



## COMMUNICATIONS

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# NFL KICKS OFF SECOND HALF AS THE CALENDAR TURNS TO NOVEMBER

As the NFL season crosses the midway point, scoring remains at an all-time high, close games are the norm and players across the league are on record-setting paces.

The NFL kicks off the month of November with action as close as ever. Through the first eight weeks of the season, 67 games have been decided by one score, tied with the 2012 season for the second-most in NFL history through Week 8 (68 in 2016), including six such games last week. Thirty-six of those games have been decided by three or fewer points, the second-most in NFL history through Week 8 (42 games in 1999), including three such games last week.

There have been 5,834 points scored this season, the most in NFL history through the first eight weeks of the season, and the league's 661 total touchdowns and 429 touchdown passes are both the highest marks in league history through eight weeks.

One undefeated team remains, as the **LOS ANGELES RAMS** advanced to 8-0 for the first time since 1969 with a win over the Green Bay Packers in Week 8. The Rams are the 25th team in the Super Bowl era to begin a season with an 8-0 record and eight of the previous 24 teams to accomplish the feat won the Super Bowl in their respective seasons.

Rams running back **TODD GURLEY**, who had 195 scrimmage yards (114 rushing, 81 receiving) and a touchdown catch last week, leads the NFL with 15 total touchdowns this season. Gurley is one of three different players to score at least 15 touchdowns in his team's first eight games of a season, joining Pro Football Hall of Famer **JIM BROWN** (17 touchdowns in 1958) and **PRIEST HOLMES** (15 touchdowns in 2002 and 2004).

### THE PLAYERS WITH THE MOST TOUCHDOWNS IN THEIR TEAM'S FIRST EIGHT GAMES OF A SEASON IN NFL HISTORY

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	TOTAL TOUCHDOWNS
Jim Brown <sup>^</sup>	Cleveland	1958	17
<b>Todd Gurley</b>	<b>Los Angeles Rams</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>15</b>
Priest Holmes	Kansas City	2004	15
Priest Holmes	Kansas City	2002	15

<sup>^</sup>Pro Football Hall of Famer

Kansas City quarterback **PATRICK MAHOMES**, who became the fourth quarterback in NFL history to throw at least four touchdown passes in three consecutive games last week, leads the league with 26 touchdown passes this season. He is the third different player in league annals to throw at least 25 touchdown passes in his team's first eight games of a season, joining **TOM BRADY** (30 touchdown passes in 2007) and **PEYTON MANNING** (29 in 2013 and 26 in 2004). Brady and Manning went on to earn Associated Press Most Valuable Player honors in those seasons.

### THE PLAYERS WITH THE MOST PASSING TOUCHDOWNS IN THEIR TEAM'S FIRST EIGHT GAMES OF A SEASON IN NFL HISTORY

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	PASSING TOUCHDOWNS
Tom Brady <sup>#</sup>	New England	2007	30
Peyton Manning <sup>#</sup>	Denver	2013	29
<b>Patrick Mahomes</b>	<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>26</b>
Peyton Manning <sup>#</sup>	Indianapolis	2004	26

<sup>#</sup>Named Associated Press MVP

Minnesota wide receiver **ADAM THIELEN** leads the NFL with 74 receptions – the most by a player in his team's first eight games of a season in NFL history – and has recorded at least 100 receiving yards in an NFL record-tying eight consecutive games (**CALVIN JOHNSON**, eight consecutive games in 2012). Thielen, who has a league-leading 925 receiving yards, can become the

second player in NFL history with at least 75 catches and 1,000 receiving yards in his team's first nine games of a season, joining Atlanta's **JULIO JONES** (80 catches and 1,029 receiving yards in 2015).

