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NFL WILDCARD PLAYOFF NOTES

by Bruce Marshall, Goldsheet.com Editor

We've been around long enough (53 seasons!) at ***THE GOLD SHEET*** to remember the pro football "wildcard" concept before the term was ever used. Indeed, the idea of non-winners of divisions or conferences actually making the playoffs was a foreign one until the old AFL broke with tradition in its final year of 1969, "expanding" its playoffs from two to four teams by inviting the runners-up in the old East and West Divisions into the postseason mix. Which is how the AFL ended up with two Western teams, Oakland and Kansas City, squaring off in the '69 title game after the championship battle had been drawn along East vs. West lines for the previous nine seasons. *For the record, the Chiefs and Houston Oilers were the "extra" AFL playoff qualifiers that season, with Kansas City ending the championship reign of Joe Namath's Jets in a cold and windy Shea Stadium, 13-6, while the Oilers were bombed by the Raiders, 56-7, the following day.* The Chiefs, of course, would go on to beat Oakland to win the final AFL title before upsetting Minnesota in the Super Bowl, technically becoming the first "wildcard" Super Bowl winner...*before the term was even hatched!*

The "wildcard" label officially became part of pro football lexicon the following season in 1970, the first year of the merged NFL, when the best division runners-up in the newly-named NFC and AFC were invited to the postseason. Detroit and Miami were the first "officially" named wildcard teams that year, and neither fared well that postseason, the Lions losing by an odd 5-0 score in a nonetheless pulsating defensive struggle at Dallas, while the Dolphins *(who would be heard from again soon)* succumbed to the Raiders in the Oakland mud, 21-14. The first post-merger wildcard winner was Baltimore *(Colts, not Ravens),* a 20-3 victor at Cleveland in 1971. Through 1977, wildcards were the 4th playoff seed in each conference, and there were no "bye" weeks in the playoffs until the week before the Super Bowl. The introduction of a second wildcard team from each conference and the "wildcard round" coincided with the NFL expanding its regular-season schedule from 14 to 16 games (and playoff entrants from 8 to 10) in '78. For the next twelve seasons, those wildcard teams would face off against each other before the winners would advance to join the division champions from the AFC & NFC in the round of eight. There were changes again in 1990, when a third wildcard team was added to each conference, upping the total number of postseason participants to 12. *This also doubled the number of games in wildcard weekend (from 2 to 4), as then only the top two division winners from each conference would get a "bye" in the first round, and the division winner with the worst record was thrown in with the wildcard teams for the initial playoff weekend.* When the NFL reconfigured its divisions (from 6 to 8) in 2002, the wildcard round wasn't fundamentally altered. Although there would technically be only two wildcards (as opposed to three), there would still be the same four games in wildcard weekend, which now featured the two division winners with the worst records along with two wildcard entries from each conference.

In the meantime, the history of the wildcard round has proven rather colorful, starting with that first season in 1978, when Philadelphia and Atlanta were involved in a Christmas Eve nailbiter at old Fulton County Stadium. The Falcons, behind QB Steve Bartkowski, rallied for a pair of late TDs to take the lead before the Eagles' Mike Michel missed a last-second 34-yard field goal, giving Atlanta a 14-13 win. In the AFC, Houston, featuring rookie (and future Hall-of-Fame) RB Earl Campbell, won at Miami 17-9. The Oilers were back again in 1979 wildcard action, and though Campbell and QB Dan Pastorini were both KO'd in the 2nd half, Houston hung on to beat Red Miller's last Denver playoff team at the Astrodome, 13-7. Oakland's magical run through the 1980 playoffs began with a 27-7 wildcard win over the same Houston bunch (now ironically QB'd by longtime Raider Ken Stabler), ending Bum Phillips' days as Oilers coach in the process. *The wildcard round has often produced memorable games since,* such as Buffalo's remarkable rally from a 35-3 deficit behind backup QB Frank Reich to overtake the Oilers in OT, 41-38, in 1992. The Bills were involved on the other end of a wild card round-thriller in 1999, victim of Tennessee's "Music City Miracle" 22-16 win, while San Francisco won a couple of hard-to-forget first-round heart-stoppers at home against the Packers in 1998 (30-27 in an unforgettable Steve Young vs. Brett Favre clash) and Giants in 2002 (39-38). Dallas and Seattle engaged in a memorable nailbiter in 2006, with the Cowboys botching a last-second, chip shot FG that allowed the host Seahawks to escape with a 21-20 win, while the Chargers survived a classic battle at Qualcomm Stadium vs. the Colts a year ago when prevailing by a 23-17 count in overtime. The occasional wildcard team has also ended up catching fire in the postseason and has gone all of the way to win the Super Bowl, including the 1997 Broncos, 2000 Ravens, 2005 Steelers, and 2007 Giants (as well as the '69 Chiefs and '80 Raiders).

There have also been a few different pointspread characteristics related to wildcard games compared to later playoff rounds. In particular, underdog teams have more than held their own in these first-round games (a bit of a departure from division round and conference title action), especially the shorter-priced (1-3 point) dogs that stand 24-16-2 vs. the number since '78, including 7-2 the last three years. Home dogs, usually rare in playoff action, have nonetheless popped up four times in wildcard-round battles the past two seasons (3-1 vs. line in those games) and are a noteworthy 11-3 vs. the number in first-round games since '78. *Overall, wildcard dogs are 52-43-3 since '78.* Although many believe the absence of the top two conference seeds in the wild card rounds has contributed to better overall underdog mark than in subsequent rounds, it's worth noting that one-sided results are still fairly common in the first-round games, with 7 of 16 since 2005 being decided by 14 points or more, as have close to half of them (44 of 98) since the wildcard round was introduced in 1978. As for recent wildcard-round "totals" trends, they've slightly leaned to the "unders" by a 20-15-1 count since 2000.

Following are the pointspread results for wildcard playoff games since 1978 *(excluding the 1982 "strike" season, when all 16 playoff teams participated in first-round games).*

NFL WILDCARD PLAYOFF GAMES SINCE 1978

CATEGORY	VS. POINTS
1-3 pt. dogs	24-16-2
3½-6½ pt. dogs	17-15-1
7-pt. or more dogs	11-12
Home dogs	11-3
Road dogs	41-40-3

Margins of victory (98 total games)—21 games have been decided by 1-3 points, 21 games by 4-7 points, 12 games by 8-13 points, and 44 games have been decided by 14 points or more.

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NFL WILDCARD ANALYSIS

Home team in CAPS. *—indicates night game. Statistics after game writeups are listed in the following order: Score of game, first downs, rushing attempts/rushing yards, passes completed/passes attempted/passes intercepted/passing yards, and fumbles lost. In each statistical category the leader is listed first. Scores and pointspreads (in parentheses) are results of most recent meetings in series. P—Pick Game. SR—Series Record (official league games only), with team leading in series, number of games won, lost and tied. NL—No Line. OPR—Average Opponents' Power Rating (at the time they met) of all **TGS**-rated teams played. **TGS** Key Releases are underlined and denoted with a star (H).

Some frequently-appearing abbreviations. HC—Head Coach (also, college Homecoming Game, when listed in score line). "O"—Offense. "D"—Defense. DDs—Double Digits. OL—Offensive Line or Lineman. DL—Defensive Line or Lineman. KR-Kick Returner. o.c.—Offensive Coordinator. d.c.—Defensive Coordinator. YR—Yards Rushing. YP—Yards Passing. recs.—Receptions. ints.—Interceptions. STs—Special Teams. ypg—Yards per Game. ppg—Points per Game. ypc—Yards per Carry (or Catch, for receivers). LY—Last Year. TY—This Year. Y—Year or Years. TDP—Touchdown Passes. FA—Free Agent. SU—Straight Up. Games are listed in the *Don Best rotation used in the majority of Las Vegas sportsbooks.*

All score predictions are made with Las Vegas pointspreads and over-under lines in mind. *Please note: All selections indicating a preference for the underdog do not necessarily forecast the underdog as the straight-up winner of the game. A predicted victory by the favorite of less than the pointspread on the game indicates the underdog is the preferred side in the game.*

NEW YORK JETS (9-7) at CINCINNATI (10-6)

Saturday, January 9, 2010

TEAM	SUR	PSR	PF	PA	YR	YP	T-R-P	YR	YP	T-R-P	TO DIFF	OPR
NY Jets	9-7	9-7	22	15	172	149	37-21-12	99	153	26-11-8	+ 1	2.3	5.1
Cincinnati	10-6	7-9	19	18	129	181	34-9-21	98	203	32-12-18	0	.4	5.9

CINCINNATI 20 - NY Jets 10—Sometimes rematches in playoff action can bear no resemblance to regular-season meetings, which will likely apply to this Bengals-Jets, quick-return match after Sunday night's lopsided 37-0 affair at the Meadowlands. *After a slow start last weekend, Cincy dialed it down accordingly, subbing liberally and effectively conceding the game to Rex Ryan's crew, which needed the win to reach the playoffs.* And, upon further inspection, after results unfolded elsewhere last Sunday, it would be hard to question the motivation of Bengal HC Marvin Lewis, who could certainly be excused for preferring a rematch with New York and rookie QB Mark Sanchez rather than facing dangerous QB Matt Schaub and a hot Houston team that beat Cincy at Paul Brown Stadium in mid-October.

Granted, it's a bit tricky recommending a Bengal side that failed to cover all seven of its chances as a favorite this season and indeed covered only one of its last seven games overall after a mid-November win at Pittsburgh. *But the psychology and dynamics that worked against Cincy last Sunday do not figure to reappear in the rematch.* The normally-robust Bengal defense that limited its usual stunts and blitzes last week figures to unleash its full fury against the green Sanchez, who self-destructed numerous times TY while throwing 20 picks and whose inexperience prevented the New York attack from expanding its playbook as the season progressed. *Moreover, the Jets' "slash" guy, Brad Smith, who burned Lewis' "D" on several direct snaps last week, will not catch Cincy by surprise this time, and we doubt New York comes close to the 257 YR it accumulated vs. Lewis' disinterested stop unit last week.*

Of course, the Bengal attack had its own problems late in the season with an often-spotty passing game, although QB Carson Palmer should have the valuable ground threat provided by RB Cedric Benson (who sat out last week) available in the rematch. *Mostly, however, there should be considerable fuel available in Cincy's emotional reservoir that was obviously untapped last week after being swelled by some unspeakable tragedies (deaths of the wife of d.c. Mike Zimmer and of WR Chris Henry) during the season.* If the Bengals can summon one of their better efforts (as we expect), they should gain a satisfying revenge, with an "under" recommendation also perhaps worth a look.

(09-JETS 37-Cincy 0...N.21-5 N.57/257 C.18/72 N.8/16/0/63 C.4/19/1/0 N.0 C.2)
(08-JETS 26-Cincy 14...N.19-13 N.27/86 C.21/43 N.25/33/2/166 C.20/33/0/128 N.1 C.1)
(09-NY JETS -10 37-0; 08-NY JETS -8' 26-14...SR: NY Jets 15-7)

PHILADELPHIA (11-5) at DALLAS (11-5)

Saturday night, January 9, 2010

TEAM	SUR	PSR	PF	PA	YR	YP	T-R-P	YR	YP	T-R-P	TO DIFF	OPR
Philadelphia	11-5	9-7	27	21	103	255	47-14-27	105	216	39-11-27	+15	1.9	5.4
Dallas	11-5	9-7	23	16	131	268	43-14-26	91	226	28-7-19	+2	2.6	4.4

***DALLAS 24 - Philadelphia 14—**Playoff history is replete with examples of regular-season rematches (even those from the previous week), although results of those prior games have not always proven indicators for the return match. *Which, in this case, could be good news for Philly*, on the short end of both battles this season vs. old NFC East rival Dallas, including last week's 24-0 Cowboy win that afforded Jerry Jones' bunch the opportunity of hosting this first-round matchup.

Nonetheless, a quick review of those earlier games is in order, especially last week's whitewash in Arlington which Dallas dominated from the outset, outgaining the Birds (*who, with only 10 rushing attempts all afternoon, hardly bothered to establish an infantry diversion for QB Donovan McNabb*) 474-228. Wade Phillips' defense similarly held Philly far below its season averages in the first meeting Nov. 8 at the Linc, when the Eagles were limited to just 297 total yards in a 20-16 defeat.

Although recording a single-season hat trick in the NFL is rare, the matchups that have proven favorable for the Cowboys TY haven't changed. In the two previous meetings, Phillips' aggressive defense *(off back-to-back shutouts for the first time in franchise history!)* limited the damage of McNabb's big-play wideouts, DeSean Jackson and rookie Jeremy Maclin, allowing only 1 TDP in the process. Meanwhile, Tony Romo had near-identical stats as he passed for more than 300 yards, with completions to seven different receivers, in each of the triumphs. *The recent victory over the unbeaten Saints as well as last week's domination of the Eagles might also have allowed Romo to exorcize some of those late-season demons that have plagued his career.* Romo's new-found comfort with a variety of receiving targets should also allow him to better cope with more of Philly's trademark blitzes, which d.c. Sean McDermott (perhaps anticipating the rematch) didn't utilize much last week.

The balance RBs Marion Barber and on-fire Felix Jones (both 91 YR last week) afford Romo is another luxury that counterpart McNabb will likely be without, especially with Philly's OL forced into some unwelcome late-season adjustments after C Jamaal Jackson's season- ending knee injury Dec. 27. Although Andy Reid and McNabb coaxed the Birds all of the way to LY's NFC title game from a similar 6th playoff seed, we don't anticipate a repeat this postseason, especially with suddenly-hot and confident Dallas looming at the first hurdle.

(09-Dal. 20-PHIL. 16...D.18-17 P.23/89 D.23/76 D.21/34/1/282 P.16/30/2/208 D.0 P.0)
(09-DAL. 24-Phil. 0...D.21-10 D.32/179 P.10/37 D.24/34/1/295 P.20/36/0/191 D.0 P.1)
(08-DAL. 41-Phil. 37...P.23-20 P.23/78 D.24/68 D.21/30/1/312 P.25/37/0/259 D.1 P.1)
(08-PHIL. 44-Dal. 6...P.16-15 P.36/137 D.19/87 D.23/41/1/211 P.12/21/0/166 P.1 D.4)
(09-Dal. +3 20-16, DAL. -3 24-0; 08-DAL. -7 41-37, PHIL. -2 44-6...SR: Dallas 57-44)

BALTIMORE (9-7) at NEW ENGLAND (10-6)

Sunday, January 10, 2010

TEAM	SUR	PSR	PF	PA	YR	YP	T-R-P	YR	YP	T-R-P	TO DIFF	OPR
Baltimore	9-7	8-8	24	16	138	213	47-22-21	93	207	27-8-17	+10	4.1	5.3
N. England	10-6	8-7	27	18	120	277	50-19-28	111	210	35-6-25	+6	3.1	3.9

NEW ENGLAND 26 - Baltimore 19—*Wes Welker's knee injury last week in Houston will be cited for years as why a coach might want to rest his stars when there are more-meaningful games forthcoming in the playoffs.* But the belief here is that the loss of the prolific Welker (112, 111 & 123 recs. the last three seasons!) far from "finishes" New England in the postseason. First of all, the Pats now have a fine replacement for 5-9 mighty mite Welker, that being "6-0" rookie mighty mite Julian Edelman, who has 37 recs., 10 of them last week after Welker was injured in Houston. Moreover, QB Tom Brady—*despite lingering rib & finger injuries*—is much more in tune with his offense and in control of things than he was back on October 4, when he was still developing his rhythm after LY's knee injury when N.E. edged Baltimore 27-21 in Foxborough.

