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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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<http://twitter.com/nfl345>**PLAYOFF RACES HEAT UP AS NFL SEASON ENTERS DECEMBER**

As the calendar turns to December, the NFL playoff picture is starting to take shape. With five weeks remaining in the regular season, there are currently 25 teams either in or within two games of a playoff spot.

Over the past five seasons, the Seattle Seahawks (19-5, .792) own the best record in the final month, which also includes regular-season games played in January. The Pittsburgh Steelers (18-5, .783) have the best mark in the AFC.

TEAM	WINS	LOSSES	PCT.
Seattle Seahawks	19	5	.792
Green Bay Packers	18	5	.783
Pittsburgh Steelers	18	5	.783
Carolina Panthers	18	6	.750
New England Patriots	18	6	.750

“The games in December are the most important regular-season games by far,” says NFL Network analyst and former NFL head coach **STEVE MARIUCCI**. “It’s extremely important to win in December and to make a run at the playoffs.”

As the NFL season enters the final month, four teams are racing towards the finish line with winning streaks of at least six games – Philadelphia (nine), Minnesota (seven), New England (seven) and Pittsburgh (six).

The Eagles, who own the NFL’s best record, are 10-1 for the fourth time (1949, 1980 and 2004) in franchise history. In the Super Bowl era, 38 teams have previously started 10-1 and all 38 made the playoffs, 17 reached the Super Bowl (44.7 percent) and eight won the Super Bowl (21.1 percent). Philadelphia can clinch the NFC East division title this week with either a Dallas loss on Thursday night or an Eagles win on Sunday night against Seattle.

Week 13 begins on Thursday night when Dallas hosts Washington (8:25 PM ET, NBC/NFLN/Amazon Prime) in a key NFC East showdown. Both teams are 5-6 and fighting to stay in the mix for a playoff berth. The week concludes with a pair of primetime contests with playoff implications. On Sunday night (8:30 PM ET, NBC), the Seahawks (7-4) will host the Eagles (10-1) in a game featuring two of the NFC’s top teams. On Monday night (8:30 PM ET, ESPN), the Steelers (9-2) will visit Cincinnati (5-6) in an important AFC North matchup. Some of the key contests in Week 13:

MINNESOTA VIKINGS (9-2) at ATLANTA FALCONS (7-4) (Sunday, FOX, 1:00 PM ET)

- The Vikings have won seven consecutive games, including last week’s 30-23 victory at Detroit on Thanksgiving. Minnesota has the NFC’s second-best record at 9-2 and leads the NFC North by three games.
- Vikings quarterback **CASE KEENUM** posted a 114 passer rating in November, the third-highest mark in the league during the month. Keenum has recorded a 100+ passer rating in each of his past three games. Minnesota wide receiver **ADAM THIELEN** has 70 catches for 1,005 yards this season and joined **RANDY MOSS** (2003) as the only Vikings to have at least 70 receptions and 1,000 receiving yards in the team’s first 11 games of a season.
- Atlanta has won three consecutive games – including last week’s 34-20 victory over Tampa Bay – and is averaging 31.7 points per game during that span.
- Falcons wide receiver **JULIO JONES** had 12 catches for 253 yards and two touchdowns in the win over Tampa Bay. Jones has three career games with at least 250 receiving yards and is the only player in NFL history to have multiple 250+ yard receiving games. Jones caught a 51-yard touchdown pass from wide receiver **MOHAMED SANU** against the Buccaneers. Sanu, who also threw a 73-yard touchdown pass with Cincinnati in 2012, is the first wide receiver since the 1970 merger to throw multiple career 50+ yard touchdown passes. He is also the first non-quarterback to throw two career 50+ yard touchdown passes since Pro Football Hall of Fame running back **WALTER PAYTON** (1979, 1983).

LOS ANGELES RAMS (8-3) at ARIZONA CARDINALS (5-6) (Sunday, FOX, 4:25 PM ET)

- The Rams have won five of their past six games, including last week's 26-20 victory over New Orleans, and lead the NFC West with an 8-3 record. Los Angeles is averaging 29.9 points per game, the second-best mark in the NFL.
- Rams running back **TODD GURLEY** leads the NFL with 11 touchdowns and ranks second with 1,344 scrimmage yards. He is the fourth player in franchise history to have at least 1,300 scrimmage yards and 10 touchdowns in the team's first 11 games of a season, joining Pro Football Hall of Famers **ELROY "CRAZYLEGS" HIRSCH** (1951), **ERIC DICKERSON** (1983) and **MARSHALL FAULK** (2000) as the only Rams to accomplish the feat.
- Arizona remains in the hunt for a playoff berth after last week's 27-24 win over Jacksonville. Cardinals kicker **PHIL DAWSON** made a 57-yard field goal with one second remaining to give Arizona the victory. It marked the longest fourth-quarter game-winning field goal in NFL history by a 40-year old kicker (42 years old).
- Cardinals linebacker **CHANDLER JONES** recorded two sacks against Jacksonville and ties for the NFL lead (**EVERSON GRIFFEN**) with 12 sacks this season. Since the start of the 2015 season, Jones leads the league with 35.5 sacks and is the only player in the NFL to have at least 10 sacks in each of the past three seasons.

