST BET

Atlanta over MIAMI by 12 points

Line Atlanta -4.5 O/U 36.5

Atlanta is preparing for this game as a dress rehearsal, while Miami's first two preseason performances exposed a depth problem. The Dolphins have scored only 10 points through two games and managed just 102 total yards against the Giants. Jack Strand and Cooper Rush combined to complete 22 of 28 passes for 297 yards last week. Atlanta owns the stronger current form and clearer offensive plan.

PROJECTED SCORE: Atlanta 24, Miami 12

TAKE: Atlanta -4.5

BEST BET

New York Giants over NEW YORK JETS by 11 points

Line New York Giants -3.5 O/U 36.5

The Giants can protect Jaxson Dart and still use an experienced reserve quarterback group with Jameis Winston, Brandon Allen and Jake Haener. The Jets are still sorting through Cade Klubnik, Bailey Zappe and Brady Cook behind Geno Smith. We prefer the Giants' veteran reserve structure in a game likely to be decided by second- and third-unit execution.

PROJECTED SCORE: New York Giants 23, New York Jets 12

TAKE: New York Giants -3.5

BEST BET

DENVER over Minnesota by 14 points

Line Denver -6.5 O/U 39.5

Denver has one of the strongest motivational setups on the board because Sam Ehlinger and Jarrett Stidham are competing for the backup job behind Bo Nix. That gives Sean Payton reason to keep the offense active deep into the game. Minnesota is more likely to emphasize evaluation and protection of established personnel. QB-depth projects Denver by 2 TD's.

PROJECTED SCORE: Denver 27, Minnesota 13

TAKE: Denver -6.5

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NFL QUICK PICKS

Pittsburgh +2.5 vs BUFFALO

Josh Allen is out, pushing Buffalo toward Kyle Allen and Shane Buechele. Pittsburgh should again give substantial work to Will Howard and Drew Allar.

TAKE: Pittsburgh +2.5

New England -2.5 vs CLEVELAND

Cleveland will sit Deshaun Watson and Shedeur Sanders, leaving Dillon Gabriel and Taylen Green to carry the finale.

TAKE: New England -2.5

Los Angeles Rams +3.5 vs LOS ANGELES CHARGERS

Stetson Bennett and Ty Simpson should get substantial Rams work. The Chargers are also likely to limit Justin Herbert, and offensive-line injuries make more than a field goal attractive.

TAKE: Los Angeles Rams +3.5

Washington +3.5 vs BALTIMORE

Athan Kaliakmanis and Sam Hartman have been efficient in Washington's backup competition. Baltimore should lean on Tyler Huntley and Joe Fagnano.

TAKE: Washington +3.5

Houston -2.5 vs CAROLINA

Houston has the steadier quarterback structure with C.J. Stroud likely brief before Davis Mills and Brett Rypien.

TAKE: Houston -2.5

Tampa Bay -2.5 vs JACKSONVILLE

Jalon Daniels has earned more attention and Jake Browning needs live reps, giving Tampa Bay useful second-half quarterback motivation.

TAKE: Tampa Bay -2.5

Cincinnati +2.5 vs PHILADELPHIA

Both clubs should protect their established starters. With backup-heavy rotations, taking the points is preferable.

TAKE: Cincinnati +2.5

Seattle +1.5 vs KANSAS CITY

Seattle has used Drew Lock and Jalen Milroe for every preseason pass. Patrick Mahomes may get only token work before Kansas City turns to its reserves.

TAKE: Seattle +1.5

New Orleans +1.5 vs DALLAS

Dallas should again be Joe Milton and Sam Howell. New Orleans still has a live QB2 decision involving Zach Wilson and Spencer Rattler.

TAKE: New Orleans +1.5

Arizona -2.5 vs GREEN BAY

Green Bay's joint practices should provide much of the meaningful work for established players, leaving reserve evaluation to dominate the game.

TAKE: Arizona -2.5

Detroit +3.5 vs INDIANAPOLIS

Indianapolis has a defined rotation: Anthony Richardson first quarter, Riley Leonard second, with Easton Stick likely after halftime. The hook makes Detroit attractive.

TAKE: Detroit +3.5

Chicago +2.5 vs TENNESSEE

Tennessee may again use Cam Ward, but Chicago has meaningful reserve-QB evaluation work and Tyson Bagent has returned to practice.

TAKE: Chicago +2.5

NFL BEST BETS

Las Vegas -3.5 • Atlanta -4.5 • New York Giants -3.5 • Denver -6.5

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