Brady has won his last 20 regular-season starts at home, and he's 8-0 SU (4-3-1 vs. the spread) as a host in the playoffs. And, this year—especially with Fred Taylor available—Brady is aided by a versatile backfield group that also includes Laurence Maroney, Sammy Morris and Kevin Faulk. HC Bill Belichick has a back for any matchup he wants.

While the New England defense is not the same veteran, ever-changing, ball-hawking unit Belichick produced during the Pats' Super Bowl years, it has begun to show the upward potential Belichick has been seeking. Young LBs Jerod Mayo & Gary Guyton are stubborn in the middle. OLB Tully Banta-Cain (9½ sacks) is pressuring from the outside. Athletic S Brandon Meriweather & import CB Leigh Bodden have 5 ints. each. Young CBs Jonathan Wilhite & Darius Butler continue to improve.

And what of the Baltimore defense, which is showing less intimidation since the loss of Rex Ryan and a couple of key cogs to the Jets, followed by TY's DB injuries? There is no doubt that Raven QB Joe Flacco, who played in the AFC title game at Pittsburgh LY, has the "gun" and the moxie to spoil the Patriots' tea party. And he's got some burly helpers in the backfield and in his OL. But the banged-up Brady still has Randy Moss and plenty of other targets, plus one of the best postseason coaches in NFL history. We'll give the host the benefit of the doubt at home, where N.E. is 8-0 SU TY, with all wins by six points or more.

(09-N. ENG. 27-Balt. 21...N.25-24 B.17/116 N.30/85 B.27/47/1/247 N.21/32/0/234 N.1 B.1)
(09-NEW ENGLAND -2 27-21...SR: New England 5-0)

GREEN BAY (11-5) at ARIZONA (10-6)

Sunday, January 10, 2010

TEAM	SUR	PSR	PF	PA	YR	YP	T-R-P	YR	YP	T-R-P	TO	DIFF	OPR
Green Bay	11-5	11-5	29	19	117	262	54-20-30	83	201	36-5-29	+24	2.2	7.6
Arizona	10-6	8-8	23	20	93	251	46-15-28	113	234	38-13-22	-7	2.4	5.2

Green Bay 31 - ARIZONA 26—The multiple rematches in this year's NFL Wildcard Round create an unusual situation of *immediate* revenge. And Arizona likely can't wait for its chance after going the "vanilla" route and absorbing a 33-7 whuppin' from Green Bay last week. Unfortunately, even though the defending NFC champion Cardinals didn't mount much of an effort in that regular-season finale, they did suffer some injuries, with CB Dominique Rogers-Cromartie (knee), 6-8 DE Calais Campbell (thumb), and WR Anquan Boldin (ankle) all emerging the worse for wear. This with LT Mike Gandy already through for the year.

Green Bay coach Mike McCarthy explained last week's crisp 2½-quarter effort by his starters by pointing out he has a young team that accumulated no playoff experience last year. And he says he kept plenty of bullets in his holster for QB Aaron Rodgers (21 of 26 last week; 30 TDs vs. only 7 ints. TY), who was also kept pretty "basic" vs. mostly the Cards' defensive subs a week ago.

With veterans such as Kurt Warner (66%, 26 TDs, 14 ints. TY), WRs Larry Fitzgerald (97 recs., 12 TDs) & the aforementioned Boldin (84 recs.), plus burgeoning rookie RB Beanie Wells (583 YR in Nov. & Dec.), we know Arizona will come out firing. But the Cardinal defense, without dominating DEs, is not the type that has derailed the potent Packer offensive engine this year. And G.B., which raced to a 38-10 halftime lead in dress-rehearsal exhibition Week Three on this field, is well familiar with these indoor environs.

The Packers finished +24 in turnover margin TY to lead the league, and d.c. Dom Capers' new 3-4 defense improved throughout the season, finishing second in pass defense *(Arizona was No. 20 going into the last week).* CB Charles Woodson had 9 interceptions, S Nick Collins 6, and CB Tramon Williams 4. Rookie LB Clay Matthews had 10 sacks, and rookie LB Brad Jones 4 in the month of December filling in for Aaron Kampman. Yes, the Packer youngsters will make a few mistakes in their first road playoff game since 2003. But G.B. is 3-1 as a dog TY, Ryan Grant (1253 YR) is balancing the offense nicely, and the Pack ended the regular season on a 7-1 SU run, with their only loss on the very last play at Pittsburgh.

(09-G. Bay 33-ARIZ. 7...G.24-13 G.34/109 A.14/48 G.22/29/1/236 A.19/31/3/139 G.0 A.0)
(09-Green Bay +3 33-7...SR: Green Bay 44-22-4)

NFL RATINGS & POINTSPREAD RECORDS

TEAM	R	HFV	SUR	PSR	O/U	TOTAL PF-PA	PSR	HOME PF-PA	PSR	AWAY PF-PA
Arizona	3	2	10-6	8-8	5-11	23-20	4-4	22-23	4-4	25-17
Atlanta	6	4	9-7	11-5	7-9	23-20	6-2	23-17	5-3	23-23
Baltimore	2	4	9-7	8-8	7-9	24-16	5-3	29-12	3-5	20-21
Buffalo	12	3	6-10	8-7-1	6-10	16-20	3-4	17-18	5-3	15-23
Carolina	7	3	8-8	9-7	6-10	20-19	4-4	19-18	5-3	21-21
Chicago	12	2	7-9	6-10	6-10	20-23	4-4	25-21	2-6	16-26
Cincinnati	6	2	10-6	7-9	6-9	19-18	3-5	21-13	4-4	18-23
Cleveland	8	3	5-11	10-6	7-9	15-23	5-3	16-21	5-3	15-26
Dallas+	**0**	4	11-5	9-7	6-10	23-16	5-3	25-14	4-4	20-17
Denver	5	3	8-8	9-7	6-9	20-20	4-4	18-20	5-3	23-20
Detroit	18	2	2-14	4-11-1	8-8	16-31	3-5	20-28	1-6	13-34
Green Bay	1	4	11-5	11-5	8-8	29-19	5-3	27-17	6-2	30-20
Houston	3	4	9-7	7-8-1	6-10	24-21	2-5	25-21	5-3	24-20
Indianapolis	1	2	14-2	10-6	8-7	26-19	3-5	24-20	7-1	28-19
Jacksonville	10	2	7-9	5-11	8-8	18-24	2-6	23-21	3-5	13-26
Kansas City	12	1	4-12	7-9	11-5	18-27	2-6	17-29	5-3	20-25
Miami	7	2	7-9	8-8	10-6	23-24	3-5	27-26	5-3	18-22
Minnesota	0	3	12-4	9-6-1	8-8	29-20	5-2	33-16	4-4	26-24
New England	-1	4	10-6	8-7-1	5-10	27-18	5-3	31-13	2-4	20-25
New Orleans	1	2	13-3	8-8	7-9	32-21	4-4	32-22	4-4	32-21
NY Giants-	**8**	1	8-8	6-10	12-4	25-27	2-6	27-26	4-4	23-27
NY Jets	5	2	9-7	9-7	6-8	22-15	4-4	20-14	5-3	23-16
Oakland	11	2	5-11	8-8	7-9	12-24	4-4	12-23	4-4	13-25
Philadelphia	1	3	11-5	9-7	10-6	27-21	4-4	29-22	5-3	25-20
Pittsburgh	2	3	9-7	6-10	10-6	23-20	3-5	25-21	3-5	21-19
St. Louis	16	2	1-15	7-9	7-9	11-27	3-5	13-30	4-4	9-25
San Diego	-2	2	13-3	8-8	11-5	28-20	3-5	28-22	5-3	29-18
San Francisco	6	3	8-8	11-4-1	5-11	21-18	6-2	21-14	5-2	20-21
Seattle	15	3	5-11	6-10	7-9	18-24	5-3	20-16	1-7	15-33
Tampa Bay	10	2	3-13	6-10	6-10	15-25	1-6	14-28	5-3	17-21
Tennessee	7	4	8-8	7-9	9-7	22-25	4-4	28-23	3-5	17-27
Washington	9	2	4-12	8-8	9-7	17-21	2-6	15-22	6-2	19-20

The Gold Sheet, Sportsbetting.com & SBGglobal.com Lines

HOME TEAM in CAPS. Totals in brackets ( ). NL-No Line.

	Sportsbetting.com TGS	SBGglobal 888-BET EASY Sportsbetting	SBG
CINCY-N.Y. Jets	C.4	C.2½(34½)	C.2½
DALLAS-Phila.	D.3	D.3½(45)	D.4
N. ENG.-Balt.	N.4	N.3½(43)	N.3½
ARIZ.-G. Bay	A.2	A.2½(48)	A.2½
Tcu-Boise St.	T.3½	T.7	T.7½
Ga. Tech-Iowa	G.2½	G.5	G.5
C. Mich.-TROY	C.3	C.3	C.3½
Alabama-Texas	A.4½	A.4	A.4

BSC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

TEXAS (13-0) vs. ALABAMA (13-0)

Thursday, January 7 Night at Pasadena, CA (Grass Field)

TEAM	GP	SUR	PSR	PF	PA	YR	YP	T-R-P	YR	YP	T-R-P	TO	DIFF	OPR
Texas	13	13-0	5-7	41	15	153	280	66-28-27	62	189	22-5-14	+12	5.9	10.8
Alabama	12	12-0	8-4	31	12	208	205	41-23-16	82	174	16-5-9	+13	8.0	7.3

Alabama 24 - Texas 13—Although both of these combatants for the BCS crown played their last game more than a month ago, it's not easy to keep disparate recent results from overly influencing the handicap of this matchup. Sure, Texas enters undefeated, just like Alabama. But, a week after needing all 60 minutes to dispatch rebuilding rival Texas A&M 49-39, the Longhorns then barely survived Nebraska in the Big XII title game, fending off the defensively-stout but offensively-challenged Cornhuskers (and some nearly catastrophic late-game clock mismanagement) on a last-second FG, 13-12. The Tide, on the other hand, saved their best for last. In fact, Bama's 32-13 revenge beatdown of defending national champ Florida in its conference title game resounds to such a degree that, combined with the SEC's haughty reputation, the Tide has a definite air of invincibility entering this contest.

So, does mighty Texas really have no chance? Hardly. After all, Alabama has looked plenty "vincible" at times this season, a blocked FG in the final seconds and a TD in the last couple minutes staving off upset bids by Tennessee and Auburn, respectively. And the Longhorns will relish their underdog status, as wily head coach Mack Brown has covered five straight (including four outright victories) in that rare role. The first game in that dog quintet? A memorable little contest on this same field four years ago, when Vince Young led UT to an improbable upset of a seemingly invulnerable USC squad in the BCS title game. Remember, Young finished second in the Heisman voting to Trojan RB Reggie Bush that season. This year? Tide RB Mark Ingram captured the coveted trophy, with Longhorn sr. QB Colt McCoy in Young's role as motivated also-ran.

The parallels between that 41-38 shootout and this season's title game don't extend to the fundamentals, however, as the defenses are likely to dominate this matchup. Alabama has begrudged foes just 11 ppg & 242 ypg (both No. 2 in the nation), and Texas' stingy stop unit ranks close behind at 15 ppg & 251 ypg. As for the offenses, each team enjoys at least one easily discernible advantage. Horn QB McCoy is a fifth-year senior with 52 career starts under his belt; still-learning counterpart jr. Greg McElroy is in his first season Tide's top signal-caller. On the Bama side—while Ingram has rumbled for 1542 YR on 6.2 ypc and 18 TDs, the often-anemic UT ground game is led by RS frosh Tre Newton with only 513 YR.

Would it be a shock if McCoy's passing accuracy (73% the last two seasons) and resourcefulness (175 YR vs. A&M!) were to lead Texas to another upset victory? Not really. *But the more decisive factor in this game is likely to be the Tide's superior rushing attack.* Even if Ingram doesn't post gaudy statistics, his presence will help slow down the hellacious Horn pass rush (39 sacks) enough to give McElroy some time to throw down field off play-action. And, before selling the Bama triggerman short in his personal battle with McCoy, keep in mind that McElroy is now 29-0 as a starting QB in high school and college after easily outdueling none other than Tim Tebow in the SEC title game. Add Lou Groza Award-winning sr. PK Leigh Tiffin on the Tide side, plus plenty of cleverly designed, NFL-style blitzes by all-business head coach Nick Saban and highly-regarded defensive coordinator Kirby Smart (named nation's top assistant) to keep McCoy off balance, and the percentages favor laying a fair price with Alabama. *(DNP...SR: Texas 7-0-1)*

See Page 10 for College Football Ratings

NBA ANALYSIS

◆◆◆◆◆KEY RELEASES◆◆◆◆◆

TORONTO by 11 over Philadelphia (Friday, Jan. 8)
DALLAS by 7 over San Antonio (Friday, Jan. 8)
CHARLOTTE by 11 over Houston (Tuesday, Jan. 12)

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

Orlando 102 - WASHINGTON 88—Orlando has controlled the series with Washington, winning 8 of last 9 SU and covering 7 of those. Offcourt distractions created by Gilbert Arenas' "packing" in the locker room can't be good. The series has been "under" 7 of last 9. 08-ORL -9' 106-81 (198), Orl -3 105-90 (198), ORL -12' 89-80 (192), Orl -8 112-103 (199)

◆◆◆Toronto 113 - PHILADELPHIA 102—Philly's 2-12 spread mark at Wachovia Center thru Jan. 4 speaks for itself. Toronto covered last 3 road games facing teams with losing records. Raptor F Chris Bosh and C Andrea Bargnani combined for 43 ppg in last 5 thru Jan. 5. High-scoring series has gone "over" 8 of last 9. 08-Tor +5 95-84 (189), Phi +5' 106-96 (185), PHI -6' 115-106 (202), TO +2 111-104 (207)

MEMPHIS 109 - Utah 105—Utah has dominated Memphis, winning 10 in a row against the Grizzlies, covering the last 8 prior to matchup at EnergySolutions Arena on Wednesday. That being said, Utah is just 3-6 SU last 9 on the road, and Memphis a different team since lopsided Nov. 20 loss at Salt Lake City, winning 10 of last 14 SU since (thru Jan. 4) as Lionel Hollins' young lineup meshing nicely with on-fire 6-9 frontliner Zach Randolph (28 ppg last 6 thru Jan. 4) 09-UTAH -9' 120-93 (207), check 1/6 result; 08-Utah +3 103-94 (188), UTAH -9' 117-100 (193), Utah -4' 101-91 (194), UTAH -11 117-99 (204)

ATLANTA 99 - Boston 89—Atlanta snapped 5-game losing streak to Boston Nov. 13 at TD Garden. The Celtics will be without F Paul Pierce (18 ppg) and Kevin Garnett (15 ppg, 7 rpg) this time around, and they combined for 38 pts. on 54% shooting in first meeting. 09-Atl +9 97-86 (193); 08-BOS -11 103-102 (184), Bos -4 88-85 (187), Bos -1 99-93 (185), BOS -4' 104-92 (187) TV—ESPN

NEW ORLEANS 107 - New Jersey 102—New Jersey has covered 3 of last 4 through Jan. 5, and the Hornets haven't covered a game at New Orleans Arena laying more than 5 points this season. Five of last 6 in series went "over" the total. 08-NO -4' 102-92 (189), No -4 99-96 (191)