**THE PLAYERS WITH THE MOST RECEPTIONS THROUGH THEIR TEAM'S FIRST EIGHT GAMES OF A SEASON IN NFL HISTORY**

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	RECEPTIONS
<b>Adam Thielen</b>	<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>74</b>
Julio Jones	Atlanta	2015	70
Marvin Harrison^	Indianapolis	2002	69

^Pro Football Hall of Famer

Below are highlights of the Week 9 schedule:

The **PITTSBURGH STEELERS** travel to M&T Bank Stadium to take on the **BALTIMORE RAVENS** in a key AFC North matchup (1:00 PM ET, CBS). In Week 4, Baltimore quarterback **JOE FLACCO** passed for 363 yards with two touchdowns and no interceptions for a 109.5 passer rating and kicker **JUSTIN TUCKER** converted four second-half field goals in the Ravens' 26-14 victory at Pittsburgh. Steelers running back **JAMES CONNER**, who had 212 scrimmage yards (146 rushing, 66 receiving) and two rushing touchdowns in Week 8, is the fourth first-or-second year player to record four games with at least two rushing touchdowns in his team's first seven games of a season, joining Pro Football Hall of Famers **STEVE VAN BUREN** (1945), **JIM BROWN** (1958) and **ERIC DICKERSON** (1983).

The **SEATTLE SEAHAWKS** welcome the **LOS ANGELES CHARGERS** to CenturyLink Field in an interconference battle (4:05 PM ET, CBS). The Chargers, who enter the game at 5-2, have won four consecutive games and are one of three teams in the AFC averaging at least 400 total net yards per game. Los Angeles running back **MELVIN GORDON** (745 scrimmage yards, nine touchdowns) is one of five NFL players with at least 700 scrimmage yards and nine touchdowns this season and Chargers quarterback **PHILIP RIVERS** leads the AFC with a 117.8 passer rating in 2018. Seattle quarterback **RUSSELL WILSON** completed 14 of 17 passes (82.4 percent) for 248 yards with three touchdowns and zero interceptions for a 158.3 passer rating in the Seahawks' Week 8 win and is the first quarterback in franchise history to register a 158.3 rating (minimum 15 attempts), the highest rating a passer can achieve.

On Sunday afternoon, the **LOS ANGELES RAMS** take on the **NEW ORLEANS SAINTS** at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome (4:25 PM ET, FOX) in a battle of NFC contenders. Rams defensive tackle **AARON DONALD** has six sacks in his past two games and leads the NFL with 10 sacks and 12 tackles for loss this season. Saints quarterback **DREW BREES**, who owns three of the four highest single-season completion percentages in NFL history, leads the league with a 77.4 completion percentage (188 of 243), which is 5.4 percent higher than the current single-season record of 72.0 percent set by Brees in 2017.

In Sunday's nightcap (8:20 PM ET, NBC), **AARON RODGERS** and the **GREEN BAY PACKERS** travel to Foxborough to meet **TOM BRADY** and the **NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS**. Rodgers (103.6) and Brady (97.6) rank first and third, respectively, in NFL history in career passer rating (minimum 1,500 attempts) and are the only active players with multiple Associated Press Most Valuable Player Awards (three for Brady and two for Rodgers). In the last meeting between the two teams, Rodgers passed for 368 yards with two touchdowns and no interceptions for a 112.6 passer rating in the Packers' 26-21 win over New England on November 30, 2014.

**NFL WEEK 9 SCHEDULE**

**THURSDAY, SUNDAY & MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 4-5**

(All times eastern)

*Bye: Arizona, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, New York Giants, Philadelphia*

**Thursday, November 1**

Oakland at San Francisco, 8:20 PM (FOX/NFLN/Amazon)

**Sunday, November 4**

Pittsburgh at Baltimore, 1:00 PM  
 Chicago at Buffalo, 1:00 PM  
 Tampa Bay at Carolina, 1:00 PM  
 Kansas City at Cleveland, 1:00 PM  
 New York Jets at Miami, 1:00 PM  
 Detroit at Minnesota, 1:00 PM

**Sunday, November 4 (cont'd)**

Atlanta at Washington, 1:00 PM  
 Houston at Denver, 4:05 PM  
 Los Angeles Chargers at Seattle, 4:05 PM  
 Los Angeles Rams at New Orleans, 4:25 PM  
 Green Bay at New England, 8:20 PM (NBC)

**Monday, November 5**

Tennessee at Dallas, 8:15 PM (ESPN)