CAROLINA PANTHERS (8-3) at NEW ORLEANS SAINTS (8-3) (Sunday, FOX, 4:25 PM ET)

- First place in the NFC South is on the line as both teams enter Week 13 tied with 8-3 records. The Saints defeated the Panthers 34-13 in the Week 3 meeting between the clubs. New Orleans has the No. 2 ranked offense in the NFL (409.4 yards per game) while Carolina boasts the league's No. 2 ranked defense (288.3 yards allowed per game).
- The Panthers, who have won four in a row, defeated the New York Jets last week 35-27 as linebacker **LUKE KUECHLY** (34-yard fumble return) and punt returner **KAELIN CLAY** (60-yard punt return) scored touchdowns in the fourth quarter. It marked the second time in franchise history – and first since the club's inaugural 1995 season (October 8, 1995 against Chicago) – in which the Panthers scored two return touchdowns in the fourth quarter of a game.
- In November, only two players have gained at least 400 scrimmage yards and scored four touchdowns – and both are Saints. Rookie running back **ALVIN KAMARA** had 594 scrimmage yards and six touchdowns – both NFL highs – during the month while running back **MARK INGRAM** added 401 scrimmage yards and four touchdowns.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES (10-1) at SEATTLE SEAHAWKS (7-4) (Sunday, NBC, 8:30 PM ET)

- The Eagles have won nine consecutive games and improved to 10-1 with a 31-3 win over Chicago last week. Philadelphia can clinch the NFC East this week with either a Dallas loss on Thursday night or a win on Sunday night at Seattle.
- Philadelphia quarterback **CARSON WENTZ** threw three touchdown passes against the Bears and leads the NFL with 28 touchdown passes. Wentz's 28 touchdown passes are the most by an Eagles quarterback through the team's first 11 games of a season. He has only thrown five interceptions this season and is the third quarterback in NFL history – joining **TOM BRADY** (2007, 2015, 2017) and **AARON RODGERS** (2011, 2014) – to have at least 25 touchdown passes and five or fewer interceptions through his team's first 11 games.
- The Seahawks enter Week 13 with a 7-4 record, one game behind the Los Angeles Rams (8-3) for first place in the NFC West. Seattle has won six of its past eight games, including last week's 24-13 win at San Francisco.
- Since 2012, quarterback **RUSSELL WILSON**'s first season, the Seahawks are an NFL-best 19-5 (.792) in regular-season games played in December/January. In those games, Wilson has completed 450 of 698 passes (64.5 percent) for 5,726 yards with 47 touchdowns and 15 interceptions for a 103.5 passer rating, the highest mark among active quarterbacks over that span.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS (9-2) at CINCINNATI BENGALS (5-6) (Monday, ESPN, 8:30 PM ET)

- The Steelers have won six consecutive games and are tied with New England for the best record in the AFC (9-2). Last week, Pittsburgh defeated Green Bay 31-28 on Sunday night as wide receiver **ANTONIO BROWN** had 10 catches for 169 yards with two touchdowns and running back **LE'VEON BELL** had 183 scrimmage yards (95 rushing, 88 receiving).
- This season, Bell leads the league in both rushing yards (981) and scrimmage yards (1,377) while Brown ranks first in both receptions (80) and receiving yards (1,195). The Steelers are aiming to join the 1991 Dallas Cowboys (Pro Football Hall of Famers **EMMITT SMITH** and **MICHAEL IRVIN**) and 1999 Indianapolis Colts (**EDGERRIN JAMES** and Pro Football Hall of Famer **MARVIN HARRISON**) as the only teams in the Super Bowl era to have the league's leading rusher and receiver.
- The Bengals have won two games in a row and are seeking to even their record at 6-6. In Week 12, Cincinnati defeated Cleveland 30-16 behind a pair of **ANDY DALTON** touchdown passes.
- Bengals rookie running back **JOE MIXON** rushed for 114 yards and a touchdown against the Browns, his first career 100-yard rushing game. He added three catches for 51 yards to finish with a career-high 165 scrimmage yards. Mixon, who has 484 rushing yards and 258 receiving yards, is one of three rookies this season (**KAREEM HUNT** and **ALVIN KAMARA**) to amass at least 400 rushing yards and 200 receiving yards.

NFL WEEK 13 SCHEDULE
THURSDAY, SUNDAY & MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, DECEMBER 3-4

(All times local)

Thursday, November 30

Washington at Dallas, 7:25 PM (NBC/NFLN/Amazon)

Sunday, December 3

Minnesota at Atlanta, 1:00 PM

Detroit at Baltimore, 1:00 PM

New England at Buffalo, 1:00 PM

San Francisco at Chicago, 12:00 PM

Tampa Bay at Green Bay, 12:00 PM

Indianapolis at Jacksonville, 1:00 PM

Denver at Miami, 1:00 PM

Sunday, December 3 (cont'd)

Kansas City at New York Jets, 1:00 PM

Houston at Tennessee, 12:00 PM

Cleveland at Los Angeles Chargers, 1:05 PM

Los Angeles Rams at Arizona, 2:25 PM

Carolina at New Orleans, 3:25 PM

New York Giants at Oakland, 1:25

Philadelphia at Seattle, 5:30 PM (NBC)

Monday, December 4

Pittsburgh at Cincinnati, 8:30 PM (ESPN)