MINNESOTA 112 - Indiana 100—Indiana won by 11 in Jan. 2 meeting against Minny behind 21 pts. each from Pacer C Roy Hibbert and G Earl Watson. That win snapped an 8-game Indiana losing streak, but don't think it indicates injury-plagued Pacers are ready to turn things around. Indiana just 3-10 vs. number visiting "B" and "C" teams. 09-IN -4 122-111 (208); 08-Min +4 116-111 (218), In +2 112-105 (213)

MILWAUKEE 95 - Chicago 94—After the favorite covered all 4 meetings in the series LY, the dog got the money in the first two this season. Bulls covered 7 of last 9 overall through Jan. 3, as G Derrick Rose is heating up (25 ppg last 7). 09-CHI -8' 83-81 (192), MIL -3 99-97 (194); 08-CHI -6 108-95 (197), MIL -4' 97-90 (200), Chi -1' 113-104 (207), CHI -6' 117-102 (205)

◆◆◆Dallas 97 - SAN ANTONIO 90—Dallas has held the upper hand in this series and has covered 11 of last 15 visits to AT&T Center. Any Mav success usually starts with F Dirk Nowitzki, and he's scored 35 ppg & pulled down 12 rpg in first two meetings against Tim Duncan and the Spurs this season. Mavs have already won at the Lakers, Phoenix and Denver en route to a Western Conference-best 12-5 road record, and see another prestigious foe falling to Rick Carlisle's crew. 09-SAN +1' 92-83 (197), DAL -2 99-94 (OT-196); 08-Dal +4' 98-81 (188), San -1' 133-126 (2OT-190), SAN -5 93-76 (190), DAL -3 107-102 (188), *Dal +4 105-97 (186), SAN -6 105-84 (188), DAL -5 88-67 (190), DAL -4' 99-90 (188), Dal +5 106-93 (189)*

PHOENIX 104 - Miami 102—Phoenix F Amare Stoudemire and G Steve Nash not getting the support they did in the first month of the season, as 7-9-1 spread mark followed 11-6 start. Both G Jason Richardson and F Grant Hill's point production fell off 20% in December. 09-Pho +4 104-96 (216); 08-Mia +7' 107-92 (199), MIA -2' 135-129 (225)

PORTLAND 98 - LA Lakers 97—Portland has won 8 in a row against the Lakers at the Rose Garden, and have to be impressed with the way G Brandon Roy has carried the Blazers despite numerous injuries. L.A. playing just well enough to win of late, as Kobe's last-second heroics saved the Lakers' bacon 3 times in the last month. *A Kobe buzzer-beater might not "get the grits" in this one.* 08-LA -8 96-76 (195), LA -11' 100-86 (198), PORT +3 111-94 (202), PORT -1' 106-98 (194)

GOLDEN ST. 110 - Sacramento 108—Return of Andris Biedrins and Ronny Turiaf has reinforced Golden State frontline, and the Warriors covered 4 of last 5 through Jan. 4 after covering just twice in previous three weeks. However, Kings have been a pesky adversary for G.S., as Sacto has covered 7 of last 8 in series. 09-SAC +3' 120-107 (217); 08-SAC -3 115-98 (214), Sac +5' 135-133 (3OT-227), GS -8' 143-141 (OT-237), Gs +2 105-100 (243)

Cleveland 98 - DENVER 93—Denver won 13 of first 15 SU at home, but Cleveland has won 5 straight on the road, including wins at Atlanta, the Lakers and Phoenix. LeBron got the best of Carmelo Anthony in last year's matchup, averaging 28 ppg, 9 rpg and 10 apg in keying a pair of double-digit wins (Melo's numbers were 16, 5 and 2). Nuggets 2-5 SU first 7 after G Billups injured his groin. 08-CLE -7 110-99 (200), Cle P 105-88 (199) CABLE TV—ESPN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

ORLANDO 97 - Atlanta 96—Orlando has come up short at home against the league's best, with no covers last 5 against "A" teams, while Atlanta has covered all 4 chances visiting the elite of the NBA. Hawks shot an icy 39% and scored a season-low 76 points in humiliating 17-point loss in first meeting at Philips Arena Nov. 26. Joe Johnson and Josh Smith turn the tables this time. 09-Orl +3' 93-76 (198); 08-Atl +8 99-85 (202), Orl +2' 106-102 (191), ORL -5 121-87 (192), Orl -1' 88-82 (192)

CHARLOTTE 101 - Memphis 91—Charlotte has been very tough at Time Warner Cable Arena this season, especially when facing "C"-rated teams (6-1 vs. points). Larry Brown's Bobcats are on an 9-2 spread run and are 15-4 vs. number last 18 chances when unrested through Jan. 4. 08-Ch +3' 112-83 (182), CH -6 101-86 (179)

DETROIT 92 - Philadelphia 90—Detroit riding 9-game SU and spread losing streak through Jan. 4, but Philly is just 10-23 SU and 5-17 in its last 22 thru Jan. 4. Even return of Gs Richard Hamilton and Ben Gordon couldn't pull Pistons out of their nosedive. Philly G Iverson (a Detroit reject) scored 17 ppg in last 7 games thru Jan. 4. 09-DET -1' 88-81 (191), Det +4 90-86 (190); 08-Phi +8 96-91 (189), DE -2' 101-97 (185), PHI -3 95-90 (185)

OKLAHOMA CITY 113 - Indiana 108—This series has gone "over" 11 of last 12 meetings, and must note Indiana has yielded 115 ppg last 6 through Jan. 4. OKC has covered 4 of last 5 against the Pacers, as Kevin Durant burned them for 31 ppg in his 4 chances. The Thunder has covered 4 of last 5 as a home favorite prior to facing New Orleans Jan. 6, while Indiana 1-10 last 11 as a single-digit road dog through Jan. 4. 08-IND -11 107-99 (196), Ind +2 117-99 (212)

CHICAGO 100 - Minnesota 99—Both of these teams played last night, but Chicago has been much more adversely affected by being unrested. Bulls have lost and failed to cover 7 straight playing the second of back-to-back games. C Brad Miller is shooting just 30% and G Salmons 29% when unrested. 08-Mi +7 102-92 (207), MIN -4' 109-108 (OT-207) TV—WGN

DALLAS 109 - Utah 96—Dallas is coming off a game in San Antonio last night, while Utah visited Memphis. The home team has won the last 9 meetings between these two, covering 8 of those games. Dallas has been in a severe downturn at American Airlines Center, dropping 10 of last 11 spread decisions as host through Jan 4, but figure Utah just the tonic to reverse negative trend. 09-DAL -6 96-85 (202); 08-UTAH -2 97-88 (195), DAL -5 115-108 (200), UTAH -3' 115-87 (208), DAL -3' 130-101 (208)

HOUSTON 98 - New York 97—There was a "Nate Robinson sighting" in Atlanta on New Year's Day, and one would have to believe the 41-point outburst (21 in the last 11 mins.) by the Knicks' diminutive guard will get Robinson out of coach D'Antoni's dog house more often. While Houston is still keeping a winning pace, the Rockets have cooled off against the points (2-4 L6 through Jan. 4. 08-HOU -6' 96-76 (204), NY +1' 104-98 (207)

Denver 118 - SACRAMENTO 107—Sacto's 20-year-old man-child PG Tyreke Evans showing some wear, missing 3 games with an ankle injury, including the first meeting against Chauncey Billups and the Nuggets. But Denver's bench was outscored 40-15 in Sacto's upset win in Arco Arena Dec. 28, as Carmelo Anthony's 34 points were not enough. Billups didn't play in the first game and is being brought back slowly from a groin injury, so it might be Evans facing fellow rookie Ty Lawson. 09-SAC +2 106-101 (212); 08-Den -5 118-85 (212), DEN -9' 118-99 (219), SAC +9 114-106 (214), DEN -17 118-98 (223)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10 - *Day Games*

Boston 106 - TORONTO 97—Boston has dominated Toronto, winning 10 of last 11 SU and covering 9 of last 12 (last 3 went "over"). Most recent Celtic triumph was last Saturday in Boston, and Doc Rivers' crew turned that trick without the services of F Kevin Garnett, G Paul Pierce and PG Rajon Rondo. 09-BOS -9' 116-103 (203), BOS -3 103-96 (194); 08-BOS -8' 94-87 (183), Bos -4' 118-103 (185), Bos -5' 94-88 (189), BOS -10 115-109 (OT-186)

New Orleans 92 - WASHINGTON 84—New Orleans has been on an "under" kick of late, and the series with Washington went "under" in 5 of last 7 meetings. Hornet PG Chris Paul shot 58% in last year's meetings with the Wizards, as N.O. won both by double digit margins despite not having the services of F David West for either game. Hornets didn't have to deal with Gilbert Arenas in the series last season, but they held Caron Butler to just 36%. 08-NO -14' 97-85 (184), No -8 109-98 (193)

Miami 107 - LA CLIPPERS 96—Miami seems to bear down when facing bad teams on the road, as Heat covered all 4 chances visiting "C" teams. The Clippers haven't been able to develop much consistency, and they probably won't improve dramatically until Marcus Camby and Blake Griffin return to full health. 08-LA +2 97-96 (191), MIA -9' 119-95 (192)

Night Games

SAN ANTONIO 101 - New Jersey 89—San Antonio gathering some momentum, covering 5 of last 6 through Jan. 5. However, Spurs have just 1 cover in their last 5 games as a double digit favorite, and New Jersey has hung in to cover 3 of last 4 games and is playing better defense in those games, holding foes below 100 points in each of the covers. Spur G Ginobili finally seems to have found his stroke after suffering through a pre-Christmas shooting slump. 08-SAN -11' 94-91 (189), San -5 108-93 (188)

PORTLAND 104 - Cleveland 103—Portland seems to rise to the occasion at home against good teams, but the Blazers have trouble with LeBron James and the Cavaliers. Cleveland has won 10 of last 12 against Portland, covering 8 of those 12. James tallied 30 ppg, 9 apg and 12 rpg in last year's victories. 09-CLE -10 104-99 (187); 08-Cle -1 104-98 (183), CLE -10' 97-92 (OT-187) TV—ESPN

LA LAKERS 108 - Milwaukee 106—Kobe Bryant scored the final 7 points of the game including a buzzer-beater in 107-106 L.A. win at Milwaukee on Dec. 16. The Laker bench was outscored 50-15 in that game, which made things too close for comfort for Phil Jackson. Lakers often playing to the level of their competition, covering just 13 times despite a 26-6 SU mark thru Jan. 2. 09-La -5' 107-106 (OT-198); 08-LA -13' 105-92 (209), La -7 104-98 (203)

MONDAY, JANUARY 11

New Orleans 97 - PHILADELPHIA 92—Although there are a few positive indicators (such as HC Eddie Jordan settling on a set rotation, A.I.'s increased contributions, and spark from bench provided by Elton Brand and Marreese Speights) for Philly, not sure Sixers all that excited to be home at Wachovia Center after dropping 12 of first 14 vs. line as host thru Jan. 4. N.O. still seeking traction, but Hornets ("under" 11-2 last 13 thru Jan. 3) slowing pace and concentrating more on defense since GM Jeff Bower and new assistant Tim Floyd took charge on bench in mid-November. 08-NO -3 101-86 (194), No +2 98-91 (189)

INDIANA 105 - Toronto 103—Let's see if recent home court series trend holds up at Conseco Fieldhouse after Toronto held serve at Air Canada Centre Nov. 24. *Host team has now won and covered last five meetings.* And Raptors (only 5-12 vs. line away thru Jan. 5) still not offering much value south of border. *But can we trust depleted Pacer bunch that just endured 8-game losing streak thru New Year's Day?* 09-TOR -5 123-112 (215); 08-TOR -3' 101-88 (210), IND -4' 111-104 (214), TOR -2' 110-87 (214), IND -7' 130-101 (218)

BOSTON 93 - Atlanta 89—Quick rematch from Friday night's game at Philips Arena. Remember Hawks scored 97-86 win their last visit in Boston Nov. 13, when Atlanta dominated boards by 47-29 count and Celtics were only 1 of 15 shooting triples. *Check Boston injury situation (Paul Pierce, Rajon Rondo, and K.G. all missing recent action).* 09-Atl +9 97-86 (193), check 1/8 result; 08-BOS -11 103-102 (184), Bos -4 88-85 (187), Bos -1 99-93 (185), BOS -4' 104-92 (187) TV—NBA

CHICAGO 97 - Detroit 88—Chicago hasn't had much to get excited about this season except for its previous two encounters vs. Detroit, both Bulls wins. Although Chicago couldn't quite cover as 7½-point favorite at United Center in 92-85 win Dec. 2, it had less trouble in recent 11-point win at Auburn Hills Dec. 31 when dominating boards by 49-33 count. Pistons having problems vs. everybody lately (lost and failed to cover last 9 thru Jan. 4) despite lineup getting healthy again before New Year's. 09-CHI -7' 92-85 (182), Chi +4 98-87 (185); 08-DET -7 104-98 (200), CHI -3 107-102 (190), CHI -5 99-91 (191), Chi +4 91-88 (197)

OKLAHOMA CITY 92 - New York 88—Surprising Ok City providing pretty good value as Ford Center chalk (7-3 vs. line thru Jan. 5), although New York also faring well lately as road dog (8-4 last 12 in role thru Jan. 8). Knicks' fortunes began to turn when Mike D'Antoni had his squad slow the pace just a bit and begin focusing more on defensive end in December, resulting in 10 "unders" last 14 thru Jan. 6. 08-NY -8 116-106 (209), OKLA +2 107-99 (214)

PHOENIX 122 - Milwaukee 106—Scott Skiles trying almost anything to get Milwaukee out of recent funk, even resorting to benching Andrew Bogut and Michael Redd in recent cold spell that saw Bucks lose 7 of 8 SU (and fail to cover last 4) prior to Jan. 2 win over Thunder. Bucks' recurring defensive deficiencies could be ruthlessly exploited by potent Phoenix bunch scoring 115 ppg at US Airways Center. 08-Pho -5' 104-96 (197), PHO -6' 125-110 (205)

UTAH 94 - Miami 85—Utah in payback mode after unsightly 80-70 loss at AmericanAirlines Arena Dec. 23. Jazz hit only 2 of 11 beyond arc that night in sloppy 20-TO performance at Miami, with Dwyane Wade (29 points) pacing Heat. Note that was one of Heat's several "unders" (5-1 last 6 thru Jan. 3) in recent weeks. 09-MIA -1 80-70 (200); 08-Mia +4' 93-89 (198), MIA P 140-129 (3OT-201)

DENVER 123 - Minnesota 103—Rest assured Denver won't be caught flat-footed as it was the last time Minnesota visited Pepsi Center Nov. 29, when T-wolves broke 15-game losing skid with shocking 106-100 win. Nuggets seemed to lose interest that night after bolting to 40-25 lead after 1st Q, only to be outscored 66-40 the rest of the way. T-wolves (allowing 113 ppg last 4, all SU losses, thru Jan. 5) springing lots of leaks lately on defensive end. Denver should gain its revenge if 'Melo and Chauncey Billups (both hurt recently) back in lineup. 09-Den -8' 124-111 (203), Min +14' 106-100 (214); 08-DEN -9 90-84 (203), Den -5 106-97 (200), DEN -12' 116-105 (208), Den -7 110-87 (208)

Cleveland 107 - GOLDEN ST. 103—Golden State displaying better form now that Andris Biedrins and the bearded Ronny Turiaf have returned from injury to provide some needed frontline presence and depth, with close loss to Lakers followed by wins over Suns and Celtics (covers in all three) prior to New Year's. *Cavs flashing good form lately on road, however, with recent wins at Suns, Lakers, and Hawks, so don't be cheated on number if preferring Nellie's bunch.* 09-CLE -14' 114-108 (215); 08-CLE -11' 112-97 (216), Cle -6' 106-105 (216)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12

Detroit 94 - WASHINGTON 92—Hard to make a strong case for either of these distressed teams, with Detroit on 9-game SU and spread losing streak thru Jan. 4, and Washington dropping last 4 thru Jan. 4, as internal issues involving Gilbert Arenas and "Dodge City rumors" from clubhouse proving ample distractions. But note that Pistons have won and covered first two vs. Wizards Nov. 14 and Dec. 6, the former at Verizon Center when Ben Gordon exploded for 29 points. 09-Det +3' 106-103 (186), DET -3 98-94 (191); 08-DET -9' 117-109 (180), WASH +5 107-94 (193), DET -10 88-74 (200), Det -4 98-96 (191)

◆◆◆**CHARLOTTE 96 - Houston 85—**Charlotte (8-2 SU and 7-3 vs. line last 10 at Time Warner Cable Arena thru Jan. 4) beginning to develop a bit of a home-court edge as overall performance pattern improves. Increasing contributions of recently-acquired Stephen Jackson coinciding with uptick. Meanwhile, Houston laboring a bit lately on road (1-6 SU and vs. line last 7 away thru Jan. 4). 08-HOU -6' 99-78 (182), Hou -1 91-86 (183)

MEMPHIS 106 - LA Clippers 94—Teams met three times in November, with home side winning each. Included was Memphis' 106-91 win at FedEx Forum Nov. 18, which actually preceded recent Grizzlies' uptick that saw them win 10 of last 14 SU thru Jan. 4. *Getting rid of A.I.'s distractions has proven quite a lift for Lionel Hollins' bunch that's now 10-4 vs. line at home (thru Jan. 7).* 09-LA -4 113-110 (201), MEM -5 106-91 (199), LA -3' 98-88 (198); 08-MEM +1' 93-81 (199), La +4' 126-105 (203), Mem +1' 118-95 (193)

SAN ANTONIO 101 - LA Lakers 98—First meeting of season between these long-time Western Conference antagonists. Note that Lakers covered all three meetings a year ago (although they only split SU at AT&T Center). Lakers no covers first 2 in rare dog role thru Jan. 7, and Spurs hitting early January on nice uptick (won and covered 5 of last 6 thru Jan. 5). 08-SAN -3 112-111 (200), LA -7 99-85 (201), La +2' 102-95 (194)

SACRAMENTO 109 - Orlando 107—Although Sacto (1-5 SU last 6 thru Jan. 4) losing inordinate number of close decisions lately. Kings a much different team than the one that was crushed in both meetings vs. Orlando LY. *Note Sacto "over" 12-5 at Arco Arena thru Jan. 4.* 08-OR -10' 121-103 (201), Orl -7' 139-107 (205)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

New York 96 - PHILADELPHIA 93—Philly maintained its recent edge over New York with wild 141-127 OT win at MSG back on Halloween, as Sixers now unbeaten SU in last 5 tries vs. Knicks. But New York has made more progress the past two months, as Mike D'Antoni has Knicks slowing tempo and playing more defense these days *(reflected in 10-4 "under" last 13 thru Jan. 6).* 09-Phi -2 141-127 (OT-206); 08-PHI -8 116-87 (215), Phi -2 107-97 (210), PHI -7' 116-110 (207), Phi +2 108-103 (214)

ATLANTA 106 - Washington 88—Atlanta's recent dominance over Washington continued in 100-89 win at Philips Arena Oct. 30, as Hawks now unbeaten SU last five (and covers last 4) vs. Wizards. Washington looking a bit dysfunctional these days (no wins or covers last 4 thru Jan. 4) as campaign begins to slip away from HC Flip Saunders. *Atlanta 11-5 as home chalk thru Jan. 5.* 09-ATL -6' 100-89 (203); 08-ATL -7' 91-87 (199), Atl +1' 102-98 (200), ATL -9 111-90 (200), Atl -3' 98-89 (197)

Phoenix 117 - INDIANA 107—Indiana has really missed injured high scorer Danny Granger, out since early December with torn plantar fascia in foot. Pacers had dropped 8 in a row SU prior to home win over lowly T-wolves Jan. 2. *"Totals" alert—potent Phoenix now "over" its last 6 thru Jan. 4.* 08-Pho -3 113-103 (204), Ind +10 113-110 (227)

Boston 89 - NEW JERSEY 77—As New Jersey (3-30 SU thru Jan. 4) stays on pace to threaten '72-73 Sixers' all-time worst mark of 9-73, doubt proud Boston falls victim. But remember that Celtics weren't focused enough to cover hefty 14-point spread the last time they visited Meadowlands Nov. 7, and Boston has been shorthanded lately *(check status of Pierce, Rondo, & Garnett).* 09-Bos -14 86-76 (179); 08-BOS -10 118-86 (190), Bos -7 105-85 (192), Bos -7 115-111 (194), BOS -10 106-104 (196)

NEW ORLEANS 96 - LA Clippers 94—New Orleans has maintained recent dominance over L.A. with wins and covers in first two meetings; *Hornets now 5-0 SU and vs. line last five vs. Clips.* But N.O. only 2-8 vs. line as chalk vs. other teams thru Jan. 7, and Clips gaining a little confidence heading into January with three straight covers thru Jan. 3. *Note Hornets "under" 11-2 last 13 thru Jan. 3.* 09-No -1' 112-84 (194), NO +2 110-102 (194); 08-No -6 99-87 (186), NO -15' 107-80 (185), No -3' 104-98 (194)

OKLAHOMA CITY 100 - San Antonio 96—Ok City a thorn in San Antonio's side lately, winning 3 of last 4 meetings, including 101-98 upset at AT&T Center Nov. 14 when Spurs were at full strength. But note S.A. had won & covered 5 of last 6 overall thru Jan. 5. 09-Ok +8 101-98 (185); 08-SA -16 109-104 (197), OK +5 78-76 (187), Ok +13 96-95 (188), Sa -6 99-89 (184)

HOUSTON 105 - Minnesota 88—Advantage Houston, which has won and covered last five vs. Minnesota after 97-84 win at Target Center Nov. 18. Al Jefferson (20 points) was only T-wolves starter scoring DDs that night. *Note Rockets 10-4 vs. line at Toyota Center thru Jan. 8.* 09-Hou -6 97-84 (197); 08-Hou -5' 109-102 (192), HOU -7' 107-90 (199), Hou -6' 105-94 (200), HOU -11 107-88 (192)

DALLAS 100 - LA Lakers 96—Rematch from Jan. 3 meeting at Staples Center. Remember, Dallas surprised Lakers in first meeting back on Oct. 30, winning by 14 on road; Mavs had lost six straight in series prior to that win. L.A. (at San Antonio last night) only 2-4 vs. line in second of back-to-backs on road thru Jan. 5 and had covered just 1 of last 6 overall thru Jan. 2. 09-Dal +8 94-80 (204), check 1/3 result; 08-La -6 106-99 (198), LA -11 114-107 (205), LA -8' 107-100 (210)

DENVER 108 - Orlando 101—Note that road dog won and covered in convincing fashion when these teams split last season. Denver, however, battling spate of injuries lately as it has dropped 10 of last 13 vs. line thru Jan. 4 (although 'Melo & Billups likely to have returned to lineup by the time this one tips off). 08-Orl +1 106-88 (210), Den +7' 82-73 (210) TV—NBA

PORTLAND 107 - Milwaukee 94—Portland taking a licking on injury front lately (LaMarcus Aldrige's sprained ankle and Steve Blake's pneumonia the latest maladies), but Blazers keep on ticking despite being reduced to 6-man rotation in some recent games, winning 8 of last 10 SU thru Jan. 3. Portland also in revenge mode after OT loss at Bradley Center Dec. 12 when Brandon Roy endured subpar shooting night (just 8 of 24 from floor). 09-MIL -4 108-101 (2OT-191); 08-PORT -6 102-85 (194), Port -3 96-84 (193)

GOLDEN ST. 115 - Miami 110—Miami starting to slip a bit with losses and non-covers last three thru Jan. 3, and now in midst of extended 6-game road swing (this is game four) in stretch of 20 in 27 games away from home. Warriors showing a bit more punch lately with frontliners Andris Biedrins and Ronny Turiaf back from injury. 08-Mia -2 130-129 (OT-215), MIA -9 96-88 (214)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

BOSTON 103 - Chicago 85—After getting pushed to limit in classic 7-game first-round playoff series last spring, Boston has taken care of business vs. Chicago this season, winning and covering first two by whopping 27 ppg. *Bulls just 3-10 as road dog thru Jan. 4; how long will HC Vinny Del Negro remain on job?* 09-BOS -11' 118-90 (187), Bos -9' 106-80 (187); 08-BOS -10 96-80 (190), BOS -12' 126-108 (196), CHI +1' 127-121 (195), *Chi +8' 105-103 (OT-196), BOS -8' 118-115 (196), Bos +3 107-86 (201), CHI -2' 121-118 (2OT-201), BOS -7' 106-104 (OT-198), CHI -3 128-127 (3OT-196), BOS -6 109-99 (196)* CABLE TV—TNT

UTAH 104 - Cleveland 101—Recent wins at Suns, Lakers, and Hawks indicate Cavs can definitely take their act on road this season, but Jazz a noteworthy 11-6 vs. line as host thru Jan. 3. Note that both teams were shorthanded (Cleveland minus Shaq, Utah minus Deron Williams) when Cavs won by 4 but couldn't cover at "The Q" Nov. 14. 09-CLE -13 107-103 (191); 08-CLE -10' 105-93 (191), Cle +3 102-97 (196) CABLE TV—TNT

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NBA RATINGS

Stats thru Sunday,Jan. 2, 2010.

KEY: HCV—Home Court Value. CR—Current Power Rating. PSR—Ptsprd Record. SUH—Straight-up home. SUA—Straight-up Away. PF-PA—Avg Pts For-Pts Against at home & on road. **ALL TEAMS MEASURED FROM BASE RATING OF ZERO.** Team with CR 6 would be 7-pt. fav. over team with CR 13 on neutral floor. Give allotted pts. for HCV to home team. Teams in **BOLD** have had their rating moved more than two pts. either for the better (+) or worse (-) since last posting. *—SU Home & Away avgs include only those games listed on the LV Line.

			HOME		AWAY			HOME	AWAY
HCV	TEAM	CR	FAV	DOG	FAV	DOG	PICK	PF-PA	PF-PA
4	Atlanta	7	11-5	0-0	6-4	5-1	0-0	108-98	100-97
3	**Boston-**	**12/9**	6-9	0-0	5-8	3-1	0-0	103-93	98-92
4	Charlotte	14	7-2	3-3	0-1	10-5	0-0	94-88	88-95
3	Chicago	14	3-7	5-1	1-0	3-10	0-0	92-93	91-102
3	Cleveland	5	5-10	0-0	8-7	5-0	0-0	100-92	99-94
3	Dallas	9	4-11	1-0	7-3	5-2	0-0	99-95	100-93
3	Denver	10/7*	9-6	0-0	4-10	3-1	0-0	114-102	101-101
3	**Detroit-**	**15**	5-5	3-3	1-0	6-9	0-0	91-93	92-98
3	**Golden St.+**	**15**	3-3	4-2	0-1	8-9	0-0	111-112	103-112
4	Houston	9	6-3	4-1	3-3	7-6	0-0	102-98	98-99
3	Indiana	17	4-4	2-6	1-0	5-10	0-0	99-101	97-105
2	LA Clippers	16	3-4	3-6	0-1	7-7	0-0	93-96	98-101
2	LA Lakers	6	9-12	0-0	4-5	0-2	0-0	105-97	97-95
4	Memphis	15	5-3	5-2	1-1	7-8	0-0	101-98	105-108
3	Miami	12	6-10	2-1	1-1	6-4	0-0	96-94	98-101
3	Milwaukee	15	7-5	3-2	0-0	7-7	0-0	100-97	90-96
2	Minnesota	17	0-2	8-8	0-0	9-8	0-0	94-102	97-109
2	New Jersey	18	0-3	6-6	0-1	5-11	0-0	90-100	90-102
3	New Orleans	12	4-6	5-1	1-2	4-8	0-0	97-96	97-105
4	New York	15	3-4	5-5	0-1	8-7	0-0	100-101	99-102
4	Okla. City	11	7-3	2-4	2-1	9-5	0-0	98-94	98-97
3	Orlando	5	9-7	0-0	6-7	2-0	0-0	104-95	99-97
3	Philadelphia	17	2-6	0-6	1-1	10-6	0-0	94-99	98-103
5	Phoenix	8	8-6	1-0	4-4	5-5	0-0	115-105	106-108
3	Portland	15/13*	8-9	1-0	6-3	4-4	0-0	100-93	92-90
3	Sacramento	19/17*	6-2	4-6	0-1	9-4	0-0	106-103	99-105
3	San Antonio	8	10-7	1-0	6-2	0-4	0-0	105-95	98-95
3	Toronto	13	7-3	2-4	1-1	5-11	0-0	104-102	102-109
4	Utah	11/9*	9-6	2-0	1-3	6-6	0-0	104-97	95-98
3	Washington	16	2-7	2-3	0-2	7-7	0-0	100-101	97-102

*-Adjust 3 points for availability of Bos F Garnett, Den G Billups-3, Port F Aldridge-2, Sac G Evans-2, & Utah G Williams-2.

NBA OVER-UNDER RESULTS, STRAIGHT-UP HOME & AWAY RECORDS AND SPREAD RECORDS AFTER A WIN OR LOSS & IN 2ND OF BACK-TO-BACK GAMES

The following are each team's totals (over-under) results at home and away, straight-up records home and away, and each team's pointspread mark in the game immediately following a straight-up win or loss. Key: SUR-Straight-Up Record, PSR-Pointspread Record. BACK-TO-BACK-Spread Record in 2nd or 3rd night of back-to-back games. **Through Saturday, Jan. 2, 2010.**

	OVER-UNDER		STRAIGHT-UP		PS AFTER		BACK-TO-BACK		
	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	WIN	LOSS	HOME	AWAY	TOTAL
Atlanta	11-4	8-8	12-4	9-7	13-8	8-2	2-0	4-3	6-3
Boston	7-7	8-9	11-4	13-4	11-12	2-6	1-0	1-4	2-4
Charlotte	8-7	10-6	11-4	2-14	9-3	11-7	0-1	6-1	6-2
Chicago	6-11	5-8	11-6	3-11	7-6	4-12	0-2	0-4	0-6
Cleveland	6-9	8-9	13-2	14-6	13-13	5-3	1-3	4-3	5-6
Dallas	8-8	8-9	11-5	12-5	11-11	6-4	0-2	4-3	4-5
Denver	7-8	7-11	13-2	8-10	10-10	5-7	1-0	3-4	4-4
Detroit	7-8	8-7	8-8	3-13	7-4	7-13	1-2	1-4	2-6
Golden St.	7-6	9-10	6-7	3-16	4-4	11-10	1-0	4-3	5-3
Houston	8-6	7-13	10-4	10-10	10-9	10-3	2-1	2-3	4-4
Indiana	7-7	6-10	7-9	3-13	6-3	6-16	1-2	4-2	5-4
LA Clippers	3-14	9-6	9-8	5-10	4-9	8-9	2-2	1-2	3-4
LA Lakers	10-10	6-5	18-3	8-3	11-14	2-4	1-1	2-4	3-5
Memphis	7-8	12-4	10-5	6-11	11-4	7-9	1-1	1-3	2-4
Miami	9-10	6-6	10-9	6-6	8-8	6-8	0-0	2-2	2-2
Milwaukee	12-5	7-7	10-7	3-11	8-4	9-9	4-1	1-0	5-1
Minnesota	6-12	9-8	4-14	3-14	3-4	13-14	3-0	2-4	5-4
New Jersey	5-10	5-10	2-14	1-16	1-2	10-18	1-3	2-2	3-5
New Orleans	4-12	9-6	13-3	2-13	6-8	8-8	1-0	2-3	3-3
New York	6-11	8-8	7-10	6-10	6-6	10-10	3-1	0-4	3-5
Okla. City	7-8	9-7	9-7	9-8	7-11	12-2	0-1	4-2	4-3
Orlando	11-5	6-11	13-3	11-6	10-13	6-1	1-1	2-2	3-3
Philadelphia	6-8	9-8	4-10	5-13	2-7	11-11	0-2	5-1	5-3
Phoenix	9-6	7-11	13-3	8-10	11-10	7-4	0-0	2-5	2-5
Portland	8-10	9-8	13-5	9-8	12-9	6-7	1-0	5-2	6-2
Sacramento	12-5	7-8	11-7	3-12	8-6	11-6	1-3	2-1	3-4
San Antonio	10-9	5-7	14-5	6-6	11-8	5-5	0-1	2-2	2-3
Toronto	7-8	11-6	11-5	5-13	7-9	7-10	0-0	1-6	1-6
Utah	10-7	8-7	12-5	6-10	8-10	10-4	1-0	4-2	5-2
Washington	8-5	6-11	5-9	5-12	2-8	8-11	1-4	1-2	2-6
TOTALS	232-244	232-244	301-187	187-301	237-233	231-233	31-34	74-83	105-117

NBA SPREAD CATEGORY ANALYSIS (totals on pg 11)

				ATLANTA							MILWAUKEE	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	2-1	1-0	3-1	5-1	11-3	HOME FAVORITE	2-2	3-0	0-3	1-0	6-5	
	-	-	-	-	0-0	HOME DOG	1-1	1-0	1-1	-	3-2	
TE	1-1	3-2	2-1	-	6-4	ROAD FAVORITE	-	-	-	-	0-0	
	0-1	1-0	3-0	-	4-1	ROAD DOG	4-2	0-1	1-2	2-0	7-5	
				BOSTON							MINNESOTA	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	-	0-1	0-1	5-7	5-9	HOME FAVORITE	0-2	-	-	-	0-2	
	-	-	-	-	0-0	HOME DOG	5-0	0-1	1-3	1-3	7-7	
TE	-	3-0	1-3	1-3	5-6	ROAD FAVORITE	-	-	-	-	0-0	
	1-0	2-0	-	-	3-0	ROAD DOG	-	2-0	2-3	5-3	9-6	
				CHARLOTTE							NEW JERSEY	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	3-1	2-1	1-0	-	6-2	HOME FAVORITE	0-2	0-1	-	-	0-3	
	2-2	1-1	-	-	3-3	HOME DOG	1-0	1-1	1-2	1-2	4-5	
TE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	ROAD FAVORITE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	
	3-1	1-2	2-1	2-1	8-5	ROAD DOG	-	0-4	1-2	4-5	5-11	
				CHICAGO							NEW ORLEANS	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	2-0	0-2	0-5	-	2-7	HOME FAVORITE	1-0	2-1	0-2	0-3	3-6	
	2-0	1-0	-	1-1	4-1	HOME DOG	2-1	1-0	1-0	-	4-1	
TE	1-0	-	-	-	1-0	ROAD FAVORITE	1-2	-	-	-	1-2	
	1-0	0-3	0-3	1-4	2-10	ROAD DOG	0-2	0-1	1-3	3-1	4-7	
				CLEVELAND							NEW YORK	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	-	0-1	2-0	2-8	4-9	HOME FAVORITE	1-2	2-2	-	-	3-4	
	-	-	-	-	0-0	HOME DOG	2-1	1-1	1-2	1-0	5-4	
TE	1-1	4-4	2-1	1-0	8-6	ROAD FAVORITE	-	-	-	-	0-0	
	3-0	1-0	-	-	4-0	ROAD DOG	1-2	0-4	2-0	3-1	6-7	
				DALLAS							OKLAHOMA CITY	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	1-0	1-4	2-4	0-3	4-11	HOME FAVORITE	0-1	4-1	3-0	-	7-2	
	-	1-0	-	-	1-0	HOME DOG	0-3	1-1	1-0	-	2-4	
TE	2-1	2-1	1-0	1-0	6-2	ROAD FAVORITE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	
	2-0	1-1	1-1	-	4-2	ROAD DOG	2-1	1-1	4-0	2-2	9-4	
				DENVER							ORLANDO	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	1-0	2-0	3-2	2-4	8-6	HOME FAVORITE	0-1	0-1	3-1	5-4	8-7	
	-	-	-	-	0-0	HOME DOG	-	-	-	-	0-0	
TE	0-7	0-1	2-2	1-0	3-10	ROAD FAVORITE	2-1	1-2	2-3	-	5-6	
	1-1	-	1-0	-	2-1	ROAD DOG	1-0	1-0	-	-	2-0	
				DETROIT							PHILADELPHIA	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	3-2	2-1	-	-	5-3	HOME FAVORITE	0-3	1-2	1-0	0-1	2-6	
	-	0-2	3-1	-	3-3	HOME DOG	0-2	0-2	0-2	-	0-6	
TE	1-0	-	-	-	1-0	ROAD FAVORITE	1-0	0-1	-	-	1-1	
	1-1	1-4	2-1	2-2	6-8	ROAD DOG	1-2	1-0	1-2	5-1	8-5	
				GOLDEN STATE							PHOENIX	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	1-1	1-1	1-1	-	3-3	HOME FAVORITE	1-1	1-0	1-2	4-2	7-5	
	1-0	0-1	2-1	-	3-2	HOME DOG	-	-	-	-	0-0	
TE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	ROAD FAVORITE	3-2	-	0-2	1-0	4-4	
	2-0	0-4	1-2	4-2	7-8	ROAD DOG	1-1	2-0	1-3	1-1	5-5	
				HOUSTON							PORTLAND	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	1-1	2-1	2-0	0-1	5-3	HOME FAVORITE	1-0	1-1	3-3	2-3	7-7	
	3-1	-	-	-	3-1	HOME DOG	1-0	-	-	-	1-0	
TE	2-1	1-1	0-1	-	3-3	ROAD FAVORITE	4-2	-	2-1	-	6-3	
	1-0	2-0	4-4	-	7-4	ROAD DOG	0-1	2-2	0-1	2-0	4-4	
				INDIANA							SACRAMENTO	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	0-3	3-0	0-1	-	3-4	HOME FAVORITE	2-1	3-0	1-0	-	6-1	
	1-2	1-1	1-1	-	3-4	HOME DOG	2-2	1-3	-	-	3-5	
TE	-	1-0	-	-	1-0	ROAD FAVORITE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	
	0-4	1-2	1-2	3-0	5-8	ROAD DOG	-	1-1	2-2	5-1	8-4	
				L.A. CLIPPERS							SAN ANTONIO	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	2-1	0-2	0-1	-	2-4	HOME FAVORITE	0-2	1-1	5-1	2-3	8-7	
	1-3	0-2	1-1	-	2-6	HOME DOG	1-0	-	-	-	1-0	
TE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	ROAD FAVORITE	2-2	2-0	-	-	4-2	
	3-1	2-2	0-3	1-1	6-7	ROAD DOG	0-3	0-1	-	-	0-4	
				L.A. LAKERS							TORONTO	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	-	0-1	2-3	7-6	9-10	HOME FAVORITE	2-0	2-0	2-2	-	6-2	
	-	-	-	-	0-0	HOME DOG	1-3	1-1	-	-	2-4	
TE	0-1	1-1	2-1	1-1	4-4	ROAD FAVORITE	1-1	-	-	-	1-1	
	0-1	0-1	-	-	0-2	ROAD DOG	2-1	2-2	2-3	0-3	6-9	
				MEMPHIS							UTAH	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	0-2	3-0	2-0	-	5-2	HOME FAVORITE	2-0	1-0	5-3	1-2	9-5	
	2-1	1-0	2-1	-	5-2	HOME DOG	2-0	-	-	-	2-0	
TE	0-1	-	-	-	0-1	ROAD FAVORITE	-	0-1	1-1	-	1-2	
	0-2	2-1	2-1	2-4	6-8	ROAD DOG	2-1	1-3	1-0	1-2	5-6	
				MIAMI							WASHINGTON	
	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL		1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL	
TE	1-2	2-2	2-3	0-2	5-9	HOME FAVORITE	1-6	1-0	0-1	-	2-7	
	1-0	1-1	-	-	2-1	HOME DOG	0-1	1-0	1-0	-	2-1	
TE	1-0	-	-	-	1-0	ROAD FAVORITE	0-2	-	-	-	0-2	
	3-1	-	1-2	2-0	6-3	ROAD DOG	2-1	0-1	4-3	0-2	6-7	

COLLEGE BASKETBALL FORECAST

◆◆◆◆◆KEY RELEASES◆◆◆◆◆

OHIO by 16 over Kent State (Saturday, Jan. 9 Day)
SOUTHERN CALIF. by 1 over California (Saturday, Jan. 9)
TULSA by 21 over Smu (Wednesday, Jan. 13)

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

WRIGHT ST. 72 - Butler 64—Although Butler has recently snapped out of its offensive doldrums, will side with veteran, balanced Horizon contender WSU (5 avg. between 9 & 14 ppg), which had defeated the Bulldogs seven straight times at the Nutter Center until LY's 18-pt. setback. *Raiders hitting a torrid 78% from foul line.* 08-BUT -10 64-48, But -2 69-51, BUT -10 62-57 (CT)

DETROIT 78 - Valparaiso 60 —With resurgent UD already matching LY's win total in the Horizon League before New Year's, must buck defenseless Valpo, yielding a whopping 85 ppg away. Titans' 6-9 juco Holman (Indiana transfer; 14 ppg, 10 rpg) spearheads a productive forecourt. And ***TGS*** scouts report UD coach McCallum thrilled with his depth at PG, saying, *"We have three capable guys, and they all bring different things."* 08-VAL -6 64-41, DET -3 56-55 CABLE TV—ESPNU

Washington St. over ARIZONA by 1 to 3—08-ARI -5 66-56, WSU -3 69-53

Saint Mary's over SAN FRANCISCO by 11 to 14 —08-Stm -9' 66-54, STM -17' 79-58

Pacific over CAL POLY SLO by 3 to 5—08-Slo +14' 76-60, Pac -6 66-58

Washington over ARIZONA ST. by 1 to 3—08-Was +5' 84-71, WASH -4 73-70 (OT), Asu P 75-65 (CT-neut.)

UC SANTA BARBARA 62 - UC Davis 61—Reluctant to lay any points with struggling UCSB side that had dropped 6 of last 7 SU thru Jan. 3. Underrated UCD presents matchup problems with big swingmen 6-7 Payne (17.8 ppg) & 6-8 Harden (14.3 ppg), plus legitimate paint presence in 6-10 sr. Calegari (20 points in Jan. 2 win over CS Fullerton). 08-UCD -2' 89-75, UCSB -6 66-64 CABLE TV—ESPNU

SANTA CLARA 57 - San Diego 56—Not prepared to lay points on road with USD bunch that has conspired new and creative ways to blow leads, dropping 8 of last 10 SU since Thanksgiving. Santa Clara adjusting to absence of injured G Foster, and Kerry Keating now starting three frosh. But Broncs capable of success at Leavey Center (where Fresno and UOP have already fallen, and UNLV a near-victim). 08-Usd +1 55-50, Scu +5' 64-62 (OT), Scu P 80-69 (CT-neut.)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

Day Games

GEORGETOWN over Connecticut by 2 to 4—08-Gtwn +6' 74-63 CABLE TV—ESPN

GEORGIA ST. 53 - Northeastern 52—A trip to Atlanta won't bother Northeastern bunch that spent the last half of December far from home (tourneys at Honolulu and Santa Clara). But Rod Barnes' combative Georgia State crew indicating it can be a factor in the competitive CAA, and the sr. G tandem of Dukes & Goldston capable of controlling pace and providing good value with any available points. 08-Neu -4 68-54, Gsu +14 70-68

NORTH CAROLINA ST. 71 - Virginia 70—UVA feeling "good vibes" entering ACC play following 72-63 comeback victory vs. torrid (and ranked) UAB, which had won 10 straight. Cavs have integrated 1st-year HC Tony Bennett's philosophy, as reigning ACC Newcomer of the Year 6-6 G/F Landesberg says, *"We're getting more complete with the system he's telling us, defensive and offensive end."* And with NCS still having TO problems (nearly 15 pg) and HC Sidney Lowe complaining about team's lack of intensity at times, this one goes to the wire. 08-NCS -7' 72-67

LOUISVILLE over St. John's by 11 to 14—08-Lvl -11 60-47

VANDERBILT 80 - Florida 71—Now that Kevin Stallings has finished with his pre-conference experimenting and has settled upon a solid 8-man rotation, expect surging Vandy (won last 4 thru Jan. 3; 7-0 SU at venerable Memorial Gym thru same date) to catch a little updraft. *In particular, the Dores' sharpshooting 6-4 frosh Jenkins (scored career-high 20 vs. Southern Miss Jan. 2) could flourish in 6th-man role.* Meanwhile, recent losses vs. Richmond & South Alabama have Florida fans wondering if the Gators will be returning to the NIT instead of NCAA. 08-Fla -1 94-69, FLA -9 82-68 CABLE TV—ESPN2

AUBURN over South Carolina by 2 to 4—08-USC -6' 68-56

MISSISSIPPI over Mississippi St. by 2 to 4 —08-Miss +9 67-63, Msu +2 82-80

WISCONSIN over Purdue by 1 to 2—08-PUR -6 65-52, Pur +1 64-63

TEXAS 78 - Colorado 64 —Although 2nd-ranked UT has been ripping most everyone in preconference, not so sure Horns destroy disciplined, veteran CU, which effectively the slowed tempo in two solid series efforts LY. Buffs' savvy, seasoned Gs Higgins & Thorne likely to be unflustered by UT's pressure defense, and good-shooting CU (50% FGs, 78% FTs) exhibiting unselfishness and patience in clock-milking half-court sets. *Bzdelik's squad 8-2 vs spread last 10 as DD dog.* 08-Tex -11 85-76 (OT), Tex -14 67-56 (CT-neut.)

Duke over GEORGIA TECH by 1 to 2—08-Duke -12 70-56 CABLE TV—ESPN

DAYTON over Duquesne by 6 to 8—08-Day +1 78-69, DAY -6 74-61, DUQ +2' 77-66 (CT-neut.)

MISSOURI over Kansas St. by 2 to 4—08-KSU +3 88-72, MO -10 94-74 CABLE TV—ESPN2

VA. COMMONWEALTH over Delaware by 17 to 20—08-DEL +5 81-79, VCU -14' 78-67

VILLANOVA over Marquette by 8 to 11—09-Vill -1 74-72; 08-MA -3 79-72, VIL -5 102-84, Vil -2' 76-75 (CT-neut.)

JAMES MADISON 78 - Towson 63—Recent eligibility of 6-10 Texas A&M transfer Denzel Bowles (24.2 ppg in first 4 games) has given JMU the paint presence that can wreak havoc in the CAA. Pat Kennedy on increasingly-shaky ground at Towson as his Tigers (just 3-8 SU thru Jan. 3) continue to struggle. 08-TOW -1' 58-57, JMU -9' 70-59

HARVARD 80 - Dartmouth 51—Rebuilding Dartmouth has already been dealt numerous embarrassing beatings (including recent 22-point loss vs. Quinnipiac). And the Big Green will have little chance keeping pace with Tommy Amaker's percolating Harvard bunch that has hardly resembled an Ivy entry in the early going behind *maestro supreme* sr. G Lin (18.1 ppg; *52% FGs!*) and upgraded an Crimson talent base. 08-Har -7' 63-62, Dart +15' 75-66 (OT)

WIS.-MILWAUKEE over Wis.-Green Bay by 3 to 5—08-Wgb +1 77-75 (OT), WGB -9' 72-68

◆◆◆**OHIO 78 - Kent St. 62—**Ohio's shrewd 2nd-year HC John Groce (former Ohio State assistant) already reaping the benefits from one of the OU's best recruiting classes in recent memory, featuring prized frosh Gs Cooper (12 ppg, 5 rpg, 5 apg, 3 spg) & Kinney (10 ppg). So, will gladly lay small number with Bobcat squad leading the MAC in scoring (78 ppg), offensive boarding (15 pg), and TO margin (+5). Kent State (no DD scorer hitting better than 31% from arc) hasn't shown the perimeter pop of past editions, and Ohio is a noteworthy 20-9 vs. the spread at the Convocation Center last 2+Ys. 08-OHIO -2' 71-65, KSU -6' 64-51

WICHITA ST. 78 - Creighton 66—Following CU's disappointing 60-52 home loss vs. Northern Iowa in its MVC opener, Bluejay mentor Dana Altman moaned, *"Our confidence is a little shaky, and the only thing that will change that is some big wins."* He's not likely to get one at the hostile Koch Center, where ascending Wichita is a perfect 9-0 and is primed to avenge a painful 1-pt. series loss in LY's conference tourney. Shockers displaying outstanding scoring balance & frontline depth, with high-energy sixth man 6-8 F Gabe Blair (8 ppg, 6 rpg) a major asset off the bench. 08-CRE -11 68-56, WSU +4' 74-61, Cre -7' 63-62 (CT-neut.) TV—ESPNU

BALL ST. over Northern Illinois by 4 to 6—08-BSU -5' 60-54, NIU -2 56-55

Central Michigan over TOLEDO by 3 to 5—08-TOL -4 75-61, CMU -7' 59-44

MISSOURI ST. 78 - Bradley 62—Fast-starting 10-1 MSU serving notice it's a legit MVC contender under hard-driving 2nd-year HC Cuonzo Martin, who has stayed with the same starting five the entire season (LY he shuffled the lineup 13 times!). Bears' prolific sr. floor general Fuehrmeyer (MVC's active assist leader) taking advantage of increased firepower TY, while BU misses its top perimeter defender, G Dunson (out for the season). *Double-revenge works.* 08-Brad +3 63-57, BRAD -7' 71-60

MINNESOTA 75 - Ohio St. 58—Hurting Ohio State hasn't covered since losing do-everything star G Evan Turner, going 0-5 vs. spread through Jan 2. That negative trend likely to continue vs. defensively-stingy Minnesota (35% FGs allowed), coming off probable setback at powerful Purdue. Gophers' sweet-stroking 6-4 jr. G Hoffarber (*3 treys pg at 48%)* has been *en fuego,* and UM's deep bench (9 avg. 17+ mpg) will take a toll on the thin OSU, which produced a meager single hoop off the bench in ugly 65-43 setback at Wisconsin in Big Ten opener. 08-MIN -4 68-59, OSU -5 64-58

UTAH over Tcu by 4 to 6—08-Utah -4 62-54, UTAH -14' 68-49, Utah -10 61-58 (CT-neut.)

NEW MEXICO 72 - Unlv 71—Steve Alford's New Mexico not leaving much room for error lately, with numerous close escapes (Dayton, Creighton, Texas A&M, San Diego) in recent weeks. And MWC sources believe the finesse-laden Lobos lack the intimidating physical presence that has knocked UNLV off its pins in the Rebels' only losses vs. Kansas State & UNLV. 08-UNLV -5' 60-58, UNM -5 73-69 (OT)

GEORGE MASON over NC Wilmington by 4 to 6—08-GMU -18' 101-60, Gmu -12' 53-52

William & Mary 60 - DREXEL 52—Surprising W&M *(won last 10 SU thru Jan. 3!)* building a nice NCAA at-large case for itself, already owning road wins at Wake Forest & Maryland and a near-miss at UConn. So a trip to Philly shouldn't bother the Tribe, especially with 6-5 soph swingman McDowell (16.1 ppg; 55% FGs, 46% treys) emerging as another go-to threat alongside savvy sr. G Scheider. Meanwhile, Bruiser Flint still searching for more Drexel scoring options (G Harris is only Dragon scoring DDs at 14.4 ppg). 08-DR -7 62-49, WM +1 48-47

OLD DOMINION over Hofstra by 11 to 14—08-HOF +1' 60-51, Odu -6' 52-51 (CT-neut.)

TEXAS A&M over Nebraska by 6 to 8—08-Tam +3' 57-55

ILLINOIS ST. over Northern Iowa by 2 to 4—08-NIA -3 59-55, Nia +6' 69-67 (2OT), Nia +3 60-57 (CT-OT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN2

WESTERN MICHIGAN over Eastern Michigan by 4 to 6—08-Wmu -3 53-45, WMU -10' 46-38

BUFFALO over Miami-Ohio by 3 to 5—08-Buf +8 76-64, BUF -3 70-67 (OT)

SAINT JOSEPH'S over Fordham by 16 to 19 —08-Stj -12' 71-54

KENTUCKY 93 - Georgia 61—Rest assured John Calipari will remind his talent-laden UK troops how they lost at home vs. 17½-point underdog Georgia last season *(even if that was before frosh stars Wall, Cousins, & Bledsoe, as well as "coach Cal," showed up in Lexington).* Bulldogs have not been within single digits in their first four road games and were ruthlessly exposed by Missouri in humbling 89-61 loss Jan. 2. 08-Ky -8 68-45, Ga +17' 90-85

CLEMSON 76 - Boston College 74—With BC's pass-first jr. PG Paris (7 ppg, 6 apg) doing a terrific job running the flex offense, ready to "take" with highly-experienced Eagle squad that's 2-0 SU & vs. spread as a road dog this year. Strong-boarding BC (+10 rpg) equipped to battle Clemson's relentless 6-7 sr. PF T. Booker on the glass. And the Eagles' DD-scoring "bigs" Trapani and Raji eager for the trip to "Death Valley" after combining for a meager 11 pts. in 10-point home loss LY. 08-Clem -3' 87-77

SOUTH ALABAMA over Arkansas St. by 11 to 14—08-Usa +3 74-67

UCF over Rice by 5 to 7—08-Ucf -2 77-52, Rice +12' 69-66

Richmond 64 - SAINT LOUIS 54—Although Rick Majerus hoping 6-8 Aussie frosh Cody Ellis (recently granted eligibility by NCAA) will provide some much-needed frontline presence, prefer more-refined Richmond bunch that has already survived tougher tests vs. Mizzou, ODU, and Florida. Firepower edge held by dynamic Spider backcourt duo of jr. Anderson (18.1 ppg) & sr. Gonzalvez (13.6 ppg), and HC Mooney won't have to remind his veteran troops how the Bills stole a triple-OT game in last meeting a year ago. 08-Rich +2 70-62, Stl +6 85-72 (3OT)

LSU over Alabama by 2 to 4—08-ALA -3' 65-59, LSU -12' 76-62

CLEVELAND ST. over Ill.-Chicago by 5 to 7—08-CSU -8' 79-69, Csu -2 66-63, Csu -4' 67-64 (CT-neut.)

Michigan St. over IOWA by 11 to 14—08-Msu -6' 71-56, MSU -15' 62-54

STANFORD over Ucla by 7 to 10—08-UCLA -10' 97-63, Ucla -5' 76-71

San Diego St. over WYOMING by 1 to 3—08-WYO +6' 83-79, SDS -17 71-60

Night Games

SETON HALL over Cincinnati by 3 to 5—08-Shu +7 67-63 (OT)

MIAMI-FLORIDA over Wake Forest by 1 to 2—08-MIA +2' 79-52 CABLE TV—ESPNU

BAYLOR over Oklahoma by 4 to 6—08-OKLA -7 95-76, Okla -3' 78-63

CHARLOTTE over St. Bonaventure by 5 to 7—08-STB +1 74-68

UC RIVERSIDE over CS Fullerton by 1 to 3—08-CSF -6' 58-52, UCR -2' 63-60, CSF -2' 59-46 (CT)

Marshall over EAST CAROLINA by 8 to 11—08-MAR -8' 72-64, Mar +1' 76-62

AKRON over Bowling Green by 11 to 14—08-Akr +3 62-52, Bgu +10 50-46, AKR -3 63-55 (CT)

Loyola-Chicago over YOUNGSTOWN ST. by 2 to 4—08-Loy +2 68-57, Ysu +7 60-49

FLORIDA ATLANTIC over La.-Monroe by 7 to 10—08-Ulm +7' 94-88

HOUSTON over Tulsa by 4 to 6—08-TULSA -3' 77-68

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS over Drake by 8 to 11—08-Dra +3 67-60, Siu +6 56-55

LONG BEACH ST. over UC Irvine by 4 to 6—08-Lbs -1 67-63, LBS -6' 75-74

PROVIDENCE over Rutgers by 7 to 10—08-PROV -11' 78-68, Prov -3' 73-66

West Virginia over NOTRE DAME by 3 to 5—08-WVA -9' 79-68, Wva -6 74-62 (CT-neut.) TV—ESPNU

Illinois over INDIANA by 2 to 4—08-ILL -17' 76-45, Ill -10' 65-52

Memphis over SOUTHERN MISS by 1 to 2—08-Mem -12' 72-47, MEM -23 58-42

Uab over TULANE by 5 to 7—08-UAB -15' 81-61, Uab -7' 76-70

OKLAHOMA ST. over Texas Tech by 8 to 11—08-OSU -12 81-80, Osu -1 92-82

Troy over FLORIDA INTL. by 3 to 5—08-TROY -4' 69-62, FIU +3 87-86

NORTH TEXAS over New Orleans by 13 to 16—08-UNO +3 71-65, NTU -10' 79-69

Middle Tenn. St. over ARKANSAS-L.R. by 1 to 3—08-ALR +1 70-65

IDAHO over Louisiana Tech by 7 to 10—08-LTU -1' 74-63, IDA -4 66-58, Ltu +1 70-62 (CT-neut.)

BOISE ST. over New Mexico St. by 7 to 10—08-BSU -1' 87-84, Bsu +6 104-92, Nms +1 80-70 (CT-neut.)

Byu 84 - UTEP 75—Longtime regional observers comparing this BYU team to the best MWC entries in recent memory, especially since the Cougs (51% from floor!) continue to shoot out the lights. Matchup of gunslinging Gs Culpepper (UTEP) & Fredette (BYU) should be interesting, but Coug supporting cast providing a lot more help as HC Dave Rose going 10-deep (with no dropoff) these days. And BYU not likely to relinquish late leads with its dead-eye FT shooting (79%). 08-DNP

COLORADO ST. over Air Force by 4 to 6—08-CSU -5' 67-56, Csu +2 71-66, Afa +2' 71-67 (CT-neut.)

Gonzaga over PORTLAND by 3 to 5—08-GON -22 67-50, Gon -10 93-78 TV—ESPNU

Loyola-Marymount over PEPPERDINE by 3 to 5—08-PEP -7' 59-57, Pep -1 58-43

FRESNO ST. over Hawaii by 13 to 16—08-HI -2 69-43, Hi +4 73-69, Fsu +1 62-58 (CT-neut.)

NEVADA over San Jose St. by 11 to 14—08-Nev -1 80-68, NEV -9' 89-66, NEV -10' 78-69 (CT)

◆◆◆**Southern Cal 53 - CALIFORNIA 52—**Emerging SC a different team since well-traveled PG Gerrity (formerly Pepperdine & Charlotte) gained eligibility in late December, providing the Trojans with the floor leader they lacked in first month. Combined with SC's collection of athletes now having absorbed Kevin O'Neill's varied defensive schemes, Trojans (won last 8 thru Jan. 5 and allowing loop-low 37% FGs) are Pac-10's hottest team. 08-USC -5 73-62, CAL -4' 81-78 (OT), USC -1' 79-75 (CT)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

Day Games

Xavier over GEORGE WASHINGTON by 6 to 8—08-XAV -17' 71-53

Temple over RHODE ISLAND by 4 to 6—08-RIU -3 67-59, TEM -5 68-62

Butler over DETROIT by 5 to 7—08-BUT -19 54-50, But -10' 66-61

INDIANA ST. over Evansville by 4 to 6—08-Eva -2' 65-59, EVA -11 63-57

SYRACUSE over South Florida by 17 to 21—08-Syr -7' 59-54

La Salle over MASSACHUSETTS by 1 to 3—(at Springfield, MA) 08-Las +4 62-54, LAS -5 97-88

MICHIGAN over Northwestern by 3 to 5—08-MICH -5' 68-59, Mich +4' 70-67 (OT)

DENVER 79 - Western Kentucky 70—With Denver running HC Joe Scott's Princeton-style attack to near perfection *(sizzling 53% FGs, 2nd nationally),* fully expect the Pioneers to knock off WKU for the 2nd straight time in friendly Magness Arena, where UD is a solid 21-11 vs. the spread the last 2+Ys. 'Toppers will miss versatile 6-5 F Kerusch (2nd-leading scorer and rebounder) vs. the deep Pioneers (9-man rotation) with their bevy of mid-sized wing players. 08-DEN +3' 78-74

ARIZONA ST. over Washington St. by 1 to 3—08-Ws +11 65-55, WS +1' 51-49 (OT)

WRIGHT ST. over Valparaiso by 16 to 19—08-Wsu -1 64-48, WSU -12 68-58, WSU -10 68-56 (CT)

Kansas over TENNESSEE by 7 to 10—08-KAN -3 92-85 TV—CBS

UC Davis over CAL POLY SLO by 1 to 3—08-Slo +9' 77-75, Ucd -1 75-73

Washington over ARIZONA by 4 to 6—08-ARI +1' 106-97, WASH -8 83-78

Florida State 75 - MARYLAND 73—Maryland harboring some self-doubts to begin ACC play following discouraging 83-77 *home* upset loss vs. William & Mary Dec. 30. Hence, take any available points with defensively-stout FSU (yielding only 35% FGs), which has covered 7 of its past 9 as a conference road dog (1-0 TY with minor upset at Georgia Tech Dec. 20). Terps settled for too many jumpers vs. the Tribe, but scoring inside a difficult task vs. 'Noles shot-altering 7-1-soph C Alabi (nearly 3 bpg), while State's gifted prep A-A 6-5 frosh G Snaer (8 ppg) figures to play an increasing role in ACC play. 08-FSU -4 76-73 (OT)

Pacific over UC SANTA BARBARA by 1 to 3—08-PAC -8 58-36, UCSB +1' 67-57

Night Games

NORTH CAROLINA 83 - Virginia Tech 76—VT on its longest win streak (7) since '95-'96, thanks to the consistently high-level play of explosive 6-3 jr. G Delaney (22 ppg, 4 apg) and 6-7 F Allen (12 ppg, 8 rpg, 2 bpg). So, the quick, hustling Hokies likely to cover their 4th straight vs. UNC squad that might be missing injured defensive ace G Ginyard (check status). Tar Heel mentor Roy Williams still tinkering lineup, and UNC has committed more TOs than its opponents after the Heels' first 12 games. VT's crafty HC Greenberg has 7 full prep days. 08-Unc -9' 86-78, Unc -11' 79-76 (CT-neut.)

SAN FRANCISCO over San Diego by 1 to 3—08-Usd -1' 65-50, USD -10 73-63

Saint Mary's over SANTA CLARA by 3 to 5—08-STM -13' 63-62, SCU +4' 70-52

OREGON over Oregon St. by 1 to 3 —08-OSU -4 57-54, ORE -1' 79-69

MONDAY, JANUARY 11

Villanova 76 - LOUISVILLE 70—With sr. G Reggie Redding recently regaining eligibility, 'Nova well prepared to deal with the rigors of the Big East road now that fellow sr. G Scottie Reynolds has his familiar backcourt mate in lineup. Wildcats' balance (five scoring DDs, with a sixth at 9.3 ppg) should help Jay Wright gain some revenge vs. Rick Pitino's rebuilt Louisville after LY's Cards swept a pair. 08-Lvl +2 61-60, Lvl -4' 69-55 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN

OKLAHOMA over Oklahoma St. by 3 to 5—08-Okla -2' 89-81, OKLA -9' 82-78, Osu +4' 71-70 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN

UTAH ST. over Hawaii by 13 to 16—08-Usu -8' 67-51, USU -15 82-62

BOISE ST. over Louisiana Tech by 3 to 5—08-BSU -9 58-53, LTU -3' 76-62

FRESNO ST. over San Jose St. by 4 to 6—08-Sjs +4' 71-68 (OT), SJS -6 85-79

IDAHO over New Mexico St. by 11 to 14—08-NMS -8 74-71, IDA -2 67-57

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12

KANSAS ST. over Texas A&M by 9 to 12—08-Ksu +3' 65-60 CABLE TV—ESPN2

FLORIDA ST. over North Carolina St. by 6 to 8—08-Fsu +4 78-65

MIAMI-OHIO over Kent St. by 4 to 6—08-Mia +3 66-55, MIA -5' 68-63

PURDUE over Ohio St. by 14 to 17—08-OSU +2 80-72 (OT), PUR -9' 75-50, Pur -6 65-61 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN

Va. Commonwealth over HOFSTRA by 5 to 7—08-VCU -13' 68-60, Vcu -5' 66-62 CABLE TV—ESPNU

TCU over Wyoming by 4 to 6—08-TCU -8' 79-78 (OT), WYO -4' 61-56

Missouri St. over DRAKE by 4 to 6—08-DRA -7 67-49, MSU -1' 65-44

WAKE FOREST over Maryland by 5 to 7—08-Wfu -2 65-63, Mary +6' 75-64 (CT-neut.)

COLORADO over Baylor by 1 to 2—08-BAY -14 75-57

ILLINOIS 73 - Penn St. 71—With PSU HC DeChellis welcoming increased offensive balance that took pressure off do-everything PG Battle (19 ppg, 6 rpg, 4 apg) in the Lions' combative 75-70 loss at Minnesota Dec. 29, points worth considering vs. Illinois, which is just 17-23 as home chalk since '06-'07. PSU's prized 6-6 frosh F B. Edwards (missed first 4 games with sprained knee) now showing he can create his own shot, and Nittany Lions have covered <u>six</u> straight as an underdog. *Double-revenge doesn't work.* 08-Psu +9' 38-33, PSU +1 64-63

NORTHERN IOWA 78 - Bradley 59—With all pistons firing for a veteran UNI squad riding 10-game win streak thru Jan. 2, expect the Panthers to dispatch a BU, which squandered a 13-pt. halftime lead by giving up <u>50</u> 2nd-H pts. in disheartening 86-81 home loss vs. Southern Illinois on New Year's Day. UNI's ferocious half-court defense (just 61 ppg allowed) is forcing opponents' into prolonged scoring droughts (Evansville was outscored <u>38-13</u> in 2nd H on Jan. 1!), while hard-nosed 6-2 jr. PG Ahelegbe (13 ppg, 3 apg) distributing ball to a couple post players or wings on other end. 08-UNI -6' 66-61, Uni +2 61-58, Uni -1' 76-62 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPNU

Kentucky over FLORIDA by 2 to 4—08-KY -4' 68-65, FLA -5' 60-53 TV—ESPN

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

MICHIGAN ST. over Minnesota by 6 to 8—08-Msu -1 70-58, MSU -8' 76-47, Msu -7 64-56 (CT-neut.)

CONNECTICUT over Pittsburgh by 3 to 5—08-Pit +3 76-68, PIT -4 70-60 TV-ESPN2

West Virginia over SOUTH FLORIDA by 11 to 14—08-WV -17' 62-59, Wv -11 64-50

VIRGINIA TECH over Miami-Florida by 4 to 6—08-Tech +7 88-83 (OT), Tech +3 65-47 (CT-neut.)

DUKE over Boston College by 12 to 15—08-BC +7' 80-74, Duke -10' 66-65 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN

NORTHEASTERN over Delaware by 20 to 24—08-Neu -3' 67-47, NEU -14 73-59

Drexel over TOWSON by 1 to 3—08-Dre -3' 60-53, DRE -10 78-65, Tow +7 73-62 (CT-neut.)

ST. JOHN'S over Cincinnati by 1 to 2—08-Cin +1 71-60, CIN -8' 71-61 TV—ESPNU

MEMPHIS over East Carolina by 19 to 22—08-Mem -15' 85-64

Old Dominion over NC WILMINGTON by 7 to 10—08-OD -20 87-57, Od -10' 84-65

Wichita St. over INDIANA ST. by 1 to 3—08-Wsu -1' 64-58, WSU -9 76-70

EASTERN MICHIGAN over Toledo by 5 to 7—08-TOL -3' 69-57, EMU -2' 58-49

OHIO over Akron by 1 to 2—08-OHIO -3' 70-65 (OT), AKR -8' 60-51

CENTRAL MICHIGAN over Ball St. by 8 to 11—08-CMU -3 71-65, BSU -3 53-44, Bsu +2 64-61 (CT-OT-neut.)

DUQUESNE 72 - Saint Louis 71—With overvalued Duquesne (1-5-1 vs. spread thru Jan. 5) having issues with foul shooting & TOs, "take" with young but rapidly-maturing SLU squad bolstered by recent eligibility of sharp-shooting Aussie import 6-8 Ellis, who got a rust-shaking game under his belt (he became available in previous contest vs. Richmond). A-10 scouts tell us 5-10 soph G Mitchell has become a defensive ace and vocal leader, so look for this one to go to wire, like both meetings LY. 08-STL -1' 78-74 (OT), DUQ -8 70-68

GEORGE MASON over Georgia St. by 1 to 3—08-GMU -13 58-52

Georgia Tech over VIRGINIA by 1 to 2—08-Va +7' 88-84 (OT)

LA SALLE over George Washington by 4 to 6—08-LAS -7' 76-66, Las +1' 68-57

RICHMOND over Massachusetts by 13 to 16—08-MASS -4' 80-71

RHODE ISLAND over Saint Joseph's by 10 to 13—08-STJ -1 92-86 (3OT)

XAVIER over Charlotte by 9 to 12—08-XAV -16 69-47, CHA +6 65-60

Syracuse over RUTGERS by 9 to 12—08-Syr -7 82-66, SYR -15 70-40

Western Michigan over NORTHERN ILLINOIS by 3 to 5—08-WMU -11 71-52, NIU +1 78-63

UCF over Marshall by 1 to 2—08-UCF -6' 87-69, MAR -3' 67-62

ILLINOIS ST. over Evansville by 10 to 13—09-Check 1/6 result; 08-ISU -7' 80-50, Isu P 70-68, Isu -4' 78-68 (CT-neut.)

Byu over AIR FORCE by 9 to 12—08-Byu -11' 71-50, BYU -21' 54-49, Byu -16' 80-69 (CT-neut.)

Temple over PENN by 25 to 29—08-Tem -10 78-53

Texas over IOWA ST. by 5 to 7—08-TEX -16 75-67

SOUTH CAROLINA over Lsu by 2 to 4—08-LSU -3' 85-68

Mississippi over GEORGIA by 4 to 6—08-MISS -10 69-47

◆◆◆**Tulsa 80 - SMU 59—**SMU failing to make progress under beleaguered 4th-year HC Matt Doherty, as the money-burning Mustangs (*0-6 vs. spread before UTEP Jan. 9)* still seeking their first victory vs. a Div.-I foe. SMU's ongoing shooting woes continue vs. Hurricane quintet leading the C-USA in blocked shots. Tulsa in bad mood if coming off a loss at Houston. But regardless of Cougar result for UT, Ponies once again have no answer for Hurricane's formidable inside-outside duo of 6-11 C Jordan & G Uzoh. 08-TLS -16 64-55, Tls -6' 74-64

TULANE over Rice by 3 to 5 —08-TUL -6' 65-54, Tul -1 61-59

HOUSTON over Utep by 2 to 4—08-Hou +4 94-86, Utep +5' 62-55, Hou -1' 89-85 (CT-OT-neut.)

NORTHWESTERN 72 - Wisconsin 64—With chemistry-rich NU (*first national ranking since 1969!)* off to its best start since 1982-83, believe Wildcats continue to be the the real deal vs. Wisconsin squad that failed in its only true visitor test to date (at Wisconsin-Green Bay). NU's clever 5-10 sr. PG "Juice" Thompson (17 ppg, 4 apg) is the consummate disher/scorer, while blossoming 6-8 soph F Shurma (16 ppg, 7 rpg) can hold his own with Badgers' primary "big" 6-10 F Leuer. Note UW just 3-6 SU on Big Ten trail LY. 08-WIS -7 74-45, NWU +1 66-63

Kansas over NEBRASKA by 7 to 9—08-Kan -4' 68-62, KAN -12 70-53 TV—ESPN2

Southern Illinois over CREIGHTON by 2 to 4—08-CR -10 73-72 (OT), Cre -3 82-60

TEXAS TECH over Missouri by 1 to 2—08-MO -18 97-86, Mo -12 81-60 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPNU

CLEMSON over North Carolina by 1 to 2—08-UNC -13 94-70 CABLE TV—ESPN

ALABAMA over Vanderbilt by 1 to 2—08-VAN -7' 79-74, Ala +3 82-75 (CT-neut.)

Dayton over FORDHAM by 17 to 20 (at Madison Sq. Gdn.)—08-DAY -21 72-71

NEW MEXICO over Utah by 11 to 14—08-UTAH -5' 69-68, UNM -4' 77-71

UNLV over San Diego St. by 3 to 5—08-Sds +6 68-66 (OT), SDS -4 57-46, Sds +3' 71-57 (CT)

NEVADA 81 - Utah St. 68—Nevada seeking revenge versus USU bunch that KO'd Wolf Pack in the finale of LY's WAC Tourney in Reno. But this year's Aggies minus the elements on the frontline to cope with Nevada's versatile 6-9 soph Babbitt (19.8 ppg), and USU might be shorthanded if PF Bendall (recent minor heart surgery) still on the shelf. WAC sources expect the Pack to take off now that 1st-year HC Carter has given go-go jr. G Armon Johnson the green light to push the pace. 08-USU -8' 72-61, NEV +1 84-71, Usu +1 72-62 (CT) CABLE TV—ESPN2

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

GEORGETOWN over Seton Hall by 4 to 6—08-SHU +8' 65-60 CABLE TV—ESPN

WILLIAM & MARY over James Madison by 6 to 8—08-Jmu +2 74-65, JMU -8 76-67, Jmu -3 70-48 (CT-neut.)

Buffalo 73 - BOWLING GREEN 68—Well-organized, sr.-laden Buffalo (7 srs. on roster) has impressively compiled a 4-1 preconference road mark (3-1 vs. spread). So, good chance the Bulls capture their MAC road opener vs. a BG squad that has *nobody* as explosive as UB's dynamic 6-2 G Pierce (17 ppg). Bulls also own the deeper bench (reserves scoring 26 ppg), and late-blooming sr. PG Boyer has become a nifty distributor (5 apg; only 1.6 LY). *Cross-sport payback and double revenge works.* 08-BGU -3' 86-82, Bgu +9 59-48

BUTLER 82 - Cleveland St. 59—With CSU desperately seeking an offensive identity following departure of prime-time G tandem of C. Jackson & Bullock (combined 26 ppg & 13 rpg), not afraid to lay hefty number with pumped-up Butler, out to avenge upset loss in Horizon Tourney following a reg-season series sweep (albeit, barely). Bulldogs, who regained their offensive rhythm in decisive 82-67 romp vs. Wisconsin-Milwaukee Jan. 2, will spend lots of time at the charity stripe vs. Viking squad fouling at an alarming rate (avg. 24 pg!). 08-But +2' 50-48, BUT -7 58-56, Csu +6 57-54 (CT)

TENNESSEE over Auburn by 12 to 15—08-AUB +3' 78-77, Ten -3' 94-85 (CT-neut.)

MISSISSIPPI ST. over Arkansas by 13 to 16—08-Msu +6 70-56, MSU -7' 86-77 CABLE TV—ESPNU

NEW ORLEANS over Arkansas-L.R. by 1 to 3—08-Alr -1' 62-46, ALR -10' 80-54

MIDDLE TENN. ST. over Florida Intl. by 13 to 16—08-MTS -14' 68-63, Mts -3' 71-66

LA.-LAFAYETTE over Denver by 1 to 3—08-ULL -7' 63-62 (2OT), DEN -6 55-51

TROY over North Texas by 1 to 3—08-Troy +6' 77-69

South Alabama over LA.-MONROE by 1 to 3—08-Usa -5' 90-57, USA -12' 67-60

VALPARAISO over Youngstown St. by 4 to 6—08-Val +1' 68-57, VAL -5' 67-59

WIS.-MILWAUKEE over Detroit by 1 to 3—08-UWM -4 71-62, Uwm -2 68-63

WIS.-GREEN BAY over Wright St. by 1 to 3—08-WGB -10 57-46, WSU -2' 65-64

WESTERN KENTUCKY over Florida Atlantic by 14 to 17—08-Wky -3 78-57, WKY -14' 87-67

OREGON over Arizona St. by 4 to 6—08-ASU -16 76-58, Asu -8' 66-57

LOUISIANA TECH over Fresno St. by 7 to 10—08-FSU -7' 63-46, LTU -3' 55-42

DEPAUL over Providence by 1 to 2—08-PROV -9 62-54, Prov -9' 83-74 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN2

MICHIGAN over Indiana by 12 to 15—08-Mich -8 72-66 (OT) CABLE TV—ESPN

UC DAVIS over UC Irvine by 4 to 6—08-Ucd +1' 88-85, UCD -5' 85-76, Ucd +2 69-68 (CT)

CS NORTHRIDGE over UC Riverside by 3 to 5—08-Csn +1 64-56, CSN -8' 77-64

LONG BEACH ST. over UC Santa Barbara by 8 to 11—08-LBS -4 76-64, UCSB -4 76-75

CS FULLERTON over Cal Poly SLO by 6 to 8—08-Csf -2' 86-82, Slo +9' 75-72

LOYOLA-MARYMOUNT over San Francisco by 4 to 6—08-USF -13' 73-53, LOY +5 61-57

OREGON ST. over Arizona by 4 to 6—08-ARI -15' 64-47, Ari -4 56-53

California over WASHINGTON ST. by 1 to 3—08-Cal +2' 57-50, CAL -6 71-63

SAN JOSE ST. over Boise St. by 4 to 6—08-BSU -3 84-64, Bsu +4' 89-83

WASHINGTON over Stanford by 13 to 16—08-WASH -7 84-83, Wash +1 75-68, Wash -5' 85-73 (CT-neut.)

Portland over SAN DIEGO by 1 to 3—08-PORT -2' 69-55, USD -3' 66-60

Santa Clara over PEPPERDINE by 1 to 2—08-SCU -16 64-52, PEP +8' 66-60 CABLE TV—ESPNU

Gonzaga 77 - SAINT MARY'S 72—McKeon Pavilion and all of Moraga will be hopping as usual for visit by Gonzaga, which SMC fans believe might finally be vulnerable after graduation losses (G Pargo, C Heytvelt & F Downs) and early defections (F Daye) from LY's Sweet 16 team. But Mark Few has filled in the gaps, as usual, as the arrival of 6-8 frosh swingman Harris (13.9 ppg) & emergence of 7-0 soph C Sacre (12.3 ppg) have provided nice complements to holdovers Bouldin & Gray. Gaels could feel the absence of defensive stopper sr. Hunter (out for season with knee injury). 08-GON -9 69-62, Gon -4' 72-70, Gon -7 83-58 (CT-neut.) CABLE TV—ESPN2

COLLEGE F/B RATINGS AND POINTSPREAD RECORDS

HOW TO USE THE RATINGS: All teams measured from the TOP RATING of zero. HFV - Home Field Value. A team with a rating of 3 would be a 6-point favorite on a neutral field over a team rated 9. Deduct allotted points for HFV from rating of Home Team. SUR - 2009 Straight-up Won-Loss Record vs. all Opponents. PSR - 2009 Won-Loss Record vs. Pointspread. CR - Current 2009 Power Rating. NR - No Rating. The consensus line is used to compute won-lost pointspread records. The consensus line is used to compute won-lost pointspread records. Teams with bold + or - have had their ratings moved 2 (NFL) or 3 (College) points for the better (+) or worse (-) since last week. The consensus Las Vegas line is used to compute won-lost spread records.

HFV	TEAM	SUR	PSR	R
3	**Air Force+**	8-5	7-5	**8**
2	Alabama	13-0	8-4	-11
4	**Arizona-**	8-5	6-5	**7**
4	Arkansas	8-5	7-5	2
7	Boise St.	13-0	8-4	-7
4	C. Michigan	11-2	9-3	7
3	**Cincinnati-**	12-1	5-7	**4**
3	Clemson	9-5	8-5	3
4	**Connecticut+**	8-5	10-2	**8**
4	E. Carolina	9-5	7-6	7
4	Florida	13-1	7-6	-11
2	Florida St.	7-6	4-8	7
2	Ga. Tech	11-2	8-4	0
4	Houston	10-4	8-5	8
3	Iowa	10-2	8-3	2
3	**Miami-Fla.-**	9-4	6-6	**3**
2	Michigan St.	6-7	5-7	11
4	Mississippi	9-4	6-5	2
3	Missouri	8-5	4-8	9
2	**Navy+**	10-4	7-6	**10**

HFV	TEAM	SUR	PSR	R
5	Nebraska	10-4	9-5	1
1	**Northern Ill.-**	7-6	5-7	**19**
2	N'western	8-5	6-6	10
4	Ohio State	11-2	9-4	-4
5	Oregon	10-3	7-6	-3
2	Penn State	11-2	5-6	-3
4	So. Carolina	7-6	7-5	8
3	So. Florida	8-5	5-5	9
6	TCU	12-0	8-3	-9
3	Tennessee	7-6	7-6	6
4	Texas	13-0	5-7	-7
4	Texas A&M	6-7	6-6	14
5	Tex. Tech	9-4	7-5	4
5	Troy	9-3	7-4	10
5	UCF	8-5	9-3	13
4	Utah	10-3	6-7	5
4	Va. Tech	10-3	8-5	-2
3	W. Virginia	9-4	5-7	7
4	**Wisconsin+**	10-3	6-6	**3**

2009-2010 COLLEGE HOOP RATINGS

KEY: HCV—Home Court Value. CR—Current Rating. ALL TEAMS MEASURED FROM A TOP RATING OF ZERO. Team with an R of 4 would be a 7-point favorite over team with an 11 R on a neutral floor. Give allotted points for HCV to home team. Teams with a bold + or - have had their ratings moved 3 points or more for the better (+) or worse (-) since last week. Ratings through Saturday, January 2, 2010.

HCV	TEAM	CR
4	Air Force	20
5	Akron	12
5	Alabama	11
5	Arizona	13
6	Arizona State	10
5	Arkansas	17
5	Ark.-Little Rock	21
5	Arkansas State	20
4	Auburn	14
4	Ball State	22
5	Baylor	7
6	Boise State	16
4	Boston College	8
5	Bowl. Green	18
4	Bradley	14
3	Brown	28
4	Buffalo	15
5	Butler	5
7	**BYU+**	**4**
6	California	4
4	Cal Poly SLO	24
4	CS Fullerton	20
4	CS Northridge	17
5	Cent. Mich.	18
5	Charlotte	13
6	Cincinnati	7
6	Clemson	6
5	Cleveland St.	15
5	Colorado	12
5	Colorado St.	19
4	Columbia	26
5	Connecticut	4
4	Cornell	10
5	Creighton	11
4	Dartmouth	31
4	**Dayton-**	**9**
4	Delaware	22
5	Denver	16
3	DePaul	18
5	**Detroit+**	**13**
5	Drake	18
4	Drexel	16
6	Duke	-1
5	Duquesne	14
4	East Carolina	22
5	E. Michigan	20
5	Evansville	18
6	Florida	6
4	Florida Atlantic	22
4	Florida Intl.	26
5	Florida State	8
4	Fordham	29
4	Fresno State	16
5	George Mason	14
5	George Wash.	17
4	Georgetown	4
5	Georgia	16
4	Georgia State	19
5	Georgia Tech	6
5	Gonzaga	5
5	Harvard	14
5	Hawaii	24
3	Hofstra	17
5	Houston	9
6	Idaho	13
6	Illinois	8
4	Ill.-Chicago	21
6	Illinois State	12
5	Indiana	18
5	Indiana State	15
5	Iowa	18
6	Iowa State	10
4	James Madison	20
5	Kansas	-5
6	Kansas State	3
4	Kent State	15
6	Kentucky	-2
5	La Salle	15
4	Long Beach St.	15
4	La.-Lafayette	18
5	La.-Monroe	24
6	Louisiana Tech	12
5	Louisville	4
4	Loyola-Chi.	18
4	Loy.-M'mount	20
4	LSU-	14
6	Marquette	9
6	Marshall	11
4	Maryland	8
4	Massachusetts	20
5	Memphis	4
6	Miami-Florida	10
5	Miami-Ohio	14
5	Michigan	10
5	Michigan State	-1
5	M. Tenn. St.	17
6	Minnesota	4
5	Mississippi	5
5	Mississippi St.	3
6	Missouri	5
5	Missouri State	10
6	Nebraska	15
6	Nevada	10
6	New Mexico	7
4	New Mex. St.	22
4	New Orleans	22
5	North Carolina	-1
4	N. Carolina St.	11
4	NC Wilmington	18
5	North Texas	16
4	Northeastern	13
5	Northern Illinois	24
6	Northern Iowa	8
4	Northwestern	10
5	Notre Dame	9
5	Ohio	14
6	**Ohio State-**	**11**
6	Oklahoma	10
6	Oklahoma State	7
6	Old Dominion	9
5	**Oregon+**	**11**
5	Oregon State	12
5	Pacific	15
3	**Penn-**	**30**
4	Penn State	13
4	Pepperdine	24
5	**Pittsburgh+**	**6**
6	Portland	11
4	Princeton	22
4	Providence	11
5	Purdue	-1
4	Rhode Island	9
5	Rice	19
4	Richmond	7
5	Rutgers	19
6	St. Bonaventure	14
5	St. John's	12
4	Saint Joseph's	20
4	Saint Louis	17
5	Saint Mary's	9
4	San Diego	14
5	San Diego St.	8
4	San Francisco	25
5	San Jose State	16
4	Santa Clara	23
5	Seton Hall	8
3	SMU	23
5	South Alabama	18
5	**South Carolina-**	**13**
5	South Florida	15
5	Southern Cal	10
5	Southern Illinois	13
5	Southern Miss	13
5	Stanford	15
4	Syracuse	-2
5	TCU	16
4	Temple	5
5	**Tennessee-**	**4**
6	Texas	-4
6	Texas A&M	11
6	Texas Tech	10
5	Toledo	28
4	Towson	24
6	Troy	16
4	Tulane	18
6	Tulsa	8
6	UAB	7
5	UC Davis	23
5	UCF	16
4	UC Irvine	23
5	UCLA	15
6	UC Riverside	19
4	UC Santa Barb.	19
6	UNLV	9
5	Utah	14
6	Utah State	9
5	UTEP	6
5	Valparaiso	22
6	Vanderbilt	7
5	Villanova	0
5	Virginia	12
5	Va. Common.	13
4	Virginia Tech	8
5	Wake Forest	6
5	Washington	8
5	Washington St.	11
6	West Virginia	-1
6	W. Kentucky	14
5	W. Michigan	18
6	Wichita State	8
5	William & Mary	13
6	Wisconsin	4
5	Wis.-Green Bay	15
6	Wis.-Milwaukee	15
6	**Wright State+**	**8**
4	Wyoming	18
4	Xavier	4
4	Yale	23
4	Youngstown St.	22

LAST WEEK'S STATS

KEY: HOME TEAM in **BOLD CAPS**. **Winner's stats listed first**. FD-First Downs. YR-Yards rushing, number of rushing attempts/ number of rushing yards. YP-Yards gained passing, number of passes completed/passes attempted/interceptions/yards passing. F/FL-Fumbles/Fumbles Lost.

Statistics for games of December 27, 2009-January 2, 2010**.**

Winner's Stats listed first

				FD	YR	YR	YP	YP	F/FL	F/FL
Air Force	47	Houston	20	27-18	72/402	20/109	10/14/0/161	24/41/6/222	1/1	0/0
ARKANSAS	**20**	E. Carolina	17 (OT)	10-24	20/81	55/184	15/36/0/202	17/33/2/209	3/1	2/1
Auburn	38	N'western	35 (OT)	18-33	39/190	37/93	20/33/2/235	47/78/5/532	3/2	1/1
Clemson	21	Kentucky	13	14-19	33/180	42/167	8/14/0/141	15/26/0/110	2/0	1/1
Connecticut	20	S. Carolina	7	17-12	48/146	26/76	9/22/0/107	16/38/1/129	1/1	1/1
Florida	51	Cincinnati	24	28-19	34/177	23/76	31/36/0/482	27/45/0/170	0/0	1/0
FLORIDA ST.	**33**	West Virginia	21	24-18	46/226	37/221	17/24/0/189	9/19/1/107	0/0	3/0
Georgia	44	Texas A&M	20	17-26	40/208	33/109	15/28/1/158	29/59/2/362	0/0	3/0
IDAHO	**43**	Bowling Green	42	19-27	38/212	24/150	15/28/0/240	34/48/1/388	0/0	1/0
Iowa St.	14	Minnesota	13	22-21	44/212	32/122	19/26/2/216	20/35/1/312	2/2	1/1
Mississippi	21	Oklahoma St.	7	20-9	50/193	28/140	15/30/4/171	14/32/4/119	2/1	5/3
Navy	35	Missouri	13	28-17	67/385	26/65	9/14/0/130	15/31/2/291	3/2	1/1
Nebraska	33	Arizona	0	19-6	48/223	20/63	13/25/0/173	10/31/1/46	1/0	0/0
Ohio State	26	Oregon	17	26-12	51/153	33/179	23/38/1/266	9/20/1/81	1/0	1/1
Oklahoma	31	Stanford	27	28-13	38/59	39/145	30/51/1/418	8/19/2/117	2/1	2/0
Penn State	19	Lsu	17	21-9	40/124	25/41	18/35/0/216	13/24/1/202	4/0	2/2
South Florida	27	Northern Illinois	3	19-11	40/189	31/108	14/22/0/217	12/26/1/130	3/1	2/1
Texas Tech	41	Michigan St.	31	31-13	31/119	32/148	38/54/1/460	16/30/2/248	2/1	1/0
Ucla	30	Temple	21	13-16	28/93	42/123	16/31/1/221	13/23/2/159	0/0	0/0
Wisconsin	20	**MIAMI-FLA.**	**14**	17-14	42/170	23/61	19/26/1/260	16/30/0/188	2/2	2/1
Virginia Tech	37	Tennessee	14	19-14	48/229	31/ 5	10/17/1/209	15/26/1/235	0/0	2/1

NFL Statistics for games of December 27, 2009-January 3, 2010

Atlanta	20	**TAMPA BAY**	**10**	24-13	37/183	22/38	23/35/2/214	16/32/2/168	2/1	1/0
Baltimore	21	**OAKLAND**	**13**	16-20	35/240	20/51	11/19/0/90	27/39/1/274	0/0	1/1
BUFFALO	**30**	Indianapolis	7	19-11	42/248	16/25	16/25/0/155	18/35/2/132	1/0	1/1
CAROLINA	**23**	New Orleans	10	15-14	37/178	32/111	14/23/0/149	15/29/1/102	0/0	2/2
CHICAGO	**36**	Minnesota	30 (OT)	19-26	28/105	33/123	20/35/1/258	26/40/0/300	0/0	2/2
Chicago	37	**DETROIT**	**23**	22-18	28/150	25/100	22/36/0/268	23/34/1/249	1/0	2/1
CLEVELAND	**23**	Jacksonville	17	18-18	49/214	24/131	7/11/1/86	22/39/1/197	1/0	2/0
Dallas	17	**WASHINGTON**	**0**	22-15	30/108	18/43	25/38/1/285	24/39/1/175	0/0	3/0
DALLAS	**24**	Philadelphia	0	21-10	32/179	10/37	24/34/1/295	20/36/0/191	0/0	2/1
Green Bay	33	**ARIZONA**	**7**	24-13	34/109	14/48	22/29/1/236	19/31/3/139	0/0	1/0
HOUSTON	**34**	New England	27	29-21	27/144	19/74	24/39/1/295	25/38/1/243	2/0	1/1
Kansas City	44	**DENVER**	**24**	22-30	35/317	22/84	13/25/2/207	32/56/3/428	1/0	0/0
MINNESOTA	**44**	Ny Giants	7	28-11	32/129	12/35	29/37/0/358	20/28/1/146	4/0	2/1
Pittsburgh	30	**MIAMI**	**24**	22-20	36/202	25/99	18/28/1/201	20/30/3/204	2/1	1/0
SAN DIEGO	**23**	Washington	20	19-18	17/50	22/64	28/45/1/314	28/42/0/275	0/0	2/0
San Francisco	28	**ST. LOUIS**	**6**	16-6	32/125	26/87	17/28/0/204	11/28/0/22	1/0	0/0
Tennessee	17	**SEATTLE**	**13**	19-16	39/133	26/140	17/28/1/171	16/31/1/169	1/1	1/0

NBA SPREAD CATEGORY ANALYSIS TOTALS
from page 7

	1-3'	4-6	6'-9	9'+	TOTAL
HOME FAVORITE	30-37	41-27	44-40	36-50	151-154
HOME DOG	31-23	14-18	16-15	4-6	65-62
ROAD FAVORITE	23-31	18-14	15-16	6-4	62-65
ROAD DOG	37-30	27-41	40-44	50-36	154-151

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